

**WE WERE
LIED
TO ABOUT**

9/11



T H E I N T E R V I E W S

JON GOLD

Dedication

This book is dedicated to 9/11 Family Members Lorie Van Auken, Mindy Kleinberg, Patty Casazza and Kristen Breitweiser, collectively known as the "Jersey Girls" or the September Eleventh Advocates. They were the ones to really start the fight for the truth. If not for their efforts, there would never have been a 9/11 Commission, as corrupt and compromised as it was. That is a scary thought. They have fought continuously for many years (even if the corporate news have largely ignored their efforts). The media focused on their fight for the Commission, and followed the women during the Commission hearings; after the release of the 9/11 Report, and the "official story" was set in stone, the Jersey Girls' questions ceased to be addressed. Shame on the media for that. The Jersey Girls have spoken at conferences, participated in the 9/11 Congressional Briefing hosted by then Representative Cynthia McKinney, and have issued many incisive press releases over the years pertaining to 9/11. Three of the Jersey Girls appeared in a documentary entitled "9/11: Press For Truth" that attempted to bring attention to this issue, but was mostly ignored by the media. We would all be better off, if the world could hear what the Jersey Girls have to say. I want to thank the four of them (and Monica Gabrielle as well who is also a September Eleventh Advocate). You are my heroes, you have my absolute respect and gratitude. You are an inspiration. Thank you.

Introduction

Hello, and thank you very much for getting this book. I was hoping my first book *9/11 Truther: The Fight for Peace, Justice and Accountability* might change the world, but that never happened.

I think I picked a bad title. If you would like a complimentary copy, feel free to email me at Gold9472@comcast.net. It would be good context for this book.

On May 22, 2013, I broke my back. I am now partially paralyzed from the waist down, and am having quite a bit of difficulties, but I'm doing my best to cope. Even though I became disabled, I still cared deeply about this cause. Even in the hospital, I continued to make movies and provide updates for the Tour de Peace (a bicycle ride across the country for peace that Gold Star Mother and anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan, myself, and others started). I am limited as to what I can do now, but I've done my best to post the news, write articles when inspired, talk on radio shows, and make informational videos.

Cindy Sheehan had this idea to start what is called the "Soapbox People's Network." The idea was that other people would contribute articles and their shows to Cindy's site. She asked me if I wanted to do a show about 9/11.

As it turns out, after 15+ years of advocating for 9/11 Justice, I've met some amazing people that know a lot about this issue. So, I agreed and instantly got started on the show.

I did my best to interview the "best of the best." I refrained from having guests on for the sake of talking about their theories.

There were many people I tried to contact to have on the show, such as John Farmer, Eleanor Hill, Dana Lesemann (RIP), but the guests I did manage to get were absolutely amazing.

One day I was talking with Mickey Huff of Project Censored. I was bored being homebound, and he recommended I transcribe all of my interviews and make it into a book. I instantly thought that was a good idea. A lot of people have been asking me for transcripts of the shows. Also, many people like to read interviews rather than listen to them. So, here is that book. Thank you Mickey for the inspiration.

I also want to give a **HUGE** thanks to Michele Fergus who took the time to transcribe my shows, and to give me little smart ass notes along the way. I hope I wasn't too rough on you. :) You laid the foundation for something I would never be able to do and for that, I am forever grateful.

I also want to give a **HUGE** thanks to Scott Ford for designing the book cover. We fight like the true brothers that we are, but you always help to make me look good. I am forever grateful for that as well.

I hope this book accomplishes what it was intended to do. That is to educate and to help set the historical record straight. Sure, there have been some new developments since these interviews took place, but they don't take away from anything that is said. I don't agree with everything everyone said during these interviews, but we're allowed to have disagreements without spewing hatred towards each other. Also, you will often hear me call people "hero" during these interviews. I have learned from personal experience that using that word causes a lot of pressure for the person you're trying to be nice to when using it. In my first book I said that I was a "Joe Schmoe American." I am. There is an expression "never meet your heroes." Your heroes will always let you down. Why? They are human beings just like you. They are capable of mistakes and everything else a human being is capable of if you can believe that (that's sarcasm). I also said in my first book "I'm not a Democrat. I'm not a Republican. I'm not a hero. I'm not a role model. I'm a regular, everyday person who's paying attention and trying to make a difference, and I'm just trying to do the right thing." That is also still true.

Here's some advice... be your own hero. Have inspirations, but **DO BETTER** than your inspirations. Don't depend on one person to get the job done. Please. This book isn't about me. It's about us.

Hopefully, this book will put this issue back on the table. Incidentally, if you want to listen to the shows, they are available [here](#) and on [YouTube](#).

I have also decided to give this book away for free because I feel like it's the right thing to do. I never did this work to keep it to myself. I don't want people to have to pay for the right to read this information, especially those who might not be able to afford it. I have no intention of profiting from 9/11.

I have believed that selling a book or putting a value on it, meant that the person buying it might be more inclined to give it a try. I'm hoping instead that my documented time and work for this cause helps in the value department. I'm going to have faith in word of

mouth. I hope you really take the time to read it, digest what is in it, and recommend it to family, co-workers, and friends.

I edited this book myself. I took out a lot of "you know's," and some stammering, and added "to," "a," "is," to places it needed it to make it more readable, and things like that. Everyone has their own way of speaking, so I tried to leave some of the "you know's," and "like's" in the text. I did, however, leave my "and so on and so forth's" there. ;)

I could never thank the people that allowed me to interview them enough. They all have tremendous things to say, and I hope you do your best to take it all in.

To those journalists who consider themselves alternative press, but don't incorporate the fact that we were lied to about 9/11, or don't know the truth about 9/11 into whatever Post-9/11 related story they report about, I have this to say... you are helping to create an extremely dangerous environment. History is being written, and it's simply the wrong history. Please reconsider your stance on the issue of 9/11. Thank you.

"I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word."

Dr. Martin Luther King

We Were **LIED To About 9/11: The Interviews** **By Jon Gold**

Testimonials

"Jon Gold has spent countless hours researching the events of September 11, 2001. As a result, he has a wealth of information regarding the events surrounding the attacks. He has interviewed many informed sources with insights into what happened before, during and after 9/11, and this book is a compilation of those interviews. September 11, 2001 has been used as a rationale for torture, the Patriot Act, the Iraq war, and recently to justify a ban on travel from seven countries (none of which are the four countries that the 9/11 hijackers came from), and so much more. For anyone interested in deepening their understanding of the complexities of September 11th, this material should not be missed."
- **9/11 Family Member Lorie Van Auken, Jersey Girl, September 11th Advocate**

"No one I know has worked harder to unravel the truth of the 9-11 attacks and to explain why it still matters than Jon Gold. To say he has the "patience of Job" is an understatement. In producing this excellent compilation of interviews of witnesses, official insiders and knowledgeable researchers, Jon Gold has gifted historians and other truth-seekers with a solid place to begin their own further inquiry." - **Coleen Rowley, retired FBI Agent and former Minneapolis Division Legal Counsel who testified in connection with the Joint Intelligence Committee Inquiry, the Senate Judiciary Committee's investigation and the Department of Justice's Inspector General about FBI failures prior to 9-11**

"In an era of fake news and disinformation, Jon Gold remains laser focused on facts, not theories, that remind us how many questions remain unanswered, connections unexplored, and criminals unpunished. Jon's dogged journalism is a beacon of light and vessel of truth in a sea of disappointment, lunacy and lies, and his mounds of research have undoubtedly shaped the true people's history of the most important event of our generation." - **Abby Martin, journalist, creator of The Empire Files and founder of Media Roots**

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Description Of The Show

JON

Hi everyone, and welcome to my new show called: *We Were Lied to About 9/11*. I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This is the first episode, so I want to explain what I hope to accomplish by having this show.

I look at 9/11 as a crime and not an act of war. As with every crime there are suspects for that crime. I believe that along with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, elements within our Government and other Governments have **MORE THAN EARNED** the title of suspect for the crime of 9/11. That being said, I don't know what happened that day or who was ultimately responsible. Admitting this, in my opinion, has made me a better advocate for 9/11 justice.

Here's what I **DO** know:

I do know we were lied to about a great many things about that day. I do know that there are many examples of individuals attempting to cover up this or that. I do know that there are many examples of people outright lying about the attacks. I do know that people who should have been held accountable were instead rewarded and promoted. I do know that many polls over the years show that a majority of people question what we were told about that day. I do know that the corporate media has only attacked those who question what we were told about that day. I do know that each investigation we had, had its own version of corruption and compromise, especially the 9/11 Commission. I do know that the families who lost someone that day, and the people of the world, both deserve and require real truth, accountability and justice for what happened that day. The last thing I know is that because of all of the lies of 9/11, there is no justification for all of the evil that we have committed in the name of that day, and in the names of those lost that day.

I don't want to focus on theories about what happened that day. I want to focus on the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. It's a simple and true statement, and I'm hoping that it reaches a majority of people. I want to educate people about everything I just said. Learning about 9/11 is a very hard and daunting task. I want to help people with it, and that is why I am having this show.



Chapter/Episode 1 – Jenna Orkin – August 4, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Jenna Orkin (JENNA)

JON Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Jenna Orkin and I'm going to quickly read her bio for us.

Jenna Orkin is the author of *The Moron's Guide to Global Collapse*. After 9/11, she was among the first to question the EPA's announcement that the air was safe to breathe. She went on to co-found the World Trade Center Environmental Organization as well as other lower Manhattan activist organizations that revealed and testified to the EPA's lies. Later, she wrote for *FromTheWilderness.com*, the website founded by 9/11 investigative journalist Mike Ruppert, who sadly killed himself in April of this year. Hi, Jenna, my very first guest ever. Welcome to We Were Lied to About 9/11. How are you feeling?

JENNA Wonderful, and you?

JON Oh, I'm doing okay. Now, before we get started, I wrote my own little personal bio for you (yeah?) and I wanted to read that.

JENNA Okay.

JON All right? So, the date was September 9, 2004, the venue the 9/11 Omission Hearings that were held in New York City and chaired by then former representative Cynthia McKinney. I had never heard about the environmental impact of 9/11 before. Our corporate media wasn't telling us about it, apparently. Anyway, Jenna spoke and quite literally changed my life. If there was a barrier that I had trouble hurdling over with regard to the notion that elements within our Government are more than willing to kill Americans, Jenna destroyed that barrier. Also, because of her I started paying extra close attention to the 9/11 first responders and their fate. If not for Jenna, I would NEVER have done the work that I've done with regard to the 9/11 first responders.

Now, before we get started, I just want to point out the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act was eventually passed after a long and hard-fought battle over it, and the responders are getting a lot of help that they would never have gotten before. The Zadroga Act is not permanent, however, and eventually the responders will have to go to DC to fight to renew it. I just wanted to get that out of the way before we start our discussion.

So, hi again, Jenna.

JENNA Yeah, hi.

JON All right, my very first question is: Living in the Manhattan area, what was the day of 9/11 like for you?

JENNA Okay, you know you just raised something that I feel it imperative to answer, which is that the Zadroga Act money will, you know, wane and they will have to fight for more. It will be much harder because you will have a mushrooming series of cancers appearing from let's say around 20 years after 9/11. So, I believe that they passed the Zadroga Act with a feeling on the amount of money because they knew that this was coming up. Anybody with any experience with incubation periods and medical subjects like that would know that, so when they assigned a certain amount of money it was with that in mind.

Anyway, so, the day of 9/11 (yep), I was going to the gym and a neighbor said, "Did you see that a plane crashed into the World Trade Center? They think it's terrorists." So, I looked out the window—I was living in Brooklyn

and you could see the smoke. And so, I went, you know, change of plans. I went back to the apartment, called my son's school because he was going to high school at Stuyvesant four blocks north of the World Trade Center. The line was busy. I made subsequent calls and the line was always busy. Then I called my ex-husband who worked down in that neighborhood to see if he could get our son, and we spoke a bit, and then he said "I've got to go. I just saw somebody jump out the 90th floor." That was the first time you ever heard about that. (Jesus!) This was the first time it was happening. And, so I tried to get to Stuyvesant. Everything was closed. You couldn't take the train. You couldn't walk across the bridge. You were sequestered. And that was a fait accompli.

So, I went back to the apartment, made all kinds of calls. Other people were calling me. My cousin said she'd heard on the radio that Stuyvesant had been evacuated. That turned out to be a false alarm. What happened at the school—my son was in physics class and they saw the first plane hit the building and they looked out the window. The physics teacher then goes and closes the blinds (hmm), which becomes kind of emblematic of the kind of attitude of so many people, including at the school, of what was happening. The head of the school—well the FBI showed up at the school—and the head of the school, the Principal, Stanley Teitel, said, "Should we evacuate?" And the FBI said, "No." And the head of the school—how did this go? He said, "What's the chance that the buildings are going to come down?" and the FBI guy said, "Not a chance." (Wow)

Then, when the first building fell, the FBI guy said, "Now you've got to evacuate everybody because the vibrations could bring down this building." So at that point, they evacuated the kids. There was a teacher downstairs who—and there were 3200 kids at this school—a teacher downstairs said, "You see that person to your left or your right? I don't care if you know them or not, that's your buddy. Stay with them. Run! Go up town." So my son was carrying his back pack because he had never gotten his act together to get a locker—a 26-pound backpack. I weighed it when he finally got home. And he walks five miles and he went to the house of a classmate—well, I guess she was a schoolmate; I don't even think he knew her—and several other people went there too. I don't know. And a friend of mine picked him up and took him to lunch and that restaurant was filled with refugees from Lower Manhattan. And they were passing people on the street. One woman was crying, and my son said to my friend, "Do you know why she was crying?" My friend said, "No." And my son said, "Her train was late. If it had been on time, she would have been in the building."

And then my friend told me he just fell asleep at the lunch table. You know, it had been so exhausting.

So the day was very hectic.

JON Obviously, horrible.

JENNA Yeah, right.

JON It's just horrible. I can't imagine what it was like to be there that day. I mean, I'm from Philadelphia, so I (yeah), the only coverage that I saw was the constant showing of the buildings collapsing (yes) by the corporate media.

JENNA Right. There were parents who lived in Manhattan and were able to get to the school, but they weren't allowed in because the administration didn't know them, and they were afraid at that time—they didn't know if there were terrorists out in the street. So they just locked the doors to people. (Right) Just another little detail.

JON All right. My next question: Why did you start to question what New Yorkers were being told about the air and water quality?

JENNA Because, the following day that same friend who picked up my son had a lunch engagement, not exactly in that neighborhood, of course, sufficiently North where life was still going on, and as per normal—whatever normal is after 9/11—and she said, "It smells godawful. It's the air that's going to be the problem." Well that turned out to be prophetic. So immediately I was concerned about that. There was an enormous rush to get the kids back into the building because it's a population that's terribly ambitious. It's a very competitive school. And, they have to take an exam; the kids go to the best colleges after that; and they LOVE that school—state-of-the-art science labs and clubs—it was the only school my son ever loved. And, so, to question what the Government was saying was to slight the common—you know, it's like slighting the Church in the middle ages, or something. I mean, everybody wanted to go back.

There were a couple of naysayers. I quickly made friends with them. But we were too few. And, on top of that, the school administration, no I should say, the parent association was lied to about whether the ventilation system had been cleaned. The school underwent a million-dollar clean-up, but it

excluded the ventilation system, and they lied about that to the parents association. So, everybody was rushing back to the school. And they didn't find out until after-the-fact. That's a very key factor.

JON So, it was essentially the safety of your son that prompted you to do the questioning.

JENNA Oh, of course, that was the entirety of it, apart from that it didn't affect me hardly at all.

JON Now, could you briefly tell us what kind of toxins were found in the dust? This is something that when I first heard you speak it was just amazing to me. It just never—none of it occurred to me. So, could you do that?

JENNA Okay, yeah, the Sierra Club report written in, I believe, 2003 or 4 said over 2,000 contaminants. Well that's plenty but, in fact, there are 80,000 manufactured in the United States, so there are probably more, but who cares? Anyway, you had 50,000 computers just in World Trade Center One and Two, each made with a couple of pounds of lead. Mercury—41 milligrams of mercury per fluorescent light bulb, you know, calculate that for those two buildings. Those two buildings constituted a city with its own zip code. So everything that's in a city was in there. Your doctors' offices with radiation equipment. You had smoke alarms that had radioactive Americium241.

And then, about early October, Dr. Thomas Cahill who came in from UC Davis tested very and ultra fine particles. They were the highest he'd ever gotten out of the 7,000 samples he'd taken around the world, including at the burning Kuwait oil fields. We'd beat them all. Just catastrophic levels of dioxin—you could go on and on.

JON And the alkalinity of the—

JENNA Oh, the alkalinity! Thank you. Yes, right, the equivalent to drain cleaner. And what the EPA did about that was so ingenious because they reduced it by from, let's say, from 11 to 10, somewhere around there. And to the layman it looks like not much of a reduction. It looks like a 10 percent, 9 percent reduction. In fact, it's a logarithmic scale, so you're reducing it by a factor of 10 and they don't tell you that of course.

JON Right, oh geez. Now, Christie Todd Whitman, the former head of the EPA, is the one that made many statements saying that everything was okay. On September 24, 2006, the *New York Post* reported that "Condoleezza Rice's office gave final approval to the infamous Environmental Protection Agency press releases days after 9/11 claiming the air around Ground Zero was 'safe to breathe' internal documents show." *New York One* is the only other news outlet to report on that story. Nothing ever came of it. The story just went away.

To your knowledge, is this story true?

JENNA Well, I don't have any personal knowledge. I only know what I read, which is the same thing that you read. But, I would say, you know, this dovetails with the question of who ultimately is responsible. And Condoleezza Rice, if her office said the air is safe to breathe, they're getting their information from the EPA. They're not in the business of environmental protection. That's not their area of expertise. So they're just mouthing what they're told. It's really (coughing) the EPA that has to be held ultimately responsible. They're the ones in charge. And I would also really love to question—and nobody ever will—the White House Council on Environmental Quality (coughing), which is the dark horse in this whole thing.

JON Are you all right? (Mmm-hmm) Okay, good.

Okay, so—but it was the White House that essentially got the EPA to rewrite the reports to be more—

JENNA It's the White House Council on Environmental Quality—and James Connaughton is a very interesting figure because lots of things lead back to James Connaughton, like comments about climate change, denying it or downplaying it, you know, can be traced back to him. Changing the press releases where cautionary statements on asbestos become reassurances eventually lead back to Connaughton's office. He was called in to question by the Senate, and I have up on my computer what Chairman James Inhofe concluded about that. That was in 2003. This is Inhofe's investigation: "EPA acted properly in its response, as well as in its communications with the public. The administration did not suppress any part . . ." You know, you can imagine what it says. (Right) That kind of thing. (Yeah) Then later Hillary Clinton questioned Connaughton, but you know, he tap-danced out of that. Nothing ever happens to any of these people. It all rolls right off them.

JON Well, the only form of accountability that I'm aware of with regard to Christie Todd Whitman is that there was a judge that one time said something about her actions in a very negative way—I don't remember exactly.

JENNA Okay, okay, huh—that was Judge, I think her name is Deborah Bade, Deborah Batts? I may be confused. Yeah, I think that was it. [Note: U.S. District Judge Deborah A. Batts] Okay, that was a lawsuit of resident students and office workers against the EPA and I was named as one of the original Plaintiffs because I had my carpet tested for asbestos and the results showed, well, it was not conclusive, but too much asbestos, according to ultrasonication which was an EPA-approved test, but a test they did not apply after 9/11 down at the World Trade Center. They questioned their own test.

Anyway, so we sued the EPA. And that's a lower court level—this wonderful judge gave an incredibly strong statement that Christie Todd Whitman's actions shocked the conscience. It was fantastic. Hillary Clinton held a press conference and it was all triumphant. But, of course, what does the EPA do? They appeal and next thing you know, that's the end of that. And the higher court judge said, basically—it seemed to me that if you read between the lines, he would say, "If you don't allow the Government to lie, they won't talk at all. So we have to let them lie." I mean that's what—in legalese that's what it sounded like.

JON Well, and in another form of accountability that Christie Todd Whitman faced was testifying before Jerrold Nadler, Jerry Nadler [Rep. Jerrold Nadler, (D-NY)] and he literally, he tore her apart. And, that's on video and that's a form of accountability, I guess, but they're not—

JENNA And then she was going to run for President and she didn't, o-kay. (Laughter) But, you know, this is a hydra's head. You cut one off and you get five other monsters.

JON Right. All right, so how does Hugh Kaufman fit into this story?

JENNA Hugh Kaufman was the chief investigator for the EPA Ombudsman, I believe the Solid Waste Department. And so, starting in February of '02, we met with him and Robert Martin, the ombudsman, at the office of Joel Kupferman, who was a wonderful lawyer and one of the heroes of 9/11, and

Kaufman and Martin held hearings, which were the best ever on this disaster, because at the other hearings the Government kowtowed to the agencies. And the agencies said if you don't let us go on first, we're not going to appear at all. And so they let them go on first knowing full well—everybody knew full well—the press had a deadline and they'd be gone by the time the ragtag militia of activists and independent scientists spoke, telling the truth. So that's the way it had been working until the ombudsman hearing where he put the best witnesses up first, so at least it's in the record. And he was a tremendous—Hugh Kaufman was a tremendous hero after the BP disaster—he was all over the place warning of what—

JON I do remember that. But he wasn't—he was not officially working for the EPA. He was somebody who used to work for the EPA.

JENNA Yeah, he was. He was the chief investigator for the EPA ombudsman. He was like the watchdog within the EPA, making sure they did what they were supposed to do.

JON Right. Now, both local and federal Governments were aware that the air was not safe to breathe when they made their statements, correct?

JENNA Well, it depends, you know, a lot of people—I think some people knew more than others. And what they normally do is hand over the statements to some poor middle innocent who genuinely doesn't know that it's a false statement and so you kind of—it's like money laundering. By the time you put somebody in front of the camera, they have no direct access to the original data and they believe what they're told. They believe what they're saying and it makes it more effective.

JON Right, right, exactly. But the White House was certainly aware of the harm when they changed the EPA statements and so forth.

JENNA Oh, God, yes.

JON All right. Can you tell me about why some 9/11 first responders were told not to wear respirators?

JENNA Some of them were told that it just looked bad—you're going to frighten the public. It's bad PR. You don't want to do that.

JON As a result, well, it's one of the factors as to why many 9/11 first responders are now sick and dying, unfortunately.

JENNA Absolutely. Some residents wore respirators because some well-meaning person said you should really do that. The residents were advised to clean up their own apartments and where the dust was really bad, just wear long pants and you'll be fine.

JON Right, I remember that. And to use wet cloth to clean the dust. Isn't that how it went?

JENNA Yes, that's how it went. And some of them would put on a respirator, but nobody told them to change the filter, so they used the same un-filter, you know, useless.

JON Geez—can you explain how Wall Street fits into this story.

JENNA According to the report by the EPA Inspector General in August of 2003, part of the motivation of downplaying the air quality was to get Wall Street up and running ASAP, which is what they did.

JON So, money is more important than people.

JENNA Oh, for sure.

JON Right, that just boggles my mind. It gets me so angry. Now—is there anything else you want to say about that, or—

JENNA I think another motivation for being so kind of counter-intuitive and counter-humane and everything else, was—and it's not just what I think; it doesn't matter what I think—is that EPA wanted to set a new precedent for environmental disasters. They already had in place—since this is what they do for a living—they had a protocol to clean up after an environmental disaster. You test in concentric circles starting from the epicenter. You see in what direction the contaminants went. You do more cleaning up in that direction. It's scientifically valid. It had been done.

Then they kept saying, well, but 9/11 was unprecedented—of course it is. Everything is unprecedented. History does not repeat itself verbatim. But there are certain patterns that are followed. So, they completely broke with tradition as far as 9/11 went, and they did not do that testing in concentric

circles, etc. (Right) and they didn't clean up according to their own protocols. So, they were setting a new standard, which is: there's a disaster; it's unprecedented and you're on your own.

JON Well, we saw the same things with Katrina. (Right) We saw the same things with the BP oil spill. (Right) Go ahead—

JENNA So they knew that that kind of disaster was in the offing and they didn't want to set the precedent of being responsible to clean it up.

JON Right. Well, that they are and they didn't, and—anyway, several thousand 9/11 first responders are sick and well over a thousand have died. Are you aware of the amount of New Yorkers that became ill or are you aware of any that have died as a result of the toxic dust. I'm aware of a nun who passed away and donated her body so it could be studied to better help people, but that's the only civilian that I'm aware of.

JENNA Right. There is—okay, you're never going to get an adequate answer on that because people will die of it and, you know, toxins don't announce themselves in the blood. They don't have little labels on them. Yeah, I'm just looking at one now. Somebody called Felicia Dunn Jones, in 2007 died of World Trade Center poison.

JON I remember that name. Go ahead.

JENNA Right. So that was one that was officially linked. But, officially linked is an obstacle course to get over or through and I'm sure there are more. You'll never get the real number there.

JON That's unfortunate. According to FindLaw.com, second degree murder is partially defined as "a killing caused by dangerous conduct and the offender's obviously lack of concern for human life." Do you agree that this perfectly describes the actions of our Government with regard to the environmental impact of 9/11?

JENNA Sure. (laughter) That was easy.

JON That was very easy. It's unfortunate that we never were able to hold anyone accountable under that standard, but it does seem to perfectly describe it. Now, in your eyes, who should be held accountable for the lies regarding the toxic dust?

JENNA You know, up the chain-of-command at the EPA, and I would love to see the White House Council on Environmental Quality really investigated, but I'm not holding my breath.

JON And that's it, okay. You told me that you're now working on the fracking issue. What would you like to tell us about that?

JENNA All right. Fracking is one disgusting example of the fallout, the consequences of an idea—it's not an idea, it's a fact, the fact of peak oil—peak oil does not mean we're running out of oil. It means we have run out of easy oil. (Right) And that's obvious across the board. So, when you run out of easy oil, it's not simply a matter of, okay, switching gears and we'll just get the more difficult oil. I mean, the BP disaster is a direct consequence of peak oil. They would not have been drilling in the ocean. They would not be going down thousands of meters into this treacherous and expensive terrain to extract oil if there was easier oil available. So, fracking and poisoning the water is one symptom. BP is another symptom. The fact that Saudi Arabia is saying, okay, we're interested in going solar, that's scary. That means that Saudi Arabia is past peak, though they'll never admit it. (Right) Because they were the fountainheads for the world (yep), so this situation where there's this desperate grab for the last remaining resources is playing out all over the world and it's the reason, one of the reasons you're having the unrest in the Middle East over Gaza because, you know, the gas that Israel wants and—

JON Right, Dr. Nafeez Ahmed (yes) wrote an article about that (that's right) for *The Guardian* (right).

JENNA So, you don't hear these words "peak oil." You don't—you hear that it's because of rockets and—or, you know, crazy Arabs, or something. The real bottom line here is that we have resource wars going on and they can only get worse as long as we keep our economic system, which is based on infinite growth. Because if you need more and more and more money, you're going to need more and more people, and there's not enough resources for them.

JON Right. Can you quickly explain what infinite growth means? To me, it means, you know, that oil does not regrow itself. You know when you run out of—go ahead—

JENNA Okay, it's really about economic infinite growth. What it means is that when you put a hundred dollars in the bank, you expect to get back a little more, and everybody gets more than what they put in and where does it come from? And really where it comes from these days is from the Federal Reserve printing it. And they have the authority to do that which they got from the Bretton Woods Agreement at the end of World War II. There are certain major banks—the European Central banks—that have this luxury.

But, pieces of paper with lots of zeros on them only work up to a point. You can't say to China "we owe you so many trillions of dollars" and then stick another few zeroes on the piece of paper you give them. China is not fools. (Hmm) So, the dollar is losing its status in the world that we got from that Bretton Woods Agreement and China and Russia are just leaving the dollar behind and turning towards the ruble, the euro, and gold. This is going to leave us in a very desperate situation. And what the economy is based on is real stuff in the earth, real minerals, food—you know, it doesn't matter if you have a trillion dollars and there's no water. (Right) It all comes down to that.

JON You can't eat a dollar.

JENNA That's correct.

JON All right. Before we finish, are there any websites you would like to promote?

JENNA Oh! Well, let's see—I wasn't expecting that. (Laughter) Mike Ruppert's website for 9/11 information: FromtheWilderness.com For the World Trade Center environmental information, the first website I put up was: WTCEO.org (World Trade Center Environmental Organization dot org), and—gosh—

JON Well, I would like to personally promote the FealGood Foundation: FealGoodFoundation.com or .org, I think. Do you have any more?

JENNA I'm going to regret this afterwards. I'm going to be kicking myself, but those are (Laughter)—I think [From the Wilderness](http://FromtheWilderness.com) is very important. Of course (Okay) it would be very good for the Ground Zero workers, yes.

JON Right. Well, Jenna, I very much appreciate you coming on my show. It's actually an honor to have you on my show. You're a hero of mine, and that's all I can say. Just thank you.

JENNA Well thank YOU, Jon. It's great to talk to you.

JON Well wonderful. All right, thank you for coming on and we'll talk to you again some day.

JENNA Thank you, Jon.

JON All right, thanks, Jenna.

JENNA Right, bye.



Chapter/Episode 2 – Mickey Huff – August 28, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Mickey Huff (MICKEY)

JON

Hi everyone and welcome to my show called "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show focuses on how the corporate media has treated those who question what we were told about 9/11. It is greatly because of how the corporate media has treated us that many people with followings won't talk about the multitude of cover-ups concerning 9/11. It is greatly because of how the corporate media has treated us that many people think that 9/11 Truthers or advocates for 9/11 justice are the equivalent of a baby killer or a dog torturer. It is greatly because of how the corporate media has treated us that we have failed to reach the critical mass necessary to resolve this issue. If the corporate media did its job, I would not have had to devote almost 12 years of my life to this cause. I ask you, in what world does it make sense to constantly attack and misrepresent those seeking truth, accountability, and justice for the murder of 2,976 people? Certainly not in the world I choose to be a part of.

Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Mickey and I'm going to quickly read his bio for us.

MICKEY HUFF is director of Project Censored and serves on the board of the Media Freedom Foundation. To date, he has edited or coedited six volumes of *Censored* and contributed numerous chapters to these works dating back to 2008. Additionally, he has coauthored several chapters on media and propaganda for other scholarly publications, most recently *Flashpoint in Ukraine* from Clarity Press (2014). He is currently professor of social science and history at Diablo Valley College in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he is cochair of the history department. Huff is cohost with former Project Censored director Dr. Peter Phillips of "The Project Censored Show," the weekly syndicated public affairs program that originates from KPFA Pacifica Radio in Berkeley CA. For the past several years, Huff has worked on the national planning committee of Banned Books Week, working with the American Library Association and the National Coalition Against Censorship, of which Project Censored is a member. He is also a longtime musician and composer. He lives with his family in Northern California. He's also the associate editor of the forthcoming SAGE publication *Encyclopedia of Censorship in 2017*.

Hi, Mickey, how are you doing today?

MICKEY Jon, I'm doing really well. Thanks so much for having me come on to have a conversation with you about 9/11, media propaganda, and censorship.

JON I very much appreciate having you on today to help me navigate through this very important issue. All right, so I'm just going to get into the questions then.

What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

MICKEY 9/11/2001, perhaps many other folks had some similar experiences. I awoke to a phone ringing wildly in my ear, six or so o'clock, almost, roughly—I'm in California and it was a student actually of mine saying, "Oh my God! You need to turn on the television." And, of course, I did, right? And we all started seeing the shock and awe of that day before us. And, I remember going to campus—I was teaching that day, and we just had conversations and discussions, and set up forums all over campus. In fact, that entire week we did those things. And it was interesting because given that I'm an

historian and social scientist, I mean, I'm also a person, I was horrified by the images and things that I was seeing.

And—but I also couldn't help the other part of me putting all of this into some kind of context. Both global, not nationalist context, and also historical, not merely present context. And I remember distinctly that from that period on for several years the questions that I had or questions that would come up were greeted with great degrees of hostility. And, in fact, I fashioned an entire course around critical thinking in 9/11 and I still teach that class, and—it was definitely a day that changed a lot of things for people, particularly in terms of perception and I think that one of the lasting things that we see from that very day is the constant attempts to rekindle, to manipulate the emotions of the public that continues to support massive wars of aggression and empire-building.

And, so I again, I do remember the day and I suppose many people do, and it was an incredible, an incredibly emotional thing, and I know that people—particularly people that were most closely struck by that, that's a post-traumatic stress issue. I'm not going to use the word disorder. There's nothing disorder-related about having post-traumatic stress related to such a tragedy. (Right)

I also remember using that event, in a way, to say well, if we have some such stress and trauma about an event like this, imagine what people around the world feel when the United States bombs their towns and their villages, and—I mean, on and on, right. You know this history and this drill. And it's really a teachable moment—tragedies often are, sadly, (Right) that continues to be. And what's interesting, too, Jon, is that teaching this class over the years about these issues, looking at 9/11 is a—the class is basically about history in the making. Right? Looking at journalism as the rough draft of history, and it uses 9/11 and the so-called war on terrorism as sort of a focal point or a course topic to analyze how all of this, all these narratives have been erected around 9/11. And now I'm teaching people that were children, literally, when 9/11 happened. And so they have a remarkably different perspective on it than 10 years ago.

JON

Absolutely, yeah, one of the things that I've done, or tried to do, is go through the park that's close to me and interview people randomly. And within the last month or so I interviewed a group of students, and I asked them how they were being taught 9/11 in their classroom. And what they told me was that they weren't taught anything about the context of the

attacks or anything like that. They were just taught about the specifics of that day. And, actually, over the years I've made many efforts to reach out to teachers who write syllabuses to teach 9/11 to try and get them to incorporate, the unanswered questions of 9/11, the context of 9/11, and so forth. Because it's very scary to me to think of what they're being taught about, they're being taught the myths, essentially.

MICKEY Indeed, Jon, and in fact an article that I did with Paul Rea for the *Censored 2009* book was literally ripping on that and the article was titled "Deconstructing Deceit: 9/11, the Media and Myth Information," meaning mythological information. And a lot of the way I go about teaching 9/11 issues, historically, is by deconstructing the mythologies and the narratives.

JON Right. Why don't you tell us a little bit about your background. You're a professor, obviously. (Laughter) Tell us a little about that.

MICKEY Teaching is something I've always been interested in. I taught music for a very long time. I started teaching music, actually, in high school. I took a real interest in media, propaganda, history, politics, and so forth, and as I went through college and veered over to become a history major and went to graduate school for history, mostly looking at the recent past and recent historiography of the United States and its interpretation—particularly about myth-making and the power of the official narrative to mold and shape the way people perceive the past, such that it creates a prism in the present that they are predisposed to see things in a certain light, or in a certain way, and less disposed to ask potential questions that challenge those narratives.

My graduate work focused on the Kent State shootings—I published more about that in the last couple years with Laurel Krause whose sister was murdered by the National Guard at Kent State, May 4, 1970. (Geez) It's the same kind of—it's the same analytical kind of approach of like, well there's a lot of things that are going on, both historically and in the present, that appear to be one thing, but there's often reluctance for people to sometimes address the severity or the roots of some of these issues because, again, we're predisposed through conditioning through our media, through education, to not necessarily question these things, and to just not know. As you said about 9/11, many people don't even really know the facts involved with these issues.

Of course, one of the things Project Censored does year-round is undercover—you know, report underreported—censored stories, but this is historic, I mean this is a history—is why we have to uncensor all of our un-histories in order to have context in the present such that we can, in real time, critically think about and deconstruct current events. And so, that's really my interest in this and that's why I ended up in education is because I just thought it was a great vehicle to be around people to just talk about these things as much as possible.

JON I think as being a citizen it is our responsibility to familiarize yourself with what's going on in this country. To familiarize yourself with what the country or the Government is doing in your name with your tax dollars. I just—you know before 9/11 I was not like that at all. I didn't care. I was like most Americans. Most Americans don't pay attention to things. And 9/11 took me completely off-guard. Caught me off-guard, and the rest is history. From that point on I had to know what was going on next and, I became glued to the TV set and watched what was going on. And, as I said before, unfortunately, I picked Fox News as my resource (Laughter). They were the red, whitest, and bluest of all the networks. So I was trying to be patriotic, and so I watched Fox News—unfortunately.

All right, you mentioned Project Censored. What is Project Censored and when did you become a part of it?

MICKEY Project Censored is a media-research organization and academic-research organization that stresses the importance of news media literacy and critical thinking. And what you just said a moment ago about civic duty for us to be doing these kinds of things, yeah, I just said that this past week. I just started teaching for the fall semester and I was telling my critical thinking classes that this isn't just for tests. This is for your, the rest of your life. This is for what we're supposed to be doing in our society. And Project Censored, of course, mirrors that, and Project Censored was founded in 1976. It's been on the state university by communications professor Carl Jensen, and Peter Phillips, sociologist, took over the project 20 years later. I worked with Peter—I've worked with Peter off and on after the events of 9/11 and became much more involved with Project Censored after 2006 and 7. I had put together a 9/11 conference called: "Lifting the Fog" with several people in the Bay Area here, and Peter and I started to work more closely after that. I became associate director of Project Censored 2008, and became director of Project Censored in 2010.

And what Project Censored does is researches and vets the most under-reported or censored stories in the U.S. press and, of course, we focus on the independent, alternative press and we point out what corporate media failed to do under alleged free press principles—and I say "under alleged" (laughter) is because the idea behind the free press is that the media, the news media, reporters, journalists, they will tell the public what is going on in a meaningful way, contextually, such that they can act intelligently in civic affairs. Unfortunately, of course, that's not how corporate media functions and they are, in fact, a large propaganda arm of the establishment of the military industrial security complex of the U.S. Nato Empire, and they're also a commercial medium that provides sufficient distraction and tries to get people consuming and doing these various things. But lost in there is the free press principles that George Seldes saying—a great reporter in the 20th century—that the purpose of journalism and the news media is to tell people what's really going on.

And that's what Project Censored really tries to do is give people the opportunity to find out what's really going on. And we do a book every year with Seven Stories Press, and we have a website ProjectCensored.org. We have a new, award-winning documentary film ProjectCensoredtheMovie.com. So your listeners can certainly go—if they don't know about Project Censored, you can invite them to check out our website and our materials.

We've certainly covered 9/11, but we are not a 9/11-centric organization. (Right) But, how could we not cover 9/11. It's not that people haven't heard of 9/11. It's not that people don't know about 9/11 per se, but if you take a look and analyze, like you—you know, I would say it was a good thing you were watching some of the Fox News. I say good thing because at some point I think it becomes so obvious that it's so completely biased and one-sided—as is the rest of a lot of the corporate media. It isn't just Fox.

JON Oh, exactly. It's MSNBC, CNBC, CNN, ABC, CBS—they're all slanted.

MICKEY NPR, PBS—all of this. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*. I mean they all have angles and they may have some, potentially on the surface ideological proclivities—Fox is on the right, MSNBC is on the left. But that's all part of the framing of the propaganda that people are getting "both sides" of the story.

JON Well, it's just the false left/right paradigm that they try to maintain.

MICKEY Correct. And they try to maintain it, but as we see year-after-year more and more Americans ARE turning away from these kinds of outlets and they're turning away from opinion-based journalism. Not because having opinions is bad, but people need to have access to just information before they can construct their own opinions. When you're feeding people over the head with opinion journalism—MSNBC led the way, by the way, last year. Eighty-five (85%) percent of their on-air news reporting was opinion-based journalism. And people figure that out and they start to not trust that these outlets are telling them what they "need to know" and rather are telling them what they want us to know, and what the establishment wants them to know, and what Wall Street wants them to know.

And when you take a look at something like 9/11, of course Project Censored covered this—Project Censored has not weighed in necessarily in terms of saying well this is exactly what happened, or this person's right and this person's wrong. You know it's not—we try not to get involved in movements politically in that regard because we're a free press organization and that is our movement, that's our concerns. But in the process we naturally had to talk about some of the things that were going on with 9/11 that were just so preposterous in terms of media coverage. (Right)

We certainly—and boy, when we weighed in on 9/11 issues, I have to tell you, man, that it really hit the fan. A lot of long-time Project supporters really just were like wow you guys are a bunch of conspiracy theorists. You're a bunch of conspiracy nuts. (Right) And, Peter Phillips had to really deal with this and I came on afterwards and, of course, since I had an interest in 9/11 as an educator and a critical thinker, as well as a concerned citizen, and as a human being in terms of how 9/11 was used by the establishment to wreak havoc around the globe literally killing millions of people, displacing tens of millions of people. We're still doing it as obviously you know. But I thought how could we possibly turn our backs and ignore 9/11 and just pretend that, you know, even that it would take the "Left" or take the Libertarian Right. Very critical Government, very critical of the role of powerful institutions in our society. How is it that they could possibly suspend critical judgment about 9/11 and just the establishment narrative. To me, that was utterly remarkable. (Laughs)

JON Absolutely, and, it was said very early on—I wrote an article—Bill Moyers essentially wrote a hit piece against 9/11 truth and I wrote a response to Bill Moyers and in that article I said:

"It is well known and said by many that after the 9/11 attacks the media in this country did not do its job. Dan Rather said on May 17, 2002, "There was a time in South Africa that people would put flaming tires around people's necks if they dissented and in some ways the fear is that you will be necklaced hear. You will have a flaming tire of lack of patriotism put around your neck. Now it is that fear that keeps journalists from asking the toughest of the tough questions." On April 25, 2007, Dan Rather told Bill Moyers that "There's no question that we didn't do a good job. We weren't smart enough. We weren't alert enough. We didn't dig enough and we shouldn't have been fooled in this way." And Helen Thomas was adamant about the media's failure after 9/11. She said, "They rolled over and played dead."

So, there's that aspect to the corporate media after 9/11. Well there were people who didn't want to be painted in an unpatriotic light, so they stayed away from certain issues. That's not an excuse. I don't condone it in any way, shape or form, but that's what a lot of journalists used as their excuse. You spoke of an alleged free press, and I'm sure you're familiar with Reporters Without Borders?

MICKEY Oh yeah.

JON They ranked the United States in their freedom of the press over the last couple of years as high as 50th in the world—

MICKEY Yes—(Laughs)

JON I'm sorry?

MICKEY Yeah, as low as 50th in the world, right?

JON Yeah, as low as 50th for freedom of press. In a country where our Constitution says that we have freedom of the press. To me, that's absurd and ridiculous (yeah) to be—

MICKEY Yeah, unfortunately, it's—I would argue that in addition to being absurd and ridiculous, it's also tragic and dangerous in a society the size of the U.S. with the resources of the U.S. and the military of the U.S.—the fact that we

have an electorate that's not oft-treated to honest discourse about the matters of the day that hits the most. I would argue that it's literally dangerous how we have such high percentages of people in the population that support certain acts of aggression and restrictions on our Constitutional rights and so forth, particularly post-9/11, in the shadow of 9/11, with the constant refrain of Remember 9/11. Here we are 13 years later and Barack Obama is still reminding us of 9/11 as a means by which to get involved with Isis in Iraq and Syria now, and so forth.

I mean this is very problematic and the role of the journalism and news media is to cut through that type of propaganda. And, unfortunately, what we see—because most people still do, even if they're turning away, do get their news from corporate news media sources. And over the years we have warned and warned and warned people that while the corporate media does report on some things that matter, on occasion, a lot of their coverage is very skewed, very framed, a lot is omitted—and a lot of people don't know where to go. And the irony is that even though more and more people are admitting that—over 60 or 70 percent, in fact, in some polls—admit that they don't trust the news media, they don't trust corporate media, but then when they're polled on issues of the day, they parrot the same things that they hear from the news media that they just claimed that they didn't trust.

JON Well that's something that Paul Thompson, the creator of The Complete 9/11 Timeline at HistoryCommons.org said. He said that the news does report on the news, but you find these stories, these important stories in the back sections of newspapers and so on and so forth. If they had given any of these stories the attention that the ice bucket challenge just got, or Britney Spears or Michael Jackson's death, I mean this would be a different world.

MICKEY It really would be. We certainly are trying at the Project. (Laughs)

JON Right. Now, you told me before that Project Censored has been criticized for not covering certain theories about 9/11. Why don't you tell us a little bit about that.

MICKEY Well, it's interesting, because on one side we've been criticized because we bothered to cover the glaring problems of media propaganda and omissions regarding 9/11 and the 9/11 Commission, and so forth. And then on the other end of the spectrum we've been criticized by people within the "9/11 Truth Movement," so called. Because we won't widely publicize or get into

some of the folks in the movement that—I can't really use the word folks anymore can I because Obama has pretty much trashed that. (Laughter) Aw shucks we tortured some folks and some folks cooked the books. I wonder if the folks cooking the books at the VA are the same folks tortured. But, anyway. I digress.

Some people do have theories of speculative points about 9/11 and I mean we're not really interested in the speculation elements so much. We're interested in critical questions that either have not been asked or not been answered. Certainly the victims' families that pushed so hard for a commission in the face of Bush's obstinance to not have one and Bush, President W. Bush asked Congress specifically not to investigate 9/11 and did not create a commission which was totally biased allegedly independent, hardly the case. And controlled by Philip Zelikow, complete partisan and friends and coauthor with people he's investigating, but that's – maybe we'll get into that later.

But we don't focus on just any Tom, Dick, or Harry or Sally or Sue, or whomever, because they have some theory or some speculative issue with 9/11. And, so we've run into some snags and problems with people about say the Pentagon, or even one of the big issues that's gained some traction in places like New York, of course, on the Twin Towers and Building 7 (Right) where they were trying to get a measure on the ballot and it keeps getting tossed out or kicked off, and it rekindles the attacks of 9/11 and rekindles the whole smearing tactic that these are a bunch of conspiracy nuts and whack jobs, and what have you.

Let me give you a really specific case. A lot of people knowing that the corporate news media is propaganda; knowing that we live in a culture based on a lot of lies and half-truths and so forth then gravitates to alternative news outlets, so that may be good. But some of the outlets they gravitate toward, I would argue, maybe have more negative or detrimental effects in the long-term. The name Alex Jones comes to mind. (Right) InfoWars. And I won't say that there aren't some things on InfoWars that are really well done and are very important stories, but what I would unfortunately also have to posit—and Nolan Higdon did an article with us at Project Censored on our website on Alex Jones The War on Your Mind. It's more like Alex Jones' war on your mind. Because—and this is not a personal statement about Alex. It's not a personal attack. Nolan, and what we've done is we've looked at the way that Jones and InfoWars has covered 9/11 issues and Jones often inserts himself such into the debate that he

becomes the issue. (Right) And, unfortunately, Jones has been discredited on so many different occasions for propounding nonsensical theories or unproven assertions that he's not a terribly credible source (No) on these matters. But he's a very high-profile character in the media, a lightning rod. The Drudge Report uses hundreds of his stories over the years—no joke. And that's a widely trafficked website.

But my point is that Alex is sort of like a lightning rod that becomes a defacto unelected spokesperson for a movement that ultimately ends up discrediting not only the movement but any serious researchers that have questions about the same subject.

JON Well this is an issue—(Very serious problem) We're going to get into this a little bit later.

But, Media Matters—I'm sure you're familiar with them (Yeah). They hate 9/11 people. They hate them. And they have portrayed Alex as the "leader" of the "9/11 Truth Movement" before, as you said.

MICKEY That's exactly the problem. There is no leader. It's an issue and there is a faction of the 9/11 Truth and Justice movement I would say that really at the core wants to know what happened and want new investigations and want material released. Again, the notion that somehow people are called conspiracy theorists in the pejorative for asking questions goes all the way back to the CIA and the John Kennedy assassination when the CIA literally through their Mockingbird reporters said, look, anybody that challenges the Warren Commission, you need to smear them with these labels. You need to call them nuts, crazy, conspiracy freaks, whatever, as long as we can move this down the road such that, people aren't going to really ever find out what happened here. Because they don't want people to understand the operations of the deep state and deep political affairs. As Peter Dale Scott would say (Right) or Mike Lofgren.

But the bigger issue here with now—9/11—is that because of some of the, and I would say irresponsible—this is my opinion, people could clearly disagree—but I think there have been so many irresponsible claims made about 9/11. Not just by the Government and so forth, but by people questioning the 9/11 attacks themselves that it has made it a very confusing and difficult to navigate field or topic. And add into it the emotional reactions people have about the 9/11 events. And a lot of people in the public they don't necessarily know. Who do they trust? Where do they go?

And so forth. And I would then argue that when people become sort of like one click away and you're over to Drudge, over to Jones, over to what have you, I think the general public sort of sees this as wow, look at this guy, bloviating, foaming at the mouth, wow, what a crack pot. He must really be crazy. And then by guilt-by-association somebody over here that argues that we don't know all these things, and the commission itself even has admitted that they were wrong and didn't get to investigate everything—that of course was the purpose, to erect some kind of story about it that might stick, despite the fact that it wasn't supported by all the evidence. We don't know all the evidence. We still don't know all the evidence about Saudi Arabia, etc.

But this kind of thing makes it very difficult to have reasonable discourse about the subject. Add into the mix the people that allegedly are watchdogs of the press and—stalwart progressives that are supposedly very interested in keeping Government honest and so forth, they spend an awful lot of time attacking people that ask these unpopular questions, and then they use the guilt-by-association as a means by which to divert attention away from asking the questions in the first place. (Right) The issue isn't Alex Jones. The issue isn't InfoWars. The issue isn't—I mean, fill in the blanks. The issue is 9/11 and what we do and do not know about it. And that is where we should be placing the focus.

JON

Well—in 2006 or so when the media essentially couldn't ignore us anymore, and they did—they ignored us greatly but there were some hit pieces that were written very early on. In fact, the very first one documented was by Paul Lashmar, *The Independent*. He wrote a hit piece on September 23, 2001, entitled "America at War: Conspiracy Enthusiasts – Some Blame Jews, Others Bush. Everyone Has a Theory on the Net." (Laughter) And early hit pieces focused a lot on the Middle East. They tried to say that there were—the people that questioned the 9/11 attacks only came from the Middle East, but there were many in America who questioned the attacks as well.

And as far as in 2006, when the media really couldn't ignore us anymore, as you said, they focused—they had guests on, that I considered to be the fringe of the "9/11 Truth Movement." They had people like Jim Fetzer, Webster Tarpley, Kevin Barrett, David von Kleist, Alex Jones, Morgan Reynolds, and for trying to paint us as anti-Semites, they had on Christopher Bollyn at one time. (Yeah)

And what they do is they take these individuals and they portray them, or they portray us, as being no different than these individuals. And, there are a lot of times before these people would go on television, you know, on 911blogger.com I—because TV time is so precious I used to beg them to talk about the families, to talk about the unanswered questions, to talk about the 9/11 Commission. In my mind, an author—because TV time was so precious—an author becomes an activist when they get on the television and you should use the best talking points possible to make our argument. And so many people, these individuals were used, they were essentially useful tools for the establishment to paint the "9/11 Truth Movement" as crazy conspiracy theorists and so forth. They would never have on family members and stuff like that.

Now, do you agree that—well, actually, Scott Ford wanted me to ask you about the class that you teach on 9/11 (Sure), so tell us a little bit about that.

MICKEY Well, it's a critical thinking course, I mean, and it involves the events of 9/11 in a historical context, while simultaneously looking at record-keeping, history in the making, the role of journalism, how we know what we know, why we know what we know, why we don't know certain things, or why a lot of people don't know things that people that have been researching more closely these subjects. Why can't they break through? Why don't the facts speak for themselves as you yourself have written.

And the course is really designed just to get people to think critically and to ask questions and to ask intelligent informed questions about very key issues and the recent past—in this case 9/11—and how it has affected us. (Right) When I'm teaching, I don't go into the class waving wands and banners "inside job," these kind of things (Laughter). Yeah, again, some people get this impression. It's either a 9/11 class that says that 19 hijackers hated our freedom; Islamic radicals hate our freedom. Or, it's inside job. And that's also part of the propaganda is that it's either/or. And it's a more complicated subject, as you well know, and so what I get into in the class is—we look at, and the students get to choose certain things that they want to investigate, and I tell them, of course, there is something very important to understand and that's the myth of the right answer. There's not always one answer. There's not always a perfectly right answer. Or some positions and some arguments are better than others based on evidence. And where evidence stops is, of course, where speculation then begins, but I caution people to stop with the evidence.

JON Well, what I generally tell people is to look at both sides of every argument, every argument that you hear in the "9/11 Truth Movement"—

MICKEY Or all six sides. This is what I argue. Let's look at all the sides. There's more than—

JON Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Look at every—see, when I used to play devil's advocate in the "9/11 Truth Movement," every time somebody would come up with a theory, and I would play devil's advocate, I would get so much shit for that, and, just like you talked about being criticized for not covering certain theories, I took the same kind of thing.

And I gotta tell you, one of the problems that the "9/11 Truth Movement" has, as a movement, and I'm guilty of this as well, is that we would contact journalists and angrily ask them: "Why aren't you covering this? Why aren't you covering that?" And because of that many journalists don't want to touch the issue anymore. Even journalists who used to report on issues, don't want to touch this anymore because they don't want to get blasted by the emails and so forth. And, to me, it's not an excuse to ignore the multitude of cover-ups concerning 9/11, but I do almost understand it.

MICKEY Well I can say, yeah, I've seen it first-hand and, frankly, I've seen it directed towards me and Peter Phillips, and at Project Censored and one of the things that I do, addressing Scott Ford's sort of what's going on in this class, question—one of the things I stress, particularly in the beginning of the term, is that how we communicate to others and each other is at least as important as what we're communicating. (Right) Because we're humans and we have emotional thinking, we have critical thinking, we have reactions—and when you're going after, not you personally, but when you're going after somebody with a big truth stick and you're very angry that other people won't unravel that and look at it and validate your concerns, that does enrage people. But it also makes people on the other end of that stick feel like they're being attacked.

And so I would argue that that's entirely counterproductive in terms of communicating. And what I've experienced is when I more soberly address critiques and questions in a macro way with some of these people in journalism or other professors and so forth is that they spend the first 5 or 10 minutes going off on a rampage about anecdotes of how many times they've been assaulted verbally from people. And it really wears on them. It really wears on them. And I know Bill Maher has railed on 9/11 Truth

because of hecklers and, I know to some degree, Howard Zinn who originally was a little supportive of some of David Ray Griffin's work, later sort of distanced himself. Some of that, again, it's the teeth. It's just people just can only handle being berated and attacked so long until they start to just see everybody that has a question about something like 9/11 is the same. And now we're back to the Alex Jones' problem, right? (Right)

And somehow the sober, intelligent, legitimately concerned citizens—certainly the people, the victims' families of 9/11—it gets drowned in the sin of our contentious bread and circus media culture, such that we have to spend some time with each other really unpacking that baggage and tearing down those walls to say, okay, let's go now. Let's have our little therapy session, and now when we're done with that, let's address some of the key facts, key issues, and key unanswered questions and let people in to the dialogue and conversation in a way that they feel they're in the driver's seat and you can socratically sort of say, okay, so what's your aversion to the subject. Let's forget about the personalities; let's forget about the people; let's forget about your personal experiences; tell me how you can make sense of—fill in the blank, Jon, right? (Right) The unanswered questions. The facts speak for themselves. Go through a list of things that we know. I mean, something that's so common as the forewarnings (Well—) right? Historical—go ahead—

JON What you're talking about is something that we would never see on the corporate television. We would never see an hour-long discussion (laughter)

—

MICKEY I laugh, but you're right.

JON We would never see an hour-long discussion with somebody like Paul Thompson, or Kevin Fenton, or even myself, talk about these issues and not allow the corporate media to frame it in a certain way—completely unedited. There was an interview years ago with Martin Luther King. He was on the Mike Douglas Show. And he had a chance to speak his views and make his arguments and so forth. You literally will not see that today.

And one thing I want to mention, Cindy Sheehan (Mmm-hmm) is a good friend of mine, she used to tell me how much she hated 9/11 Truthers because of how aggressive they were against her. And there was a time where she wanted nothing to do with it, and then something happened in the "9/11 Truth Movement"—somebody called her a wretched liar, I'm not

going to mention any names (Mm-hmm) and I emailed her and I said, look, this man is not representative of the "9/11 Truth Movement." We very much respect what you do. I apologize and so forth. And from that point on, Cindy and I, became great friends. And now, she's open to discussing the 9/11 issue. She's open to promoting the 9/11 issue when she speaks. And so, again, it goes back to how you approach people and so forth.

Now, I have a question. How many companies own the majority of the media in this country?

MICKEY In the United States, we're down to about five or six that control roughly 90 percent (90%) of the media. And when we say that, it's not just news media, it's the entertainment and infotainment complex. I mean, the same companies historically, we have major military industrial complex companies owning vast percentages of various media outlets. Ben Bagdikian who wrote *The Media Monopoly* in 1982—it's now in multiple editions later—Ben Bagdikian was the canary in the coal mine, so to speak. Dean of journalism at UC Berkeley back in the day, saying that oh my, we're down to 50 corporations that are controlling the media. (Laughs). (Right) I'm not laughing because it's funny. (No, I know)

We're down to five and it's amazing how little people seem to pay attention to this and—I mean, Phil Donahue, another talk show pioneer, along with Mike Douglas, Phil Donahue, who also by the way experienced the wrath of the nationalist post-9/11 climate that percolated through corporate America and the news media losing his show because he asked questions about the invasion of Iraq (Right). Totally unrelated factoid of 9/11, but you wouldn't know that if you were watching the corporate news media back then, or now, for that matter I suppose. But, Donahue hit the nail on the head a number of years ago when he said, yeah, I've got 500 channels and 400 of them are selling Bowflex machines and the others are selling jewelry and Jesus. (Laughs) And, I mean, it's—yeah, but because people have all these channels and all these alleged choices, right, they don't necessarily ask the critical questions about like who is putting this out there, what are we paying for? Who is arranging this to be so convenient for us to consume and what do they get out of it?

JON A lot of times the corporate media will accept talking points from the Government and portray it as news.

MICKEY Absolutely. It's commonplace, I'm afraid. So are video news releases, which are fake news stories done up from PR firms that hire actors to play journalists to read propaganda and then they send these tapes and these videos to news outlets in hopes that they will uncritically run them. And hundreds of times, Jon, they have run them. (Right, exactly) Literally.

JON I've heard stories before, Sibel Edmonds tried to contact somebody from *Newsweek*, and that person refused to talk to her. She's a 9/11 whistleblower. She has explosive information that if it ever got out—it's one of those things that the corporate media did not bring attention to that if it had ever gotten out, Americans would be outraged. And she just mentioned one instance of trying to contact somebody in *Newsweek* and they refused to talk with her.

Now, with regard to that issue I have a story from Bob McIlvaine, who's a 9/11 (Mmm-hm), family member. At one point, there was a reporter from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* who wanted to do a story with Bob, and the editor would not let the story run. And, eventually, this reporter quit from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and they called Bob to apologize because they really wanted to run that story.

Could you talk a little bit about that? Like, who has the say in corporate media as to what gets reported on and what doesn't? Where do those decisions get made?

MICKEY If you go back and look, one of the seminal works in this area of media literacy and propaganda that is particularly focusing on the United States was Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's *Manufacturing Consent*. That was from 1988. And, I know in the 9/11 movement, Chomsky's name often draws great ire because (hmm) well, why don't you address these issues? And why don't you—again, I think that the litmus testing that we talked about earlier that the notion that there are people in both Left and Libertarian circles that if you have a certain view on 9/11, that determines whether or not they'll ally with you. And within the 9/11 movement, they have another litmus test that if you won't say X about the Pentagon, then you're on the wrong side of the issues, and on and on and on.

JON Correct, it became cult-like. The "9/11 Truth Movement" became very cult-like.

MICKEY Yeah, very cult-like, and very tunnel-vision. But, again, I'm not into throwing babies out with bathwater here. I have critiqued Amy Goodman or Noam Chomsky on some issues and I have agreed with them on many, many others, and I can at least acknowledge where people have contributed intellectually and culturally in very positive ways, I think, overall. And I don't think it's fair that we can just litmus test people on one issue and discard them. And I do think that's also what draws contempt for particular movements and outlets, both alike. (Right) And that's what I think is important—to cut through.

So, back to the question of who makes these decisions. Well, manufacturing consent is literally a term that's taken from the 1920s—Walter Lippmann, Edward Bernays, Freud's nephew—these folks were really instrumental in selling World War I to the American public, and engineering consent was one of the terms that comes out of that period. In other words, the modern Democratic theory in the early 20th century, it was that, well, we have more and more people voting and participating in society to the progressive era; we have more and more people that want to be part of Government and so forth. That's fine, but the munitions industries, the banks, and established powers, well, how are we going to control the masses? Going back to the founding of the United States, Alexander Hamilton was, basically, look at the rabble, how can we deal with these ignorant people? Democracy will never work. We'd have to tell people what to do and think because they're too stupid and ignorant to do it on their own.

Well, that's where manufacturing consent comes from. And that's the idea that well, if you just control the range of opinion and control the flow of information, then you can ultimately attenuate the outcomes of public opinion that then maybe steered toward supporting policy X or policy Y. When prior to the steering and controlling of that information the public may have had a very different view about policy X or policy Y.

JON Well, obviously, this is extremely dangerous. It's an extremely dangerous practice, and—my belief is that the media outlets in this country need to be broken up into hundreds of different companies, forcing them to compete for the best story.

MICKEY I would argue they need to be broken up into a series of non-profits. I mean, this is one of the big problems with news media, and if you look at the propaganda model that was put forward by Chomsky and Herman in *Manufacturing Consent*, their book, in 1988, it has five significant

components about what controls news media and information flow. And the first is ownership. In a capitalistic economy the idea that news is based on competition for profit creates serious problems because it means the bottom line matters more than the facts. (Right) Or what the "truth" might be about a particular issue. And when you compound ownership and private profit with advertising, which is the way most media companies make their money, then you've got to be careful that you're promoting the people that are advertising their products and services on your shows—which, by the way, are supposedly on the public airways, right? (Right) The Communications Act of 1934, says that the airways belong to the public, yet we have five corporations that control 90 percent (90%) of the information and the media that is going out to the public. So it's a complete oxymoron. It's a complete propaganda ploy.

JON They've also done away with what's called the Fairness Doctrine.

MICKEY 1987, that got axed. Now the Fairness Doctrine used to mandate that there were equal time for different candidates and that got disappeared in the Reagan years, and that then led to the rise of A.M. right-wing radio, which dominates across the U.S. almost 90 percent (90%) of the talk-radio programming in particularly small communities around the U.S. is piped in, is right-wing radio.

And I want to say something here—just very, very quickly, as a footnote. Possibly, a disclaimer. I don't consider myself a right-wing person, but I want to say that I don't personally have problems with people that have right-wing ideologies. My problem is when people act like their ideology is the only ideology. And I have a bigger problem with news media outlets that pretend they are objective when, in fact, they are entirely ideological operators. (Right) All the main big fives—the Disney, the Viacom, the News Corp, and so forth—they have a clear ideological perspective, and it's not necessarily Republican or Democrat as you'll see on Fox and MSNBC. It's pro-capitalism. And it's not a free market, and it's not a fair market. It's dominating a market. And it's dominating the so-called marketplace of ideas. And when you couple the ownership and advertising issue, that's a serious means by which information can be wittled, funneled, controlled, omitted, etc.

And then you add to that the other elements of the propaganda model, which includes sourcing—only relying on official sources? (Right) Well, that totally crowds out the people that are involved in the society, the

vernacular views, the bottom-up views, the grassroots views, bringing Howard Zinn back into this. The people's history, right? We need the people's media, Jon. And the people's media isn't on CNN. And it's not on Fox, and MSNBC, and ABC and so forth, and all these other channels. The people's media is something like Pacifica, right? It's a community based media.

And so I don't want to get into ideological fights with people by saying right-wingers or left-wingers—these kinds of things. (No, I mean—) Yeah, I think like you said before, you called it a false paradigm. And I think people get really ensconced in this distraction.

But the part of the propaganda model that I was just mentioning—sourcing—is very significant. The news media that rely only on official sources, they're like stenographers for people in power.

JON Exactly. They also fight for what's called "access."

MICKEY Yeah, if you write a story that's critical of one of your sources, they'll talk to your "competitor." But I always say the competition is a ruse. I mean that whole idea that these groups are competing is—I mean, that's propaganda in and of itself. That's what's used to make people feel like this is really competitive. They're definitely going to scoop each other and da-da-da. They're going to tell us what's really going on because that's how they make their money. No, nonsense. These are all people that hobnob with powerful people. They eat in the same restaurants. They hang out at the same meetings. In some cases, at some news outlets, they literally have people there that are married to people that are in powerful positions so they don't disclose. All kinds of stuff like this goes on.

So sourcing is a real serious problem, biased and newsfeed that a lot of people don't pay attention to, unfortunately.

And then the last couple points in the propaganda model, one's called flack and the other ideology. Well, we already addressed ideological bias. And in the United States where it masquerades as donkeys and elephants, it's really about bottom line and is about controlling markets and controlling profits for shareholders. Corporations are required through their charters, by law, to do what is necessary to maximize the profits of their investors. That clearly competes with the need to tell people, as George Seldes said, what's really going on. Because if it goes against the profit motive, then the people

that make those decisions can be removed from leaderly roles in the corporation. So, we have the owners, the advertisers, we then—of course that trickles all the way down through the editors and so forth.

And I want to underscore one key point about this propaganda model. Flack, by the way, is feedback, boycotts. There are ways in which people at news media outlets can be influenced or pressured to report or not report certain things. So there are several different things that work together through the propaganda model. But the thing is that a lot of folks when you ask journalists—there's the "folks" word again, sorry, can't use it (laughs)—a lot of people in journalism, they'll say well, nobody tells me what to report. Nobody tells me. (Right) Jim Lehrer was just saying this not long ago about PBS news. Nobody's ever told me what to do or what to report.

Or, what a lot of people don't know is that PBS, even though it's "public broadcasting," the Lehrer News Hour, the flagship news program on that show, was basically privately owned and funded by Liberty Media, which was a conservative, organization, and so in other words, Jim Lehrer doesn't need to be told what to report or what not to report per se. Jim Lehrer is an intelligent person. He knows what he can and can't necessarily get away with saying. And particularly not—look, Lehrer's more like a superstar in the news media, right? These personalities and so forth. You take your rank and file journalist at this shrinking jobs that consolidation's brought, and deregulation has brought, which has gotten us down to five behemoth corporations that own 95 percent (95%) of the media, you don't need to tell these young journalists what to report and not report. If you're reporting and writing about something and your editor doesn't publish it, how long do you think that's going to happen before you lose your job, Jon? (Not very long) And covering controversial issues is always problematic.

JON Well, this brings us to a topic that I want to talk about. There were journalists who would report on some of the unanswered questions of 9/11 and some of the inconsistencies of 9/11. One person in particular, Robert Scheer wrote an article for the *Los Angeles Times* called "What We Don't Know About 9/11 Hurts Us" and just a few months later he was fired.

MICKEY Yeah, he's not working at the *LA Times* anymore. (Laughs)

JON No, he started Truthdig.com (Yes, I know) And I think there are other instances where journalists who tried to do the right thing were let go. And

we talked about Phil Donahue and so forth, but I mean, that was also one of the reasons—

MICKEY You can go down the list, I mean, with so many of these people. Ya know, Sharyl Attkisson, Kristina Borjesson, Peter Arnett, the embedded reporters in the so-called wars and so forth. I mean there is a serious effort to control what people are saying, what journalists are allowed to report. There are military censors; there are corporate media censors; there are other Government censors. I mean, it's patently absurd, to be frank, that many in the public just don't realize how many controls there are on the information. And it is exactly as you say, Jon, the very people that often try to call that out or point that out or point to the things that the media ought to be covering and doing, they might not be long for those particular pedestals, outlets, or megaphones.

One good thing about the Internet so far is that people like Scheer can go out and start his own kind of online publication and attract enough of viewers that want to know things that these folks want to say at Truthdig that they're able to continue and they're able to keep going.

But this gets back to the problem of the competition and the profits and so forth. And I'd argue that the non-profit model, the community based model (Right), like higher education, we have tenure for professors and even though some will say, well, tenure's abused and so on. But tenure is very important for academics because it protects academics' freedom. And journalists really need to have the same kind of freedom to report the things they see without the fear of retaliation that takes many forms. And, of course, this takes serious forms. You look in our last book *Censored 2014: Fearless Speech in Fateful Times*, the onslaught against whistleblowers; the deaths of journalists around the globe. This is all escalating. This is all increasing in the post-9/11 environment. (Absolutely) And I think that people need to be made much more aware of this and really get more involved in citizen's journalism and supporting journalists (Right) that really try to do the right thing.

JON People like Abby Martin and so forth.

MICKEY Yes, Abby is on our board and has a wonderful show "Breaking the Set" on RT. Now a lot of folks knee-jerk that right out of the gate and say, oh that's *Russia Today*; that's propaganda, Putin, Russian parliament funded. And I say, yeah, that's great, but who do you think funds *The New York Times*?

Who do you think funds CNN? (Right) Do you think there's nobody behind that that has an interest involved? And so I say to people—

JON Well it just—

MICKEY You know what I say to people—back to the critical thinking class—is that yeah, that's fancy, that's wonderful, please pay attention to that. But, take a look at the subjects, the topics, the guests, the facts, and the arguments and THEN if there is an obvious bias, an obvious problem and a conflict of interest, yes, then that is very relevant. But, if you go through case-by-case and you take a look at who Abby Martin has on her program, including us, or Nafeez Ahmed, and so many other people that don't get the attention of *The New York Times* or CNN and so forth, has to make you wonder, has to make you wonder. Then why are people not being involved by being invited on these shows? Well, we know why, Jon. It's because these corporate news media outlets will not tolerate people that are criticizing this political economy issue, who are criticizing the blatant biases that go on in news media. They're just, they pretend they don't exist. And a show like Abby's, "Breaking the Set" really, I think, hits whereas—it's like a Who's Who of who should be a part of the public debate about what's going on, who most people never hear of.

JON Right. Now, I want to—I brought up Abby for a reason (Yeah). You know, I coined the phrase 9/11 Truther and, unfortunately, because of how it's been tarnished over the years I now refer to myself as an advocate for 9/11 justice. But let me—I want to read the definition that I wrote for the phrase 9/11 Truther.

"In my mind a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights alongside the family members seeking truth and accountability for the 9/11 attacks. In my mind a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights for the sick and dying 9/11 first responders who need healthcare desperately. In my mind a 9/11 Truther is someone who does not like how the day of 9/11 is being used to inflict pain and suffering around the world and is trying to stop it, stop it by using the truth, something that we have been denied by our Government regarding the 9/11 attacks."

Now, that's the definition of a 9/11 Truther. I get to say that because I coined the phrase. Now, unfortunately, because of the corporate media's coverage of the—or the corporate media's attacks against 9/11 Truthers, they've essentially made a 9/11 Truther the equivalent of—

MICKEY It's a term of mockery.

JON Yeah, they've made it the equivalent of a baby killer or a dog torturer. If you even, oh my God! A 9/11 Truther!

Now Abby recently, she spoke out against Russia's actions in the Ukraine and she got a lot of flack for that. But one of the things that they did (Yeah) is they went through her history and saw her activism with 9/11 and tried to use that against her. And we've seen that in many cases. (Absolutely) Van Jones, do you remember him?

MICKEY I remember well. I remember well.

JON I'm not saying I'm a fan of Van Jones, but you know he signed this 9/11 Truth statement years ago. And they used that against him to get him out of the Obama administration. How many times have we seen, let's talk about celebrities. Every time a celebrity has come out and spoken on behalf of 9/11—Rosie O'Donnell (Mmm-hmm), Willie Nelson, Heather Thomas, Charlie Sheen, who I don't like, but whatever—every time someone like that has spoken out, the corporate media went into attack mode. (Of course!) And it—

I wrote an article years ago—I don't remember the title. It was something like "Recording mainstream media attacks in unison are hard." Just recording mainstream media attacks just happen to take place in unison. And it's across all networks that these people get attacked.

MICKEY It's very coordinated and the term has propagandistically been transformed quite successfully by the establishment and corporate media. I don't call it mainstream media, Jon, because I think you and I and—(Yeah, we're the mainstream) are the mainstream, and they're the corporate media. They're the media that has their agenda and our media, I think Jon, needs to have the people's agenda. And that's why we need to have these kinds of conversations. And that's why Peter Phillips and I have the show on KPFA Pacifica Radio once a week. I think that's what we need to be doing. We need to counter that. Corporate news media is irrelevant. I think. Other than being a propaganda arm of the state and the—the corporate state, to be more specific. And I think that we need to be aware of that. (Right) And they have successfully. You're correct, Jon, they have successfully turned the word TRUTH into a tarnishing term. And, boy, I have to say that

is a travesty. (Yes it is) That the very thing that is pure about human existence to seek wisdom and seek understanding and compassion is part of a process of truth. The great Indian poet Robert Dranoff Tagore once wrote that truth comes as a conqueror only to those who have lost the art of receiving it as a friend. The truth meaning, the process of coming to reasonable, temporary conclusions based on facts, based on evidence, right?

And what has happened is our Government and the corporate news media have literally turned that very term, described that process, into a negative pejorative attack. (Yep) And that—that is at the core of the propaganda organ. That is ultimately the way to control public opinion. Because you don't want to find yourself on the receiving end of that kind of attack, now do you, Jon?

JON No you don't, because look what happens. You lose your job and so on and so forth.

MICKEY And you lose your credibility and so forth.

JON Yeah, you lose your credibility—you lose your following—

MICKEY Yeah, yeah. It is a sickeningly devious attempt that, again, it pains me greatly to see otherwise thoughtful, caring people on whatever side of the political spectrum buy it, fall for it. And anytime that you're somebody uttering the term conspiracy theorist as a pejorative label, it has already told me enough about that person. Nothing much about the person or movements they may be attacking. It's told me they are intellectually lazy. They are potentially dishonest. And that they are not interested in having open dialogue. They're interested in attacking people to bolster their own position or status.

JON Right. Well one of the problems with demonizing people who question 9/11 is that it's very difficult to get people who have a voice, who have a following, to even address the issue anymore because of the fact that they're afraid of the backlash that they'll receive.

MICKEY Oh we've addressed it every year. It's been in our books for years. We've addressed it repeatedly. We're sure we've lost some support, from foundations, and so forth. A couple of people have quit as national judges of Project Censored. Out of the many people that have been judges, including Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn, only two people resigned as

judges of our stories, over 9/11 stories—Norman Solomon was one of them. Who, by the way, has since said that he thinks we may need to look into it again and so on. Who knows?

But my point is that you're right about that. There has been a tarnishing affect. But we focus on the media coverage of it and the lack of information that comes out through the corporate media about these types of events. Next week we're doing a 9/11 show yet again. (Right) We're participating in the 9/11 Film Festival in Oakland, not because we agree with everything that every movie there says, but because it's a key place that people in the community can go in and talk about these things and not feel attacked, and not feel threatened. And we're going to have Nafeez Ahmed on. Coming up here this week who obviously will be talking about post-9/11 related issues. We have Shahid Buttar coming on from the Bill of Rights Defense Committee in a couple weeks talking about post-9/11 civil liberties issues. These are real issues connected to 9/11 and we cannot be afraid to address these issues or else we are throwing in the towel for the next generation.

JON

Well, I'm going to address a few things right now that you made me think of. Things that are omitted by the media. Things that are absolutely ignored by the media and—before we get into this, everybody should know that each time one of these things has happened, there's been mass email campaigns to different corporate media outlets informing them that these things are happening. So, it's not like they don't know they're happening. They just choose arbitrarily to ignore them. And—yeah, I'm going to go over a list of things that I believe are newsworthy events that happened that the news media completely ignored. And, one of the things are the many conventions we've had over the years, the very first, or one of the very first, was the 9/11 Omission Hearings, which took place in New York City on September 9, 2004, a few months after the release of the 9/11 report that was chaired by then former representative Cynthia McKinney. They had a multitude of family members speaking. They had authors and researchers speaking. There were hundreds of people in the room. And nobody covered that. And there were many examples of that from many different conferences over the years.

Now another few things that have been completely ignored by the media, unless it's an attack piece, the different Zogby Polls that 9/11Truth.org commissioned over the years. Those were completely ignored. The only polls that ever seem to get any attention were the ones that were run by

CBS or *The New Times*. That talked about conspiracy theories and stuff like that.

The 9/11 Congressional briefing that took place in July of 2005 that was chaired by then Representative Cynthia McKinney—she won her seat back. And The Jersey Girls—Lorie Van Auken, Mindy Kleinberg, Monica Gabrielle, the September 11th Advocates. They testified at this hearing and —The September 11th Advocates, The Jersey Girls, they, during the time of the 9/11 Commission, they were on TV all the time. And, we had this thing where in this country we should support the 9/11 Family Members and so forth, but after the release of the 9/11 report when the myth was written in stone, when The Jersey Girls would speak out, they were almost entirely ignored. They released so many press releases over the years calling into question this or that—and I'm going to give you two examples, and remember the word "newsworthy" okay? When I read these.

This is the first one. It's from August 4, 2006, it's called "9/11 Widows Issue Statement Regarding Pentagon Deception and 9/11 Commission."

"The fact the Commission did not see fit to tie up all loose ends in their final report or to hold those who came before them accountable for lying and/or making misleading statements, puts into question the veracity of the entire Commission's Report. Individuals who came before the commission to testify after NORAD's appearance had no reason to state the truth. It was abundantly clear that there would be no repercussions for any misrepresentations." And they finished their statement by saying that the "9/11 Commission was derelict in its duties. What we needed from them was a thorough investigation into the events of September 11th. Inexcusably, five years later we still do."

MICKEY Yeah, that's inexcusable. You're correct.

JON And nobody, nobody covered that. I mean, this is something, to me, that should have been plastered across the television screens across the country. And never did.

MICKEY Again, you're right. There are decisions that were made by people in very high places to report the press releases from the Commission. (Okay--) I mean, look, it's so amazing that there are even people associated with the

Commission itself who have publicly stated that the Commission itself was a white wash. It was a cover-up. John Farmer comes to mind, Dean of Law at Rutgers University. The former legal counsel to the Commission. I mean it's really riveting in a lot of ways. The two main commissioners, Kean and Hamilton, have discussed the problems and how they don't know, and how we really don't know. It reminds me, painfully, of the 1970s when the Congress basically had the United States House Select Committee on Assassinations and so on and they basically said, yeah, that Kennedy thing, that Warren Commission Report, that hmmm, that's got a lot of problems. We don't think it's very accurate, but we don't know what to do about it, so move along. Nothing to see here. These aren't the droids you're looking for. [Laughs] Here we are at 9/11—here we are (Right) where there are ample statements from people both involved with the Commission and outside, including the victims' families that are saying, we're still waiting for an actual investigation.

JON

I want to read the second press release from The Jersey Girls, the September 11th Advocates. And this was written on February 4, 2008, after the allegations from Phil Shenon's book "The Commission" came out that said Karl Rove was speaking to Philip Zelikow—the idea that he may have been taking direction from Karl Rove came out—and they came out with a statement and it was titled "September 11th Advocates Comment on the Impending Release of Philip Shenon's Book."

"Why when this Congressionally mandated commission could have done much to fix the fatal flaws in our Government by conducting a real investigation and making vital recommendations, would they instead allow it to become a sham. This investigation was meant to fix the loopholes that allowed our country to be so vulnerable. Why would they choose instead to succumb to political machinations? What would we find out if a real investigation into September 11, 2001 were ever done? The bottom line is that the most deadly attack on American soil, since Pearl Harbor, remains dangerously unexamined. This can only be remedied with an investigation guided by the facts and conducted outside the reach of those with a vested interest in suppressing the truth."

Again, another press release from The Jersey Girls that should have been splattered across the TV screens across the country—and I want to go

through a couple of other things really fast—the release of "9/11 Press for Truth." That was completely ignored by the media.

MICKEY Yeah, you don't see that—you don't see that in the 9/11 Museum—excuse me, I'm—[laughs]

JON This is a film—you will not see "9/11 Press for Truth" at the 9/11 Museum. When it was released we had a mass campaign, sending out emails to different corporate media outlets; we gave a copy to each and every member of the House and the Senate; and nobody in the corporate media covered this. And this was The Jersey Girls calling into question—it destroyed the legitimacy of the 9/11 Commission, in my opinion, and it was completely ignored. It was not ignored by movie critics, which all gave it favorable reviews, but it was ignored by the corporate media, and around the time of the release of "9/11 Press for Truth" 9/11 Family Members, Donna Marsh O'Connor, Christina Kminek, and Michele Little, got together along with Kyle Hence and Paul Thompson at the National Press Club on September 11, 2006, to call for a new investigation. Only one media outlet in the country covered that, and it was a small town, I forget which it was—it was just one news article that was written about that.

Now, in the latter part of 2006, the September 11th Advocates, or The Jersey Girls, wrote a petition calling for the release of pertinent documentation regarding the 9/11 attacks. I think one of the things was a July 10, 2001 meeting between Cofer Black and Condoleezza Rice. Another was the CIA Inspector General's report, and the final thing that they asked for was for the release of the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry. We got 17,000 signatures and not one media outlet in the country covered this effort.

And there have been many efforts over the years by the families to bring attention to the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. And, it's funny, because in the beginning we were told to support the families. And, instead, over time we were told that when we do this, when we're questioning the 9/11 attacks or whatever, that we were somehow dishonoring the family members. And we heard that repeatedly by the corporate media. And I can't think of anything more dishonoring of the family members than ignoring them, when they're trying to get real truth, accountability, and justice. That's what I used to tell people when they were told that you're dishonoring the family members is to throw it right back in their faces and say, this

happened, that happened, the family members tried to do this—you didn't cover that. Why are you dishonoring them?

MICKEY --five percent of their questions. Yeah, 75 percent of their questions were never even asked let alone answered. We could go on about that.

JON Lorie Van Auken and Mindy Kleinberg wrote a report in September 2006, that showed how poorly the 9/11 Commission answered their questions. Again, something completely ignored by the media.

MICKEY Well, I have to say, that the purpose of "official commissions" in Government—I mean, the purpose in Machiavellian fashion is to create a narrative and use that narrative and put to bed questions. It's not to necessarily seek out the truth or to investigate all avenues. I mean, we even know this from listening to some of the commissioners who said well, we were never allowed to see that. Or these agencies would not give us these documents. (Right) So the erection of the Commission is political theater in many ways. And, attacking people that support the victims' families is another way of trying to own politically the message of the families. As you'll recall, there was no politician, really not too many politicians that weren't gaming to get photo ops at so-called ground zero. (Right) Only to kick the first responders to the curb for a decade thereafter. I mean even up to the present.

JON That's another thing, they completely ignored all of the good work that the "9/11 Truth Movement" did for the 9/11 first responders. We were the only group that was trying to support them, that was trying to bring attention to their issues, that was trying to get them healthcare—

MICKEY Well, until Jon Stewart, right? [Laughs]

JON Yeah, exactly, Jon Stewart, he was the hero of everything. Even though we tried for YEARS and years to bring attention to their issue.

MICKEY I would argue, it's interesting—that example is interesting because notice that if we DO use the big megaphone and the platform to rally people to just causes, they respond. Because it was, once many people were reminded of this travesty, per Jon Stewart on a comedy program (Right), that people mobilized and pressured Congress to do something.

So, I mean, this is exactly why the media is controlled, Jon. Because once people understand what's going on, people, general every day regular folks like us, we react, we respond, we are not operating under the edict of corporate profit or global dominance (Right). We are operating as human beings that want justice and want truth and want to help each other. And, corporate media—let's look at that word corporate for a minute—if that technology was used in a way that addressed the injustices of the world, well, we would have far fewer of them now, wouldn't we? (Absolutely) It's an incredibly powerful medium. How it's used, unfortunately matters. And who controls the levers of that machine matters even more. (Right) And, We The People, Jon, don't control CNN and Fox. All we can do is control our remotes, by turning them off. (Exactly) Stop listening to their propaganda. Stop buying their products. Stop buying their messages and become more involved in local, independent media, citizen journalism, and use critical thinking and media literacy skills.

Which is, again, what Project Censored over the years has been combatting—censorship and propaganda—and this is a message we hit home. We have hundreds of students and faculty on over 20 campuses across the United States, and what we want to do is really create this kind of curriculum (Right), where people have the opportunity to learn why it's not in their interest to watch these programs. I say "programs" purposely [Laughs], because they are brand names.

JON One thing I want to get into is how desperate the media got over the years. It was like blatantly obvious how desperate they were to destroy or discredit anyone questioning the 9/11 attacks. You remember when somebody interrupted Bill Clinton and said, "9/11 was an inside job!" and he said, "How dare you!" At the time, Bill O'Reilly said, "Clear thinking Americans must condemn the fascists (the 9/11 Truthers) and actively oppose the anarchy they embrace. Your children are getting this craziness in school, and it's 24/7 on the Net. Only public opinion and criminal proceedings against the loons will clamp them down. Let those actions begin in earnest."

MICKEY Spoken like a true fascist. That's what fascism sounds like, Jon. [Laughs] (Right) That tacky.

JON I want to get to—

MICKEY And don't forget George W. Bush—let's not tolerate outlandish conspiracy theories about the 9/11 events, right?

JON Concerning the 9/11 attacks [Laughs] yeah, exactly. It seems the media—

MICKEY That's propaganda out of the gate.

JON The corporate media followed his advice it seemed over the years.

Now, I want to continue with how the media has treated us. Now, they had moved to the point, or they did move to the point where they were actually trying to paint us as murderers, as dangerous, murdering people, like psychopaths. And there are many instances of this. And I wrote an article that 9/11 truth has always been non-violent and I suggest people read it. It's available at: 911TruthNews.com

But, they literally, they tried to paint us as murderers. There was something—we had a Treason in American Conference in March 2010, in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, and two different media outlets showed up—ABC and RT. The reason—well, I'll get into this—the reason that ABC came there, there was a recent guy who shot some bullets at the Pentagon. He was called "the Pentagon shooter." And, apparently, maybe he had written something about 9/11 online, and ABC was there to try and paint us all as dangerous as the Pentagon shooter. And I'm going to read two different quotes from two different articles.

One is from OnlyInPhiladelphia.com and that was called, "TV Media Info Wars Strikes at Valley Forge 9/11 Truth Conference" and it was by Nate Graham on March 9, 2010.

"Perhaps there truly is no such thing as objective journalism anymore. TV news media organizations have their own slant on every televised story. Unbeknownst to myself at the time, two separate TV news organizations, Russia Today (RT) and ABC News arrived to cover the same 9/11 Truth Conference here in suburban Philadelphia, but with different agendas."

And Coleen Rowley, 9/11 whistleblower, she came there to speak and she was attacked by ABC and she wrote an article called, "Baring the Truth, Nightline Reporter Channels Bill O'Reilly and does a hatchet job." And this is from May 10, 2010.

"When young, smiling female producer Katie Herman identified herself as being with ABC and asked for an interview, I had only just arrived at the conference, so although I was a little surprised that the Nightline TV crew was there, I immediately consented to an interview before anyone had a chance to warn me that the TV show was trying to concoct a connection between the conference and the mentally ill young man who had been killed a few days before while shooting at the Pentagon guard."

They came there literally to paint us as murderers. And I want to say something, there are quite literally millions of people who question what we were told about 9/11, millions and millions of people. Whether or not they're active is another story, but there are millions. And polls over the years have shown this. If there are ten murderers and psychopaths who wrote something about 9/11 on the Internet out of millions of people, that doesn't mean that millions of people who question 9/11 are murderers and psychopaths. And, unfortunately, that hasn't stopped the corporate media from using those individuals to paint us as such.

There was a Holocaust Museum shooter who killed somebody. He went into the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C., and Glenn Beck got on TV and said that he was a hero of the "9/11 Truth Movement." And this is what it's come to. This is why people—they squirm when they hear people talk about 9/11. They literally have been trained to stay away from the issue.

MICKEY Well, I can't disagree with you, Jon. And, I do this, in addition to teaching critical thinking and political economy, I also of course teach modern U. S. history and I tell students to scroll over the last pages of the book. Go over the last chapter. How does it end? In other words, how do historians cover 9/11, and already, right, in the last several years, already, the narrative has gelled. This is the same narrative, by the way, as the Fox News man-on-the-street gave the day of 9/11 (Right).

That ended up essentially being the thesis of the 9/11 Zelikow Commission's and sits today now in stone, basically, in the history books because the questions, the unanswered questions, the controversies—all the things that we've been talking about, the

things Project Censored has been covering since our Censored 2003 book, these are just written out of the historical narrative, Jon, so that subsequent generations of people will not be given the opportunity to think critically and ask questions about these issues, because they're not on the test. (Right)

And this is how propaganda works on so many multiple simultaneous levels and layers. And that's what needs to be regularly deconstructed. And I—you mentioned Pearl Harbor before, and I'm not going to veer off historically through all the serious problems from the Mexican-American War, the Spanish-American War, WWI, Pearl Harbor, Gulf of Tonkin—fill in the blanks—the lies that lead to wars, WMDs, etc. but the Pearl Harbor event is interesting because everybody talks about Pearl Harbor so they know exactly what it means, even though the U.S. Army in 1944, issued a report saying the attack should have been prevented and were known about in advance.

We now see Roosevelt documents and Simpson documents, the Secretary of War—that's back when we were more honest about what we called these people. They show them having these conversations about needing to let these things happen to mobilize public support for war and so on. Yet, even when you see acclaimed historians and documentarians like Ken Burns at PBS and so forth, they just brush right over it, and still call it a sneak attack. There's no history of the 50 years of hostility between the U.S. and Japan. There's no talk about the oil embargoes. There's no talk about the reality of what actually is going on there. It's like a sacred historical cow. It's such an important propaganda victory in our historical narrative of official stories, that the Bush administration immediately likened 9/11 to Pearl Harbor, which I thought was, whoa, wait a minute, man, do you really mean that? (Right) Because if you really mean that, it means you did ignore the warnings and you did want it to happen. (Exactly)

And if you do read over the Project for the New American Century, ending up in the Bush administration, well, they talked about needing a new Pearl Harbor in order to invade seven countries. And, by the way, Obama has helped fulfill the prophecy of the Project for New American Century by invading all of these countries that they had outlined. And absent a catalyzing and catastrophic event, like a

new Pearl Harbor, it will likely be difficult to carry out these global ambitions for global dominance. And here we are, 13 years later, Republican, Democrat, doesn't matter on that count, we are in fact the global hegemon, and anybody who questions it: Remember 9/11.

Just this last week, Isis—I keep waiting for Shazam to come out too—but Isis, right, it poses a threat greater than 9/11. I mean, they're still using this Pavlovian fear button over 9/11.

JON Which shows just how important it is to point out the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. To take away their playing card.

MICKEY That's a conservative statement. Yeah, that's a very conservative statement. I know some people hear that and they say: "oh my God, that's crazy talk." Look, the basic facts are that we were lied to about 9/11. That's what the facts show. (Right) The facts are that the public has not been given fair, open, honest, fact-based treatment about 9/11. It has been invoked relentlessly by both Democrats and Republicans as a bludgeon to beat the public into submission through fear, and it continues to be that way, and unless and until we continue to call out the incredible historical pattern of lies and deceit, right, by Government. Remember, I.F. Stone, all Governments lie... (Right) and this is the thing—that we need to focus, and we need to say let's reconstruct these events. And even if we don't bog down in the minutia of the Pentagon, or Building 7, or—remember the Anthrax attacks? Most people don't. We can, at the very least, look at the Commission as the pinnacle of the officializing of those lies.

JON Well there's an old expression that it's not the crime that gets you, it's the cover-up. And the 9/11 Commission itself and its report is literally the cover-up.

MICKEY It is.

JON And so by pointing out the ridiculousness of the 9/11 Commission—I mean, people think that 9/11 was investigated, and unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth. There were investigations but they all had their own version of compromise and corruption.

And Mickey, I very much appreciate you coming on my show to talk about this issue. I want to try to wrap it up. We've already been talking for an hour and a half now.

One last question. How do we deal with this issue overall?

MICKEY I think, Jon, the way to do it is where we started. We need to talk to each other about overarching issues of how official narratives permeate our culture. We need to reinforce the idea that questioning our Government, questioning our corporate institutions that lord over us in the globe. We need to stop tacitly and unthoughtfully supporting these organizations. We need to turn off corporate media. We need to think for ourselves, think critically, think independently, become more media literate, and become more compassionate with each other the way that we communicate our concerns and our issues with each other. And we need to not only be compassionate and critical thinkers and communicators, we need to be compassionate and critical listeners. And we need to give people the space that they need to feel secure, that they can come to their own conclusions. And if you give people the facts, and if you listen to them come back at you and you have this ongoing dialogue, everything doesn't need to be fit into a two-minute sound bite, and all issues in the world aren't going to be solved over dinner.

By the way, I would like to say that that's also an idea though. It's nice to share fellowship with people. We need to take the community and really insert this community element back into this. We need to not just sit around on Facebook and we need to be having Face Time. We need to go out and talk to each other as human beings and look at each other and earn respect for each other. By peddling truths and facts with transparent sourcing.

And I think that's the real way forward. And I think that when we pay attention as much as how we communicate to each other as what we're communicating to each other, I think we can really build mutual symbiotic audiences that resonate as a true, small "d" Democratic community that really wants to move forward under the principles ensconced in the U.S. Constitution and, particularly, the Bill of Rights.

Particularly, about free speech and expression and assembly, and petitions and grievances, the right to bear arms, the right to not be imposed upon by Government, the right to be secure in your person, and the rights to privacy, the right to due process, the right to transparent jury trials, the right to be free from torture and cruel and unusual punishment, and the rights of states and local Governments to decide things that the federal Government has no business deciding.

I just rattled off the ten amendments that are the Bill of Rights. And if we really believe in these ideas, Jon, then the way to move forward is by actually practicing them. These are verbs, not abstract concepts. If we do not do these things, we do not have them. And if we don't think for ourselves, somebody else will gladly do it for us.

JON There's an expression, you better take an interest in politics before politics takes an interest in you.

MICKEY --an interest in you. I tell that to my students every semester, Jon.

JON Well, thank you very much Mickey Huff for coming on today. Are there any websites you want to promote?

MICKEY Sure. ProjectCensored.org. You can follow us on Facebook, the NSA and CIA surely do. We're at Project Censored on Facebook. Andy Lee Ross, our associate director and I just finished *Censored 2015: Inspiring We The People*, with a forward by Ralph Nader and cartoons, once again, by Kahlil van Deeb. We are mostly a donor-supported organization. We don't get a lot of grants and foundation support because of the kind of questions we ask and the stories we support. And we recently won a whistleblower—the Pillar Award in Washington, D.C. for our Persons of Conscious in New Media and Journalism—we're very honored to be working with whistleblowers and truth tellers. Thank you so much, Jon.

And we'd like to open up our organizations to all the people that have their stories to tell and their under-reported stories, and we'd like to help do it together. So, we'd certainly like to hear from people. They can contact us through Facebook Project Censored. They can go to ProjectCensored.org and show a screening of our film in your community—Project Censored the Movie. Go to

ProjectCensoredtheMovie: Ending the Reign of Junk Food News. You can go to ProjectCensoredtheMovie.com. You can go to the Project Censored website and see that.

And start this dialogue. Start the dialogue about how media is the root of some of these serious problems of communication we have, and then insert your issue. Then open up a discussion. Have a weekly discussion with people in your community. Right? Use Project Censored as a leap, as sort of a springboard into the conversation. Next week let's talk about how media covers Gaza and Israel. After that, why don't we have a meeting on how the media covers—we could have whole hour and a half shows on all of this as you know. What about 9/11? What about the wars in Iraq? What about Isis? What about this? What about religious freedom? What about pensions being sold off to Wall Street and losing money in New Jersey and Rhode Island? What about the reform education movement? We could fill in the blanks forever. And I tell people, take the issue you care about. Take the issues that hit for you. Check out how it's covered in the corporate media and, all of a sudden, you've got your number two topic ready to go. Because if we don't address the problems of media and propaganda in this country, and in the world, we can't really further our own other interests and causes because the communication is controlled.

JON Right. All right, Mickey, thank you very much for coming on today and I will look forward to having you on again.

MICKEY My pleasure, Jon, any time, and we'll return the favor on KPFA. So, thanks again for all you do. And thanks to you and Cindy Sheehan for the Soapbox. It's been my pleasure to be on.

JON All right, thanks a lot, Mickey.

MICKEY Absolutely.

JON Bye bye.

JON One thing that I neglected to mention during the show is the fact that the corporate media started to attack the 9/11 Family Members who are asking questions and seeking real accountability and justice. People like Glenn Beck, Rush Limbaugh, and most famously, Ann

Coulter. Ann Coulter viciously attacked The Jersey Girls in a book of hers and the corporate media gave her a tremendous amount of TV time. There were even people in the corporate media who defended Ann's actions. This took place around the time of the release of the documentary: "9/11 Press for Truth," which starred The Jersey Girls and destroyed the legitimacy of the 9/11 Commission.

Which do you think should have gotten the tremendous amount of TV time? Here's a hint: Not Ann Coulter.



Chapter/Episode 3 – Erik Larson – September 2, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Erik Larson (ERIK)

JON

Hi everyone and welcome to my show called "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show will focus on the importance of obtaining documents from the Government regarding 9/11. It will focus on the classification of documents and the redactions within many of the documents that have been released. It will focus on how sometimes within these documents we see contradictions between what is within the document and what is written within the 9/11 report. This aspect of research was very important to the late, great John Judge, an early mentor of mine who, unfortunately, passed away earlier this year. This show is dedicated to him.

Okay, this is Jon, and I'm here with Erik Larson, and I'm going to quickly read his bio for us.

Erik Larson is a 9/11 researcher and activist. In his view, the 9/11 Commission's failure to credibly account for how and why 9/11 happened, and the general acceptance or apathy of the media and the public toward the

official story, represent national security and constitutional crises, and corruption in American society itself. Concerned for the U.S. republic and the well-being of present and future generations around the world, Erik, among other things, has made well over 8,000 9/11 Commission and other 9/11-related documents publicly available through two file sharing websites on the web. It's primarily this work that we have Erik on to talk about today.

Before we talk to Erik, I have a few personal things to say. Erik is the one who came to Washington, D.C. to film my act of civil disobedience where I chained myself to the White House fence. And I was very grateful to him for that. He also got me out of jail.

Another thing is that Erik and I have approached 9/11 in a very similar fashion. So, hopefully, it will make for an interesting conversation today. So, hi Erik. How are you doing?

ERIK Doing well, Jon, and yeah, thanks for remembering that incident—the arrest and all that. Yeah, good times.

JON Yeah, good times. I also remember you came to the March 2010 march against the war and we had lunch with Cindy. (Right) Do you remember that?

ERIK I remember that, too, yeah. You've got some photos of me from that day, I think. Yeah, you're right, we have a similar approach in our thinking to what is important about the information about 9/11 and what the citizenry can do to get truth and justice. Yeah, that's why I agreed to the interview.

JON Now, I am dedicating this show to the late, great John Judge, and I know that he was a friend of yours, inspiration perhaps. (Yeah) Would you like to say a little something about John?

ERIK John Judge, unfortunately, passed away this year and he was behind a lot of efforts for truth and justice in society. Not just 9/11, but he was there from the beginning when all the information that was coming out was fucked up, excuse me, strange and incomplete and there were a lot of serious questions that needed to be asked. And he worked with Cynthia McKinney while she was in office, the House of Representatives, to work on investigations and use the power of Congress to get things done. He worked on 9/11 Citizens Watch, which worked with the families, especially the Family Steering

Committee and the Jersey Girls, to Watchdog the Commission's work. He even helped it do its work to understand what kind of questions it should be asking that it admitted at the beginning derelict saying the family's commission should be a roadmap. But they didn't do it.

And, in addition to that work, his work investigating numerous other deep state events and the actors behind them—so many. I mean—JFK and RFK, and MLK—those political assassinations were some of his primary work that he's best known for. And he—I don't think he published a book, but he did a lot of writing and research and his work was used by other researchers and authors and very well known in communities, research of alternative events like 9/11 and JFK assassination.

Also, in addition to that work, he was a long-time activist in D.C. working with the school system compelling them to make sure that the kids there had options and information in addition to their ROTC programs and military trying to get into the schools and recruit. Like where they backdoor draft these poor young black kids who get into the military usually don't know about non-violent options they could use to better themselves as a society and make a living.

And, I'm probably forgetting a lot of things, but he was well-loved by a lot of different people. I remember David Swanson commented on his passing and someone else whose name escapes me. But, anyway, yeah, John Judge. I'm glad you're dedicating this show to him and I'm honored to be on a show that is dedicated to him.

JON Yeah, John, very early on was an inspiration to me. The way he presented things; the arguments that he would make—it was so compelling. I have a little quick story about John. The first time I met him was during the 9/11 People's Commission, which was hosted by Pacifica radio. It took place on 9/11/2004 in Washington, D.C. And, I had just recently heard of 9/11 Citizen's Watch a few months prior, and so I wanted to help in any way I could, so the way that he asked me to help him was to put change in his car. And I did. I kept running in and out to put change in the meter for his car. (Yeah, yeah) But he was a major influence on me and he is greatly missed. (Yeah, yeah)

So, let's go ahead and get ahead with the interview.

What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

ERIK You know what? I guess it was probably like it was for a lot of Americans. At the time I kind of assumed that Democrats and Republicans might both be pulled into corporate interests, but we had a free press because anybody could say anything and then I kind of figured if anything was suspicious, or whatever, the media would be doing its job if Congress wouldn't. And I kind of couldn't believe that anybody would not do everything in their utmost to make sure something like that didn't happen.

So I was in shock watching these towers burning. Wondering what's going on for the people in New York and their families. And, I go to work—because waking up and seeing on the news in California, and just kind of in shock, you know. Even after Oklahoma and the first World Trade Center bombing and the Millennium threat, I kind of just like never took terrorism seriously as a threat. I just like figured it doesn't happen here. I hear about it happening in the Middle East now and then, but I'm kind of concerned with what's happening in the United States and my own life and all that.

And then, so I'm wondering, so what's going to happen now because this is a major event. There has to be some kind of response. Who are these people who attacked? I never heard of Al-Qaeda. That's kind of what it was like. Feeling kind of patriotic and outraged and hurt, feeling bad for the people that lost their lives, and pissed off—who would do something like this? You know? If you've got a grievance, work within the political process. I kind of like said okay, it's screwed up, but it works—non-violence is a better strategy than violence. And terrorism became real. It was in America. The worst attack since Pearl Harbor, as they say.

JON As they say.

Okay, when did you first begin to question what we were told about that day?

ERIK I guess even from the beginning I was kind of skeptical, but I did not entirely disbelieve what we were told. I was not sure what to believe. And there were certain things that came out in the news over the years. I remember hearing about the collapse of a third building and thinking it was a little strange. And then hearing about that NORAD had drills involving hijacked airliners being used as weapons prior to 9/11 and I was thinking that was going to be an issue, but I didn't hear much more about it. And the appointment, or attempted appointment of Kissinger to the Commission and

kind of just the whole thing. You know, just Democrats and Republicans on there. I didn't have high hopes for it but I figured it was going to be an investigation and that it wouldn't be possible to cover anything up and people would be held accountable. And then nobody was, so it was—and I noticed how well it all worked out for the Bush administration and their cronies and the Military Industrial Complex. And how they already had an agenda to go into Iraq, which was mentioned even on the campaign trail by Bush.

And then—but I didn't really question it until I saw some DVDs in 2005, which I would not recommend to anyone. A lot of B.S. information in them, but it got me to go looking for information. And when I went looking, I discovered that there was a whole community, even a movement, of researchers and activists on this issue who were actively working to highlight certain information which really cast into doubt what we were being told about 9/11 if we're not critically fatal to certain parts of the narrative and raise serious questions about really who was responsible even if Bin Laden and these 19 accused were involved and actually did the physical work of flying planes into buildings.

Anyway, so it was about 2005 when I started seriously questioning things and became an activist and doing my own research trying to figure out what could be known and what wasn't know.

JON It's interesting because I did my own work starting from mid-2002, early 2003, and I never stumbled across the "9/11 Truth Movement," surprisingly. I did everything on my own. I was contacting my local reps. I was contacting my local media and saying why aren't you covering this? (Mm-hmm)

As I mentioned, you've uploaded over 8,000 documents to the online file sharing website: [scribd.com/911DocumentArchive](https://www.scribd.com/911DocumentArchive) (Yeah). What are these records? And where did they come from?

ERIK These are primarily 9/11 Commission records, but they're also records that came from other sources through the Freedom of Information Act and mandatory declassification review, also known as FOIA and MDR, respectively. And the 9/11 Commission may have some of the records that I got from other channels in their records and they just hadn't been released yet, or they may not have them, I don't know. And the ones that are there, represent a fraction of what the 9/11 Commission had. But 2009—January,

2009, they were mandated by law, an agreement by the 9/11 Commission—or, I guess it wasn't mandated by law, but did an instruction from the 9/11 Commission to the National Archives that they be released in five years. And this was worked out with Philip Zelikow and Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, who were the executive director and commission co-chairs. And, by law, certain Government records must be preserved. Certain records can be destroyed if they're not necessary, or whatever, but certain records must be preserved in the 9/11 Commission's records, were to be preserved means they're going to wind up in the National Archives, and at some point, they become public unless there's reason to keep them from being made public, which may be national security, personal privacy, or any number of other things.

So, they were down there, and January 2009, they were scheduled to be released and they did put out a finite number, according to Thomas Kean, the Commission had access to over 2 million records, and according to archivists at NARA—the National Archives is also known as NARA—according to Chris Wilhelm, the NARA archivist, NARA has 1.4 million pages. So, if the 9/11 Commission had access to that over 600,000 pages, they didn't actually get physical custody and it didn't wind up in the National Archives. And that's just [AUDIOBAD]. They also had a lot of gigs of videos and audio and other records, terabytes even, I think. You know what, definitely I think over two terabytes that Chris said they had just in digital stuff. And a lot of paper records and so—

JON Why did you—what prompted you to go down there and do it?

ERIK As a public service. I was aware that they were going to be released and a couple colleagues at the HistoryCommons Matt and Kevin Fenton were interested in these records, as well as, I guess it was mainly them. So I was in a discussion with them—unless Paul Thompson was around then too. I can't remember. But, anyway, yeah—I was in a discussion with them about getting these records and at the time I had just moved over here, by coincidence, and was unemployed. I couldn't find a job for about a year, so I spent every day down there. It was 50-60 hours a week sometimes, just scanning these records. Scanning everything that had been released, which is actually, even though it's a lot of pages, it's a fraction of what is in there. Let me just finish up on that line real quick. So, out of the 1.4 million pages that they had, NARA had processed about 35 percent, which is what they made available. However, a lot of that 35 percent was in the form of withdrawal notices saying hundreds or thousands of pages of what would

have been in the files is not there because it's withheld for whatever reason, and a lot of times it's classified. So, even though it's been processed and the public could know in general terms what they might be able to get access to if they can get it declassified it's not there. (Right) And what was released is also, you know, when there's actually physical paper in there, a lot of it's redacted. And a lot of what has been released, is not agency records per se, although some agency records did get released in this batch, but a lot of it is just the 9/11 Commission's own records. It's interview records, memos, records of meetings with staff, press briefings, and so on. All the records that are created that's part of the investigation will create a lot of stuff. They had eight different teams, each investigating really complex issues, interviewing hundreds of people, and in addition to the ones I scanned, the National Archives also on its own website, released a significant portion, but not all the memoranda for the records which were created from staff notes from interviews—it's basically like a summary of what was said in the interview according to the actual—

JON Right, and we're going to get into the MFRs a little bit later. (Okay) But, okay, you've essentially, you've collected and put online 8,000 documents (Yeah). There is a great many documents that have yet to be released, for whatever reason. (Yes) A lot of times they cite national security. And, why is it important for researchers to look at this information?

John Judge—I could probably answer that—John Judge used to say a lot that when you go through the actual records of the investigation, a lot of times you'll find contradictory information than what's in the actual report itself. (Absolutely) So, that is one of the reasons why getting these documents is important, making them available to the public is important, and so on.

Now, I'm going to read a little bit—it's part of a question—

ERIK Can I just comment on what you just said? (Sure, go ahead) So, the 9/11 Commissioners themselves, all of them had conflicts of interest. Some of them—like personal, professional, financial, political—all of them had at least one, some of them had many, and especially the two chairs and co-chairs. Lee Hamilton, very interesting history involved in what was essentially a cover-up with the October Surprise in the Iran-Contra; and Kean, a lot of, or several, financial conflicts of interest, in addition to their political—again, how come they're all Democrats and Republicans? We're going to have an independent investigation? They can't find any credible,

experienced, non-Democrats and Republicans to head up this very important investigation? In addition to the commissioners themselves, half of the staff had the same kind of conflicts of interest—at least the professional ones. They got people from the same agencies that they were investigating to assist with these investigations. Not necessarily they were actively working for them, but had previously spent their entire careers in these agencies. So who do you think they're going to be sympathetic to when it comes to telling the story?

But even so, and I guess you could consider the other half of the staff as Americans were concerned and wanted to get to the bottom of things and make sure something like 9/11 never happened again, a lot of stuff came out in staff reports, memos, things that were sent to Zelikow, and things that were sent to the commissioners trying to get around Zelikow's tight reign over the staff's work that not only contradict what the—generally the gist of the report. The official conclusions and all that and the official narrative, but were complaining about how the investigation was being conducted. So, yes, very useful for researchers who are interested in finding out what really happened, whether it's history or whether it's current events that are being used to shape our policies, our Government's policies, foreign and domestic. It's useful for researchers to dig through the actual Government's own records, because sometimes there's stuff in there that—it's just critical to what the public's being told.

Anyway, go on—

JON Well, you're right and I completely agree with you. You know, there's many problems, obviously, with the 9/11 Commission and that. We could devote an entire—a multitude of hours to that topic alone. Yes, there were many staffers who did not trust Zelikow, and so forth.

Now, on September 25th 2006, former 9/11 Commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste makes public knowledge a deal within the 9/11 Commission to keep Bush, Cheney, and Clinton's testimony classified until 2009. And then on September 8 2011, it was reported that "ten years after Al-Qaeda's attack on the United States, the vast majority of the 9/11 Commission's investigative records remained sealed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., even though the Commission had directed the archives to make most of the material public in 2009."

You've already gone over a lot of that—

ERIK Right, and that's a point I meant. Other records like what has been released is mostly junk. I mean, there's files and files of newspaper clippings that were related to events and the Commission's work and other records that as far as someone who is looking for truth and justice are just not going to be useful. The Commission just got all kinds of crap dumped on them that really didn't make a difference to their investigation but impeded their work. And, in addition to that, as I mentioned, the people running the investigation had all these conflicts of interest. They had a story to tell. They didn't want to get to the bottom of things necessarily. There's an agenda there. So, again, the records that they're creating are not necessarily useful and these are the ones that are harmless to the official narrative. Of course that's just going to be put out first. But, even so, certain important things had come to light.

But I think I got off track—you were saying?

JON [Laughs] No, I was just making—restating what you said that there was a deal made (Oh, yeah—) by the 9/11 Commission to get these documents released and only 35 percent of them have been released and many of the documents that have been released are greatly redacted, as you mentioned.

ERIK Yeah, and there's stuff in them that might be important, yeah.

JON Now, in many of the memorandums for the records, or what some people call MFRs, which are essentially staff statements describing discussions with witnesses there are many redactions. For instance, 9/11 whistleblower Sibel Edmonds' MFR is almost completely blank. (Right) I also notice that Prince Bandar's MFR is still classified. Are they planning on releasing these documents in their entirety? Ever? Do you know?

ERIK Sibel Edmonds—let me comment on both of those situations. Sibel Edmonds, as you know, FBI whistleblower, who has been by the people who she had named being implicated they called her a nut, conspiracy theorist, crazy, all kinds of disparaging terms. However, if what she has to say is just a bunch of garbage, how come it's been blacked out for classified reasons? So that's really questionable that there's not something very important in there. And, Sibel Edmonds, in her own work and as head of the National Security of Whistleblowers Coalition, and even before that, released a letter signed by her and 24 other people who had knowledge from the intelligence community, FBI, who had knowledge prior to 9/11 of

what had gone down and had observed the Commission's work and read its report and realized it had seriously failed in its duty to account for how and why 9/11 happened. And most of these people are still being gagged from testifying, publicly or under oath, about what they knew and no one is calling them to do it that has the authority to do so. Remarkably, a lot of Sibel Edmonds' testimony has come out under oath in 2008. But yeah, the 9/11 Commission did interview her for like three-and-a-half hours, I think, and came up with a seven, six-and-a-half-page summary of the interview, which is almost entirely redacted.

JON Well, one of the things about Sibel Edmonds is the fact that she was trying to get to testify before the 9/11 Commission and they were not (Right) responding to her, so the families actually snuck her in on one of the family 9/11 Commission meetings and forced them to talk to her. And her story received a footnote in the back of the book—of the back of the 9/11 report.

ERIK And the footnote basically said the FBI needed to improve quality control on its translation unit.

JON Yeah, exactly. (Right) It doesn't get into depth at all as to what we've learned from Sibel. But, again—

ERIK In that Inspector General's report a lot of her allegations. But, yeah, very significant document and that needs to be released. Whether it will ever be made public while we have Democrat or Republican administrations, really questionable. And as far as Bandar and certain other Saudis who have a lot to answer for regarding what happened—al-Bayoumi, and Thumairy, and Abdussatar Shaik and some others, we can get into those, but the Bandar, specifically is this guy's interview record ever going to be released, the State Department would have to be involved. And because it involves sensitive and diplomatic foreign relations, it's highly unlikely that that one will ever be released as long as we have Democrat/Republican administrations, as well.

JON Well, is there anybody fighting for their release?

ERIK Well, as far as I know, the 9/11 families, Jersey Girls, some of them, are still advocating for their release. There's only so much they can do. The Jersey Girls, I think, have already called for a new investigation two or three times since the 9/11 Commission's whitewash came out. There was, as we mentioned previously, a "9/11 Truth Movement," which has some

people going down avenues that I find strange and useless, but there are other people that are working on getting records released. Myself, I'm currently not—I'm not actively working on filing new requests for information. This sorely needs to be done. I'm not sure if Kevin Fenton is either at this point. I'm following up on requests that have already been filed, but I have a list with several hundred additional things that should be submitted for declassification review.

Just from what we know about the records that have already been processed—one of the problems is that we do not even know what the Commission got. Especially amateur researchers like myself, I don't know what records to ask for, what records would and should have been created that should be in the Commission's files. If anyone does know, then—that is willing to give advice, that would be a big help, that might be listening to this about specifically the names of types of records that would be in there. And then they can go looking for them. We can ask for—if you know what the record is, you can ask for a declassification review, which is an avenue similar to Freedom of Information, the FOIA act, but yeah, it's a different process and sometimes more successful.

Other than these people, not sure. I think there's a general interest in the public that more stuff is released, and there are a variety of research communities that I think have an interest in 9/11, but I'm not sure who is actively working on getting stuff out.

JON It seems as if they'll keep them classified and not for public consumption for as long as they can. If nobody's fighting for it.

ERIK Even though Obama, who promised to be the transparency President in his executive order had made provision for stuff to be held secret for over 75 years, as long as certain people, like people of certain levels sign off on it, they can keep stuff secret forever. You know, indefinitely.

JON Absolutely. So what is exactly a FOIA request and do you have any advice for people wanting to make them? And also, what are MDRs?

ERIK Sure, good question. So, a Freedom of Information Act request, or FOIA, is a request that the Government produce records and the FOIA Act can be phrased in general terms. You can ask for any records that the Government has on a specific person or a specific topic and sometimes it's a good idea to narrow the request to reduce the amount of research time and to not get a

bunch of junk in response, which could wind up costing a lot in processing time and copying fees. But in 1974, not even sure—I think it was the 70s—the Freedom of Information Act was passed. Or was it under Clinton? You know, I don't know. But it's on Wikipedia [laughs] it's not even [AUDIOBAD], but it basically says that the Government has to produce any records it has unless there is a compelling interest in keeping them withheld, such as a person's privacy interest, a law enforcement interest, national security interest, a variety of things, there's exceptions. And the law has even been interpreted to mean that the Government does not have to acknowledge having certain records if these records fall within certain generally national security related circumstances. You ask them, I want a copy of this record and will deny having it because it's exempt. (Laughs)

But, anyway, that's one avenue that the public can find out what's going on in its Government is by requesting records. As you noted earlier, sometimes there's information in the Government's own records that contradicts what the people running the Government are telling the public.

And the MDR, which stands for Mandatory Declassification Review request, is a demand that certain information be reviewed for declassification, and the Government has to do this if requested every five years, like once every five years. If it gets a second request within five years, it doesn't have to do it. But it has to do it at least once, which means somebody, somewhere in the Government is going to take a look and see if the information that you want can be released. And with MDR, you have to request a specific document. You have to give detailed information about what you're asking for. You can't ask for information under subjects to be declassified.

And there's also an appeal process which goes all the way to the Information and Security Oversight office, which is part of National Archives. It's the highest classification authority below the United States President. So, if someone in a Government agency is trying to keep some information covered up, either to protect themselves or some cronies, or some political agenda that they have or whatever, or some crime that they're involved in, if they want to keep it covered up and they can't find a way to get that record destroyed without someone finding out and then getting prosecuted for it being destroyed, which isn't necessarily going to happen with the Democrats and Republicans in charge, but if it gets to the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP) or Ice Cap—if it gets to Ice Cap, which is part of ICU, then they're going to review it. And

Ice Cap's board is composed of someone from each agency, so they're going to discuss among themselves this information, more eyeballs on it, more brains thinking about can we release this?

Surprisingly, Ice Cap has a better track record when it comes to getting classified information released than under FOIA. Under FOIA you can sue for it to be released, but that means you're going to be in a federal court and, generally, federal judges are deferential to the executive claims of privilege and secrecy and national security and all that. So, suing under FOIA for classified information is more likely to be than just appealing to Ice Cap, which could take many, many years, but may not. According to the National Security Archive, which is based at George Washington University in D.C., which has done great work for decades on getting classified information out about all kinds of important subjects, has put out a requester's guide on Freedom of Information Act and FOIA, and MDR, the mandatory declassification.

So I recommend that everyone go to NFArchive.org if you're interested in learning how to get records from the Government. Yeah, that's the single best source of information. There are other sources of information out there like the Reporter's Committee for Freedom of the Press, but I found the Archive's guide a lot more useful. Anyway—

JON Where can people go to find what you have already made available online? From the 9/11 Commission.

ERIK Sure—so, as mentioned before Scribd.com/911documentArchive and Scribd is spelled S-C-R-I-B-D.com/911DocumentArchive. That's where I've uploaded everything that I've gotten from NARA and from FOIA and MDR. And I've also uploaded records that other researchers have obtained, and it's all 9/11-related stuff. And in addition to that, everything that I've gotten I've sent to 911DataSets.org, which is a TORRENT site. You can't link to individual files in a way that they will be displayed the way you can at Scribd, but Scribd charges money, and if you want to download all the records and you know how to use TORRENT, you can get that from [911DataSets](http://911DataSets.org), plus a voluminous amount of other information that has come out from other channels, a lot of it related to the World Trade Center destruction investigations. But there are a lot of other 9/11-related subjects as well. So, definitely recommend checking out those sites if you're interested in doing research.

JON Okay, well, from the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11, there are 28 redacted pages. Supposedly, having to do with Saudi support for the hijackers. And there are other countries, supposedly, listed as well. Obama promised 9/11 Family Members, Kristen Breitweiser and Bill Doyle, that he would release these pages and never has. The Obama administration has also made it difficult for the 9/11 families to sue certain Saudis, and right now there is a big push by certain family members and members of Congress to get these documents released. What is your opinion on all that?

ERIK Well, I think those pages should definitely be released. Senator Bob Graham, knows what's in them. He was co-chair of the JICI (the Joint Intelligence Committee Inquiry), the Congressional inquiry, and he said publicly many times that it's not an actual security threat and the fact that it is being suppressed should be of concern to Americans concerned about national security because there's information in there—and he's gone even so far as to say it's a Saudi Government but there's other foreign Governments in there apparently who provided logistical and financial support to the hijackers. And we already actually through other channels know about this information as well. It's been documented. And the question is—

JON Well, as I mentioned, Prince Bandar's memorandum for the record is classified and one of the things that has trickled out over the years, especially from Bob Graham, is the fact that the Bandar family was financially connected to two of the hijackers, and many think that because Prince Bandar was such good friends with Bush, that's why Bush essentially kept these pages redacted.

Now, to me, if that's the case and, I'm not sure that it is, if that's the case, the President essentially helped to cover-up possible participants in the murder of 2,976 people. That to me is an act of treason. When it all comes down to it. And that's just one thing regarding the 9/11 attacks.

ERIK Yes, covering up for anyone that was involved in 9/11 is tantamount to treason. I absolutely agree.

JON It's accessory after the fact. I mean, if you want to talk about real crimes.

ERIK If only that, and there's a lot of other questions about what Bush did and didn't do before 9/11 and on 9/11 and afterwards. But, just for that, it's essentially an act of treason. If you know some foreign country was

involved in attacking the United States and then you're protecting them for whatever reason—and we can assume it's the oil that the U.S. gets from Saudi Arabia, the business relations that the Bush family has with the Saudi Royal Family, and the fact that they had billions in U.S. Treasuries, and all these other investments in the United States, but yeah, it's treason. He takes an oath to defend the Constitution, not even physically protect Americans or the country. And here he is selling out on the investigation of the worst attack on the U.S. since Pearl Harbor? To protect some—whatever is being protected there. And Obama, as well? And especially after the fact, the preventing of this information from being released?

And just to finish the thought from earlier, if the guy who knows what's in the report, who's responsible for that investigation and that report being together, says there's no reason to keep that information classified, I—we're going to of course—I think that information should be released. And it's not just Bob Graham saying so—other people that know what's in there had been saying it should be released.

JON

Well, The Jersey Girls have for years attempted to get these documents released, and now there's an effort by Representatives Walter Jones and Stephen Lynch, and Rep. Massey, and a few others who are attempting to get these documents released. So, hopefully, they will.

Okay, I think we answered the questions regarding the Joint Congressional Inquiry.

Just so everyone knows, we're having some technical difficulties, so we're trying our best to get this interview done.

During the 9/11 Commission, instead of using subpoena power to obtain documents, they instead used what were called "document requests" which could be and were in many cases ignored. I think they used subpoena power two times—once with NORAD and once with the FAA. But that was it. Do you know which documents weren't supplied to the 9/11 Commission? I mean, we talked about that earlier. We really don't, do we?

ERIK

Yeah, we do not have a full accounting, for sure. There are some interesting questions about that though. First on the subpoena power, yeah, the Commission could have used that. It had the authority to do so from the law that Congress passed, and the excuse that they gave was that if they subpoena documents, then they're going to fight us in court and that's going

to tie everything up past the deadline to review the Commission's work. Which sounds like an incredibly bogus excuse, but that's essentially the excuse that was given. But, if the Bush administration wants to get to the bottom of this, why are they going to be fighting subpoenas anyway, you know?

And, another question, since they did use document requests, why were they not complying with these document requests? Certain things like—one question that comes to mind—NORAD was asked for any after-action reports, in addition to a lot of other things. They were asked for any after-action reports that were prepared in response to the events of 9/11. And this is a common thing that's done in the military. Whenever there's an exercise or some major event they're involved in, an after-action report is submitted. Same thing like with a cop—any incident that a cop is involved in with a civilian—it doesn't mean it has to be a shooting or whatever, just writing a ticket for some offense, there is a report being made. And these reports are used to understand what happened and how to improve performance in the future and create accountability. There was no after-action report prepared by NORAD, apparently, in response to the events of 9/11, even though there's gross violations of air sovereignty four times on the day with these planes flying around unauthorized in the U.S. Hijackers crashing them into buildings or attempting to do so. It's just incredible!

And, in addition to that—

JON Well, with regard to NORAD, just to give people an idea, there were people on the staff who wanted to refer NORAD to the Justice Department for a criminal investigation because of the lies that they were telling the 9/11 Commission. And, it actually was Zelikow who sat on that request for a long time and, ultimately, decided to send it to the Inspector General instead, someone who cannot hold anyone accountable for any of their lies. All they can do is recommend that people are held accountable.

ERIK Yeah, clearly, Zelikow was not one of the people who wanted to get to the bottom of anything. He was protecting the responsible agencies.

JON Exactly. Now, and I'm going to read a little bit for this question to give it some context.

In June, 2009, one of the documents that you found at the National Archives was written about in an article at HCGroups.wordpress.com

entitled: "Two Days Before 9/11: Military Exercise Simulated Suicide Hijackings Targeting New York." From that report it says:

"The U.S. Military conducted a training exercise in the five days before the 9/11 attacks that included simulated aircraft hijackings by terrorists. In one of the scenarios, implemented on September 9th, terrorists hijacked a London to New York flight, planning to blow it up with explosives over New York."

Also from that article, it says:

"Although it is not listed in the document, there was also a simulated plane hijacking scheduled to take place in the Northeast United States on the day of 9/11, and its timing overlapped with the real-world events. According to *Vanity Fair*: '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.' When NEADS (Northeast Air Defense Sector) was informed of the first real-world hijacking, members of its staff initially assumed this was part of the exercise. For example, Master Sergeant Maureen Dooley, the leader of the I.D. section, told the other members of her team: 'We have a hijack going on. Get your check-lists. The exercise is on.' Major Kevin Nasypany, the mission crew commander, actually said out loud: 'The hijack's not supposed to be for another hour.' Like numerous hijacking scenarios described in the NORAD exercises document, there was no mention of this simulated hijacking scheduled for the morning of September 11, in the 9/11 Commission Report.

Now, I think only one war game was mentioned in the 9/11 report, and it was in a footnote in the back of the book. I remember during the time of the 9/11 Commission, 9/11 researcher Nick Levis was actually screaming at them: "Talk about the war games! Talk about the war games!" When NORAD was in front of them.

Do you think we'll ever know the full truth about the military exercises that were taking place that day? Or in the days before?

ERIK

If we elect people who are committed to serving the public interest, we can get the truth about 9/11 and justice. And—but yeah—as far as that record and the questions about the war games, boy, where do I start?

Oh yeah, so, *Vanity Fair*, "Vigilant Guardian," the hijacking to Cuba exercise. Very interesting that this was not mentioned in the 9/11 Commission Report and the only attention that the Commission gave to this, other than like the quotes, which it didn't mention was part of that kind of an exercise. It did say it was like a hijacking, but it also mentioned in the footnote about Vigilant Guardian involving a Soviet bomber exercise. So, yeah, very curious. We do not have complete information.

The document that you mentioned that was posted at Scribd, which is titled: "NORAD 9/11 Hijack Summary" I believe. Kevin Fenton wrote the article at HCGroups.wordpress.com that you mentioned, analyzing that. And that document did not go up to the day of 9/11. It goes up to September 10th. And the week before 9/11, there were a quite a number of exercises being conducted. Some of them involved other hijackings, not just this one that was mentioned. Actually, I'm not clear now. That document goes back to a few years before 9/11, but there were a number of exercises being conducted in that week before 9/11. And that document was prepared by 9/11 Commission staffer Miles Kara, who was a senior staff member on Team 8, which was looking at the military response on the day of 9/11. And it's basically a table where he plots out elements of all these different exercises that NORAD had been involved in going back to 1999 or 98, about three years before 9/11, that involved elements of the 9/11 plot. And when you look at it, it's like, wow! They drilled every single element of the 9/11 plot—planes being hijacked; using missiles; domestic hijackings, and so on. And planes being blown up. When you mentioned it happened two days before 9/11, eerily similar to 9/11.

And, again, we still don't know what all the scenarios might have been that were being run on 9/11. But the exercises may or may not have interfered with the response. Maybe they were intended to. There are serious questions about why they weren't cancelled. The person responsible, Colonel Robert Marr, was questioned by Kevin Nasypany, the guy quoted in *Vanity Fair*, about cancelling the exercise. He never gave the order to do so until it was all over. And, again barely scratching the surface.

And there was another MFR where the Commission mentions that certain records that they had gotten about discrepancies in the records and Marr

agreed, that the Commission's standards for quality control, or something like that, had not been met.

But I'm getting off track here. Back to that document that was posted. So, in the Commission Report it said that prior to 9/11 there was no exercise that postulated a hijacked airliner being hijacked from within the United States and used as a weapon—that NORAD had not done an exercise like that. And that statement is literally correct. However, NORAD had done exercises that involved all those elements, repeatedly. It had been drilling responses to hijacking since the 70s. And, if anything, even if they're not going to shoot down a commercial airliner, the response is still they are going to scramble and monitor and intercept. And it happened routinely prior to 9/11. There is a lot of different records, Government records, as well as reports from the media about how routine this was prior to 9/11. Because, the United States has a problem with people flying drugs over the border. One of the things that NORAD gets involved in is if there are unauthorized flights coming from certain places. They scramble jets to check out what's going on, and they'll force these people down. (Right) In addition to that, they started this whole thing because of a fear about the Soviet Union invading the U.S. with bombers. And, granted, that's not as much of a threat anymore, but the fear or the threat of terrorism has only increased. And they had known since Japan attacked Pearl Harbor with kamikaze pilots back in World War II, 1940s, that people had the potential to fly planes into property and cause massive damage on flights. (Right) They've known this is a threat.

And, in addition to that—and this is another footnote in the 9/11 Commission Report—Samuel Byck, 1974, tried to hijack a commercial airliner (Exactly--), from Baltimore/Washington Thurgood Airport (I was just about to--), yeah, in order to fly into the White House and assassinate Nixon.

So it's like they don't know that's a threat and are not taking steps to mitigate this and all the other incidents where planes have been used as weapons? Of course NORAD's going to be drilling this.

And in addition to all these other incidents, they knew that Al-Qaeda possibly had planes, used planes as weapons in 1998. This is brought up by Ben-Veniste in a Commission hearing.

JON

Well they were also aware of Project Bojinka.

ERIK Yeah, and then Bojinka. And then the summer of threat. There was information out there about planes being used as missiles by Al-Qaeda and possibly the U.S. being a target. Everything was there. Just from what has come out, we know that they had enough information to at least harden defenses in the U.S.

The G-8 Summit in Italy, after putting Bush on an aircraft carrier off-shore to sleep at night and then got aircraft guns set up around the perimeter just on the possibility that Al Qaeda attacks the G-8 Summit with planes and they know that the U.S. is at risk. They know these people are in the United States and they're doing nothing to harden airport security or anything.
Sibel Edmonds—

JON One of the things—

ERIK Let me just finish real quick on that point. Sibel Edmonds said that she saw documents proving that the FBI had information indicating that Bin Laden had planned operatives in the country that were going to attack U.S. cities four to five U.S. cities with planes. But go ahead—

JON One of the things that Sibel talks about is that in April 2001, Behroor Sarshar, he found that yes, there were warnings that showed Al-Qaeda was planning on crashing planes into buildings. From what I remember. I mean, I'd have to go back and look.

Okay, so—NORAD lied. The idea that they never prepared for such things
—

ERIK Jon, can I interrupt just real quick—just a quick note on Behroor Sarshar (Absolutely—)

Sibel Edmonds got the Commission to interview him. They interviewed him for two and a half hours. His MFR is several pages and is also heavily redacted. (Right)

JON Exactly, another MFR or memorandum for the record that is greatly redacted.

Now, with regard to the idea that they never envisioned anything like what happened on 9/11 or were—they only envisioned planes coming from across the ocean and never coming from within?

You know, you mentioned Samuel Byck. There were other instances where there were hijackings taking place within the United States with the purpose of using those planes as weapons. I don't remember them off the top of my head. I did an interview recently with Robbie Martin where we got into specifics. There was one instance where a FedEx employee was planning on crashing a plane into FedEx headquarters, I think.

So the idea that they didn't prepare for that, or didn't envision that, you know, it's absolutely absurd.

ERIK Somebody flew a small plane into the White House trying to kill Clinton.

JON Right, exactly.

Now, another significant document that came to light was titled: "Executive Branch Minders' Intimidation of Witnesses." And I think that was found by Kevin Fenton. Can you tell us about this one? Well, first, can you tell us what Government minders are? Tell us about this document. Tell us about what Government minders are, and how did they affect the 9/11 Commission?

ERIK Sure. As part of the Commissions' work it wanted to interview a lot of people, ostensibly to learn about how the Government actually functioned, not just how it was supposed to function. And, if you're doing an investigation and want to get to the bottom of things, you want to get candid responses from people. Yet the people that they're talking to, a lot of the lower—I mean they talked to a lot of people, from the low level to the high. All the lower-level people who could tell the Commission what they saw at their jobs on the day of 9/11, or in the years leading up to 9/11 if it's intelligence-related work, the day of 9/11 it's more the FAA, military response. But, yeah, a lot of these lower-level people like air-traffic controllers, people in the military whose job it was to respond to domestic crises like these hijackings, and the terrorist threats, and the FBI's/CIA's investigations and what they're supposed to be investigating regarding terrorist threats. A lot of lower-level people saw stuff, and so if you want to get candid responses, honest responses about what these people were witnesses to, you're probably going to want to interview them alone. You're

definitely not want to interview them with anyone who might influence their responses or intimidate them in any way. However, all of these people—there was no interviews conducted where minders weren't present.

And what minders were are these other representatives from the agency that witness/that employee worked for that was sent there by that employee's boss or people even higher up. In practice—let me quote from Kevin Fenton's article about this, also posted at HCGroups.wordpress.com, and he quoted from this memo which was written by Kevin Scheid who is a senior staffer who led Team 2 and Lorry Fenner, an air force intelligence officer and lawyer at Gordon Lederman. And this memo said that:

- Minders "answer[ed] questions directed at witnesses;"
- Minders acted as "monitors, reporting to their respective agencies on Commission staffs lines of inquiry and witnesses' verbatim responses." The staff thought this "conveys to witnesses that their superiors will review their statements and may engage in retribution;" and
- Minders "positioned themselves physically and have conducted themselves in a manner that we believe intimidates witnesses from giving full and candid responses to our questions."

So, given that these people acted this way in all of Team 2's interviews, it's not reasonable to believe that they got candid, honest, open responses to any serious lines of inquiry that they were trying to pursue. And given Zelikow's role in the staff's work, he may have insisted that they were thrown softball questions anyway. But these three staff members complained about this. And it wasn't just this incident either.

There was another memo that also complained about minders interfering with their work in some different incident involving their work with Canada on parts of the investigation.

So, we don't know exactly what went on with the minders and other staff, but if this is any indication, it was similar. And Miles Kara, who was mentioned previously in this call, Team 8 lead staff member, said that the minders were actually a great help to them in the investigation because (Oh, God) it did help them understand what was going on with the Government processes, and what was supposed to be happening, they were useful in getting information that was needed and helping witnesses to understand how to communicate information.

JON Okay, I have something to say now, (Okay).

With regard to Miles Kara, Miles Kara has become somewhat of a 9/11 debunker. And he seems to me like an apologist for the 9/11 Commission. The idea of Government minders intimidating witnesses—the idea of anybody intimidating witnesses—to me the whole Government minder issue completely discredits the 9/11 Commission—in my mind. And what's interesting—

ERIK Even the appearance of it, regardless of whether they actually did influence anything, the fact that they were there taints the credibility of the Commission's work.

JON Absolutely, absolutely. And, you know, a lot of people in the "9/11 Truth Movement" weren't even aware of the Government minders until this document was found. But at the time of the 9/11 Commission, the 9/11 Family Steering Committee released several statements that addressed the minders. The families didn't want them there. And I'm going to go read to you some of their statements.

This one is from September 10th , 2003:

"On August 27 the family steering committee received an update on the Commission's progress. We learned that there has been improved compliance from some Government agencies and that minders continue to be present during interviews even though the chairman and vice-chairman publicly protested."

Another one is from September 2003:

"The FSC, or the Family Steering Committee, is shocked with the use of minders in the interrogatory process and despite the Commissioner's similar objections to minders, as stated at the last press conference, minders continue to be present during witness examination and questioning. The FSC does not want minders present during any witness examination and questioning. It is a form of intimidation and it does not yield the unfettered truth."

And the last one I'm going to read from them is from October 4, 2003:

"When asked about minders by reporters, Chairman Kean admitted that in order to have access to the witnesses, the Commission had to accept the minders. He said the Commission staff believes no one has been intimidated by their presence. Chairman Hamilton, however, added the caveat that it is very difficult to tell when a witness is being intimidated by a minder. To preclude any hint of intimidation, no minders should be present during the interviews. This should not be negotiable."

So, obviously, the 9/11 Family Members were furious that they were there. They did not want them there, and they were still there.

Now I have a quote from Coleen Rowley, actually. It's a very short quote and she says:

"And there were minders in Government that every time you're interviewed, I was never interviewed by myself."

(Laughs) And that's Coleen Rowley.

As I said, to me, the issue of Government minders just completely—it's one of the many, many, many, many things that completely discredits the 9/11 Commission in my mind.

ERIK Couple points on that. Kean, in early July, 2003, he said on a press briefing:

"I think the Commission feels unanimously that it's some intimidation to have somebody sitting behind you all the time who you either work for or who works for your agency. You might get less testimony than you would."

And that's the chairman of the Commission saying that in July, 2003. However, by September 23 of that year at another press briefing he had changed his tune basically saying:

"Talking to staff, what they have told me is that they've done these interviews where the interviewees are encouragingly frank and that they by and large have not seemed to be intimidated in any way in their answers. I'm glad to hear that

it's from the staff that they don't feel it's inhibiting the process of the interviews."

And that was nine days before this minder's memo "Executive Branch Intimidation of Witnesses." It was the subject of the article.

JON Well, Kean has on a number of occasions changed his tune. (Yeah) I can't remember any references off the top of my head, but I remember him saying one thing, as if he was for the families, as if he was, really trying to find out what happened and then a week later he'll say something completely contrary to what he already said. Which indicates to me he had a talking to. (Laughs) You know, by someone, to change his tune. (Yeah) But I have no proof of that, it just sounds like it.

Now, the last question I'm going to ask you—another document that was found had Rich Blee's name listed because a careless redactor left it in. Could you tell us what happened as a result of this disclosure?

ERIK Sure, Rich Blee, very interesting character. Again, much thanks to Kevin Fenton. His sharp eye caught Blee's name in the staff memo that had been prepared. I guess he was just reading through it and noticed that it was in there. And the statement was, let me find that. I don't have it up. Anyway, Blee's name was mentioned in connection with George Tenet and Cofer Black. George Tenet was director of the CIA, Director of National Intelligence and Cofer Black was—what was his title again? (CTC?) It was something counter-terrorism. But, regardless—

Richard Blee worked under Cofer Black. He reported to him and also to Tenet. And Rich Blee would, specifically, was the guy who replaced Michael Scheuer at the CIA bin Laden unit when Michael Scheuer was forced out, essentially, in 1999. And—or 98. And George Tenet released this memo which became a big deal where he declares war on Al-Qaeda supposedly, even though Michael Scheuer, by all accounts, was rabid to destroy Osama bin Laden and his network of terrorists.

And after Blee was put in charge, according to records that had come out—according to what's in the public records so far—this guy basically took no action to insure that the FBI got critical information that it needed about terrorists that were trying to get into the U.S.—known terrorists, Khalid Al-Midhar, involved in the 1998 Embassy bombing. The CIA received information that this guy had a visa to travel to the U.S. and the CIA did not

pass this along on to the FBI, even though an FBI employee detailed to the CIA's bin Laden unit, wanted to pass it on to the FBI, and that same employee later wrote a cable saying the information had been passed on to the FBI.

And I think I'm getting ahead of myself here—this is Chapter 6, Footnote 44 material—but Blee, the guy in charge of that unit and his deputy, Tom Wilshire, was one of the people involved in that incident, and a lot of other incidents where the FBI's work is being obstructed. People at the FBI who sent, who know from other bits of information that came out that there's a plot afoot to attack the United States, and they are rabid to destroy this plot. And there's people within the FBI and CIA who are preventing them from doing the work. (Right) So, Blee is the guy who's in charge of the bin Laden unit.

And, in addition to that incident there's a lot of other incidents where he should have known, where he was responsible, where he clearly did or did not do something which points to him—it's like to believe that this guy had any motive other than wanting the plot to go forward, it's just not credible.

JON One of the things that came from all of this is Kevin Fenton wrote his book *Disconnecting the Dots* (Right) and Rich Blee was a main character in that book. But another thing that happened, the director of "9/11 Press for Truth," Ray Nowosielski, John Duffy, and Rory O'Connor started looking into Footnote 44 and did further research into this whole thing. So the fact that the careless redactor left Rich Blee's name in was very helpful.

And I recommend that people listen to a Podcast called "Who is Rich Blee?" and look into everything that happened as a result of Ray Nowosielski and John Duffy's work. (Yeah)

That's the last question I have—I'm sorry go ahead.

ERIK A bit more information on that—as you commented toward the beginning part of the interview about how John Judge said it's useful to go through Government documents because you'll find stuff in there. That's another thing that Kevin found just by randomly going through stuff that might possibly have interesting information in it. And, as a result of that coming out, Kevin posted his article and the information now being public, the guys that you mentioned that did "9/11 Press for Truth" and then the podcast "Who is Rich Blee?" were able to get interviews with other people. And by

sharing information, such as Rich Blee's name, these people assume they already know this, they know certain other information and they talk candidly with them about what they already know and confirm things that might have been only semi-confirmed before. Now they're on the record—such as Richard Clarke who you mentioned from that interview.

And then after that George Tenet, Cofer Black, and Rich Blee all released a public statement on George Tenet's personal website responding to Clarke's film and certain points that he had made and again began providing confirmation of their involvement from Rich Blee himself this confirmation came.

And in addition to that, because this attention is being created in the online independent community, it actually got a certain bit of mainstream attention with Rich Blee's name and also Alfreda Bikowsky and Michael Anne Casey, two female CIA officers, who were also involved in the failures to prevent 9/11 were mentioned—and who else was it?

In *The Washington Post* I think there was even on their website a blogger commented on Clarke's public statement. And Clarke, again, his point of view is the CIA knew these guys were in their country but they were trying to turn them or they were trying to do something else and things got out of control so they only told the FBI at the last minute. And by then it was too late and that's why it happened, which it's just not credible to accept that story for a number of reasons, and it's just puzzling that Richard Clarke is claiming he accepts it, but who knows. At least he's on the record saying what he has and I guess that's about all—

JON

Well, the point is, is that because of that disclosure a multitude of things opened up for people—for Kevin to write his book; for Ray to do his research. We got a lot of press because of the Richard Clarke interview. It brought a lot of attention to the film "9/11 Press for Truth," because Ray Nowosielski was the one doing the research and he was the director of the film. So it did a lot of good things.

And I think that's the point of this is that we need to see documentation. We cannot accept when the Government tells us that something needs to be classified because of national security, in many cases. So, it's very important to look at these documents and to do a lot of research. If you want—because a lot of times it discredits what's being written in the actual report. And that's the whole point of this. (Yeah)

Anyway, Erik, I want to thank you very much for coming on today. Is there any websites that you want to promote besides HistoryCommons.org, which we both have been contributors to over the years?

ERIK I guess not and I would definitely say support HistoryCommons.org. It runs on a shoestring, very useful research tool, and but also I want to mention 911DataSets.Org also runs on a shoestring doing good work. Scribd is making plenty of money and we are not making any money from that. I think they put ads on the site. They charge for downloads. We do not make any money from Scribd. So don't give them any money. But, I don't know, it's a good public service that the document's out there.

But, yeah, good interview and glad to come on again. Thanks for dedicating it to John Judge, great human being, great humanitarian.

JON Yes, he was. All right, Erik, thank you very much for coming on today and I'm sure I'll have you on again someday.

ERIK Okay, thanks Jon, take care.

JON All right, thanks, Erik.



Chapter/Episode 4 – Ray Nowosielski – September 11, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Ray Nowosielski (RAY)

JON Hi everyone and welcome to my show called "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week we'll be talking with the director of what I think is the most important documentary of our time, *9/11 Press for Truth*. In my opinion, if you are an advocate for 9/11 justice, this documentary is the first thing you should show people. If this documentary had gotten the attention it deserves, I firmly believe we would be living in a better world today.

Hi, this is Jon and I'm here with Ray. Today is the 13th anniversary of the attacks of 9/11. So, before we begin I want to have a moment of silence and then I'll read Ray's bio. So here we go...

Okay, Ray Nowosielski—Ray lives in New York City where he works as a freelance producer, previously for such organizations as the Emmy-winning series *VICE* on HBO and the Oscar winning documentarian Barbara Kopple. In 2011, he was greeted with an outpouring of support after the CIA threatened him and his colleagues with prosecution under the Intelligence Identities Protection Act. He had contacted the agency

requesting that two of their employees respond to serious allegations which were later detailed in a 90-minute Amazon-only "investigative podcast" entitled "Who is Rich Blee?" An advocate for Government and corporate transparency and accountability, he has written for *Salon* and *Truth-Out* and contributed investigations to *The Daily Beast* and *Gawker*. He is best known as the director, co-writer, and producer of the 2006 documentary film "Press for Truth," telling the story of a group of the September 11th widows' and their struggle to see the creation of the 9/11 Commission.

Hi, Ray, how are you doing today?

RAY Hey, Jon, thanks so much for having me on. You know, I know you're not going to toot your own horn, so I'm going to go ahead and do it. You're one of the best human beings that I know and you were instrumental in both our first documentary "Press for Truth" and later the investigative podcast work "Who is Rich Blee?" I've got nothing but respect for you and I'm really glad you're doing this podcast.

JON Well, thank you very much for that. It's very much appreciated.

All right, so we're just going to go ahead and get into the questions, and my first question for you is: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

RAY Yeah, I grew up in Chicago and Indianapolis, and I was going to school in Chicago at the time, but I hadn't—we were on—the semester hadn't started yet, so I was down in Indiana with my parents and it was a rare morning where I didn't watch some TV to start the day, so I was totally out of the loop. At the very beginning I was taking a shower and was getting ready for work and my Dad called and said, "Are you watching the TV?" and I said, "No." He said, "Turn it on, your life just changed. We're at war." And I think it's really interesting how quickly my Dad was able to sort of put that into a succinct sound bite and call it. Because—I mean, my life and everyone else's life was changed. Of course I balled my eyes out when I watched thousands of people die on live TV as the buildings came down, and how often do you feel—do you know that a new era has begun in a single instant and everyone recognizes that the old thing is done and we're on to a new chapter. It was a terrible day.

JON Right, absolutely, it was a terrible day. When did you first begin to question what we were being told about 9/11?

RAY So, you know, 9/11 did for me what it did for the majority of Americans, which is that it kind of caused me to turn my brain off for about six months. And, you know, I had been politically active. I had strong opinions about things like Government efficiency, Government corruption, what have you. And I was pretty antiwar, but all that, I just turned it off. And I thought, all right, this is like World War II. My generation finally has a purpose. We've got to get ready for this war effort. We've got a real enemy and— I remember, I was talking with a friend of mine, another filmmaker. We were both like 21 at the time, and kind of saying well, I don't really know what to—I'm kind of putting my career on hold and I'm not sure what's happening here and we might need to kind of support the war efforts, see how these things go.

I mean, that's totally where my mindset was until early 2002, there started to be—or mid-2002—there started to be rumblings about this war in Iraq and that just seemed like a total non-sequitur to me, and so I started to have a little distrust for the administration—Bush, and where they were headed. And we got told to go to this timeline—this Paul Thompson's timeline. At the time, it was CooperativeResearch.org, now it's just HistoryCommons.org. And, John Duffy, who I know you know, the co-producer of Press for Truth—he and I just hung out at his house one night, started reading Thompson's timeline and probably read it until about 6 AM. We just couldn't stop. We kept commenting stuff like, "Did you know this?" "Can you believe that?" "What does that mean?" You know? (Laughs) And then from that point on we were thoroughly obsessed with the issues related to 9/11.

JON Well, it's interesting because one of my first forays into 9/11 was reading an article that Paul and, I think, Allan Wood had written called "An Interesting Day," (Yeah) which was basically about Bush's actions on the day of 9/11. And my friend sent me the article and we went back and forth and back and forth—just unbelievable the information that we were reading.

RAY And this was the first event, really this was like the first kind of major event to happen in the Internet age. So I don't think anybody was really prepared for how much information could be out there so fast and how many people would be sort of organizing and that are tracking it or what not. So, yeah, it played out in a totally different way than I think previous big events had.

JON Right. Now, why is it important to you not to be associated with the quote "9/11 Truth Movement" or "9/11 Truthers" in general?

RAY

Sure. I'll just go ahead and let your audience in on the fact that I made you ask that question. (Laughter) And, you know—look, here's the thing—okay, let me say this. Activists of any kind, anybody who sort of puts in for a cause, is passionate about it—is trying to achieve that cause—that grouping of people—tend to be very bad at PR—public relations, at advertising, and marketing—which is kind of ironic because, the whole point is to achieve some kind of goal of change, so you would think you would want to be very good at that.

And so (laughs)—and so, I think I have more of a mind for that. I don't consider myself a conspiracy theorist because most of what I—almost everything I look at is in short time in *The Washington Post*. I mean, basically, I advocate for accountability. I feel very passionately that the system and accountability are broken in corporations and in our Government. And that a lot of the terrible things that we've been seeing over the years, as a result of this broken system of accountability and transparency.

So, I'm very sort of goal-oriented and to me, I feel like people—a lot of people that consider themselves, let's say truthers, or something. I don't think—I don't always get the sense of what they're trying to achieve other than their best kind of—this mystery and they keep trying to unravel it. But like for me, I don't need to know the answer to every little piece. When I see for instance that NORAD clearly changed the times that they said certain things happened on that morning, one might say, "Oh, well, they're in on this," or "they're being ordered to do something" like that—I'm less concerned with that, and I'm more concerned with the mere fact that they clearly committed some kind of crime by falsifying data that went to, let's say, the 9/11 Commission.

And so, I'm just about sort of catching people that do things that we can prove that they've done and were in positions of power and taking them and making them—trying to foster some kind of an outcome that actually results in people being—I guess justice being done.

JON

I completely agree with you. You know, the whole point of being an activist—it's essentially a PR campaign that you have to create in order to reach a majority of people. Now, as the originator of the phrase "9/11 Truther," I feel an obligation to say something about it, a little bit.

Now, there are—

RAY Well, just walking—it just makes like—frankly? Between me and you and your entire audience, like normally it would make me nervous to go on a program called "We Were Lied to About 9/11"—even though, we WERE lied to about 9/11. There's nothing wrong with what you said. And because I know you are one of the smartest, most capable of this particular movement and one that I see eye-to-eye on, and I'm honored to be here, but, it's one of those things where it's like, it does make me nervous that it gets posted somewhere and has my name attached and people who might not listen to the content will simply judge and dismiss. So I know—I try not to be associated with certain things...

JON I completely understand that. But there are two portrayals of what a "9/11 Truther" is. There's mine and the corporate media's. And the following is my definition for what I thought it to be. The article that has this definition called "What is a 9/11 Truther?" was cited by *The New York Times*—they just seem to leave this part out of it for some reason. (Hmmm)

"In my mind, a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights alongside the family members seeking truth and accountability for the 9/11 attacks. In my mind, a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights for the sick and dying 9/11 first responders who need healthcare desperately. In my mind, a 9/11 Truther is someone who does not like how the day of 9/11 is being used to inflict pain and suffering around the world and is trying to stop it. Stop it by using the truth—something we have been denied by our Government regarding the 9/11 attacks."

That is essentially MY definition for the phrase. And then there's the corporate media's portrayal of a 9/11 Truther. You have to remember that very early on, the "9/11 Truth Movement" was mostly about supporting the family members and getting them a credible investigation. And then after the 9/11 Commission—trying to get the answers to the unanswered questions of 9/11, which were prominently displayed on the 9/11 Family Steering Committee's website, and trying to expose the obvious cover-ups that were taking place. And early on we would hear from people like John Judge, Jenna Orkin, Paul Thompson, Nafeez Ahmed (Right), Michael Springmann, Ray McGovern. And the September 11th Advocates, the Jersey Girls, credible people doing and saying credible things. And back then, people like Howard Zinn were on our side.

But I believe that the movement was eventually co-opted, by what I call the conspiracy theory industry (Yep, that's right). Our signs used to say things like "Support the 9/11 Families," "Expose the 9/11 Cover-Up." And then they started to say things like "9/11 was an inside job," and "New World Order," and "WTC7" etc. and so on.

RAY Yeah, that 9/11 was an inside job thing, speaking of people being bad at PR, those black tee-shirts that say "9/11 Was an Inside Job," I don't care if you're the nicest person and most open-minded in the world, and you're talking to the smartest truther, if they're wearing that black tee-shirt, I don't want to be sitting and talking with them, you know? Like it's—

JON Oh, I get it. Believe me, I hate that phrase. I've always thought that that phrase is no different than screaming "Elvis is Alive!" at people. (Laughter)

RAY At least that's how it's perceived, certainly.

JON Yeah, the corporate media helped that industry along by only giving attention to them, in an attempt to paint anyone who questions 9/11 as no different than them. If the corporate media did its job, instead of attacking, slandering, and misrepresenting those who question 9/11, I doubt very much at all that you would mind being called a 9/11 Truther today, but you know, unfortunately, they have succeeded in making a 9/11 Truther the equivalent of a baby killer or a dog torturer.

RAY Well, and the other issue there too is just that after years have proceeded—we're now on the 13th anniversary of course—it's like these issues started with 9/11, or 9/11 opened this, exposed this can of worms regarding the lack of accountability, the lack transparency, and much more. But, now those issues extend into so many things that have sort of sprung from 9/11. That's another thing that I wouldn't—basically, I'm an accountability and transparency activist.

JON Oh, no, I get it, believe me.

RAY 9/11 is one area that is always good to go back to and look at because it's probably the best example you can give of all these different things, you know.

JON Well, what I do—9/11 created what's called the "Post-9/11 world" and that entails a multitude of things—the lies of 9/11, the lies of the Iraq war, the

torture, Guantanamo Bay—just so many different things are under this umbrella of the "Post-9/11 world." And I have a tendency to focus on most everything related to that issue. And I think you do as well. (Yeah)

So I completely understand your apprehensiveness at being associated with the "9/11 Truth Movement" or the 9/11 Truthers. But I think the need to differentiate ourselves from how the media has portrayed us over the years, stems from something that many people share. And that's a fear of being dismissed with one word (Right), actually two, and that's "conspiracy theorist" and "9/11 Truther." And I think a lot of people—

RAY And I know we've only got an hour here, but I'd like to just rip on that for a second. The thing is that not everyone is even as educated about—in fact, most people are not as educated about just most of the things that occur on a day-to-day basis as we would like, and so it's funny because I post about issues like the NSA's surveillance. I've got a major problem with that and so when news stories come out in *The Guardian* or *The New York Times*, I'll post about it, make a comment on Facebook. Or, I'll post about the war on whistleblowers, because I've got a major problem with that, too. (Yep) But I'll post these things and then I'll actually hear from friends sometimes that are kind of like, yeah, Ray's into conspiracy theory stuff.

And it kills me! Because I NEVER mention conspiracy theory stuff on Facebook, and the fact that they think that me even talking about CIA torturing people or NSA eavesdropping on all of our metadata is—that falls into the category of conspiracy theory, even though it's written about every day in *The New York Times*. It's kind of crazy. So, anyway.

JON Well people have been trained essentially that when they hear the word conspiracy theory they automatically shut down. I define the phrase "conspiracy theorist" or "conspiracy theory" as a phrase used by the establishment to silence and/or discredit dissent. That's how I see that phrase.

But, anyway, let's move on because we only have an hour. Tell us a little bit about your background in film. Where did you go to school and so forth?

RAY It's not that interesting (laughs), but I had wanted to be like Alfred Hitchcock, that was my thinking when I went into school, and I went to Columbia College in Chicago. Got a nice little film education, and then came out—honestly, by late in school a couple documentaries really kind of

turned me on to what docs could be, and then that's basically "The Thin Blue Line" by Errol Morris and Michael Moore's "Bowling for Columbine." Of course I've seen a lot more since then, but at the time my exposure to those two kind of led me down the documentary path, and then just sort of right out of school, again, I'd become very into this issue or these multiple issues connected with 9/11 and became aware of the Jersey widows, and then from that point on was obsessed with getting their story to the screen so that—I felt like people would understand these issues if they could just sit there in a room with these widows and hear them talk, and that was kind of the concept for the film, you know?

JON Right. Well, how did you come to be the director for *9/11 Press for Truth*?

RAY You know, I've got to give a lot of credit to Kyle Hence, Rory O'Connor, and my co-producer and stone cold colleague John Duffy, along with a lot of other people, yourself included. Kyle in particular at the beginning helped us get connected to the Jersey widows, helped us find some funding—and we would get it in little fits and starts—five grand here, ten grand here, so we would shoot for a while, or we'd edit for a while and then we'd have to stop and get paid jobs. So this kind of dragged on for three years. But I was sort of the director from the beginning. I had kind of a vision for it and then put together my thoughts on what this would be and so as we went—we sort of kept adding to the scene in different ways that were really important, but I stayed the director.

JON Right. Can you please explain to us the process you underwent to decide what would go into the film and what wouldn't go into the film? And before you answer that, I just remember times when Kyle would send me early versions of the film and ask me, "What do you think should be in here?" (Mm-hmm) And I loved the film as it was, like it couldn't get any better to me at the time, and I'm like "I got nothin'." (Laughs, yeah) But, anyway, what process did you go through?

RAY Well, honestly we let Paul Thompson's timeline be the guide. And so there were a lot of things that he—for those who don't know, he had pulled together I think at the time it was 11,000 different mainstream news stories—so all credible—and it pulled different sort of facts and lines of things out of them and it built these maps—timelines and, yeah, so we gravitated towards—it was kind of like well, this is about 9/11, so let's, for one thing, the very first thing they started to say on the first day being people in the Government, the first few days after 9/11, the first week, was that they had

no warnings. And Paul had documented so much stuff, and of course, now we all just kind of know that there was a flood of intel that had come in pointing to all kinds of things that should of... actions should have been taken. So we thought, well obviously, that's got to be a category.

Let's at least—let's take out the, I guess the floor that holds... kind of holds this 9/11 thing together that there were no warnings and nobody saw it coming. Let's start there. And then we thought well, I mean, what did 9/11 lead to—it led to war in Afghanistan. So how did that actually play out? Because we thought the war was to go after Bin Laden and get Al-Qaeda.

And looking at the details, it just seemed like they let—I mean Al-Qaeda just escaped again and again and again. And Bin Laden escaped, and you could actually follow if you went through these articles, the paths that he took and, they would bomb an airport nearby, but they wouldn't bomb this parade of cars. So it's like, well okay, so then let's kind of debunk what the goal was for the first war to come out of 9/11 was. And then it was sort of like well, was there a sponsorship for this beyond Al-Qaeda? And I would have done this maybe differently now, but at the time Paul Thompson had put together a pretty solid argument for at least looking at Pakistan, and what made Pakistan so interesting, of course, was that the U.S., despite all this evidence, that they were possible sponsors of the attack and certainly sponsors of Al-Qaeda and chosen to partner with them, and it was sort of a mysterious odd partnership that seemed to last no matter what evidence came out to the contrary.

So that was kind of what we—that was the process. That was what we thought of.

JON

Well, with regard to Pakistan, I mean, there are still reasons to question the entire Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed ordering Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to wire transfer \$100,000 to Mohamed Atta—(Right). There's still reason to bring attention to that issue, even though a document from the 9/11 Commission was discovered that says very simply that the Pakistani ISI had nothing to do with the attacks, but it's redacted. It's so greatly redacted and it doesn't even mention the names Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed or Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh (Well—) Basically, because of the reporting about that issue, I firmly believe there's more reason to believe that it happened than it didn't. However, today we could have focused on Saudi Arabia's role or the Saudi Royals' role (Sure), as well as a possible ISI role and so forth.

- RAY And, if we were doing the film today, there's no question we would have given some weight to the Saudis if not more to that story. And, an interesting anecdote, Kyle Hence met Barack Obama. He got into an event—I'll tell you the details, they're pretty funny—and got into a line when Obama was running for President and was still a Senator, and got him a copy—well, no, I'm sorry, he got him a copy of Press for Truth at some point prior, and when he got into the event he said, "Hey, do you remember me? I got you a copy of the movie. Did you watch it?" And he said, "Yes, I did." And he volunteered, "I liked it." I don't know if that's true, because you know, politicians. But I always wondered, Obama took a much tougher stance against Pakistan, kind of ignored their sovereignty when it was time to look at Abbottabad and has been bombing out there for quite some time, so I kind of feel bad about that. I mean if we played any role, I'm sure it was fairly minor, but in shaping the thinking there that certainly wasn't what I intended that we needed to attack Pakistan.
- JON No, that's one thing that wasn't in the film that I think could have been in the film is a declaration saying that we don't want war with these countries that we're bringing attention to. We want individuals held accountable, but—something to that effect.
- RAY Sure, and the partnership question—yeah, the partnership with some of these nations, then it would probably extend beyond ones related to 9/11. We need to look in general at who we are considering our allies and who we're financing.
- JON Right. And, what—is there anything in the film that you would like to take out today and vice versa—is there anything that isn't in the film that you would like to be in there today?
- RAY Ah, yes, but that's such a gigantic question (laughter) because if I was going to do the film today, it would focus almost entirely around the Who is Rich Blee? side of things. So, essentially, the inside story of this massive screw-up at CIA that many journalists have called the worst intelligence failure of our time. The meat of those details. I mean, that's where my head is at for the last few years. So, I'd do that. The other thing I'd do is I'd like to restructure the film. I think we made a mistake. We basically kept the widows' journeys to the first half hour through act one and we sort of jumped off to follow the issues that they were so passionate about. But I think that was a mistake. We should have basically strung their story

throughout the film so that you sort of kept that dramatic hold. So, chalk it up to me being 25, but yeah.

JON Well, if I were to have a say today, I would put more emphasis on the ridiculousness of the 9/11 Commission (Right), of Philip Zelikow, the fact that there were Government minders intimidating witnesses. I would—the fact that the 9/11 (Yeah—) Commission ignored and censored a multitude of whistleblowers. A lot of that kind of stuff I would have put into the film (Yeah). Maybe some mention of the military exercises and then stuff like that I would probably put into the film. But I still—I love this film. I think it's—I say this and it's hard to believe, but I honestly do believe it, that it's one of the most important documentaries ever made, as far as I'm concerned.

RAY That's extremely kind. Thank you.

JON Well, it's not meant to be nice to you, I just honestly believe that. And that's one of the reasons that I—

RAY Well, the subject matter carried it. The widows themselves are so likeable, so smart, that you can't hear them talk and not feel moved toward their cause and not feel that they're making some kind of sense, you know?

JON Well, I've always said how can you turn your backs on the family members? How can you do that? And this is one of the reasons I gave you the money to finish the film is because it was so important to me that their message, the Jersey Girls' message get out there. And, it was so important to me to bring attention to the work of Paul Thompson. I mean this is why when I spoke to Kyle and he asked me "do you know anybody who might have money so that we can finish this film?" and I asked him what the premise of the film was and he told me and I automatically, I'm like oh my God, I have to try and do everything to get the money to them. And I asked my father and he was kind enough to give it to me and I sent it to you. (Yeah). It was just as soon as I heard the premise of the film, I knew that this documentary had to be made.

Now, how disappointed were you that the corporate media completely—in this country—completely ignored the film?

RAY Yeah, completely. We got picked up by Rupert Murdoch's history channel, but it was history channel Australia. (Laughs) And we got picked up by Al

Jazeera. We played on the fifth anniversary of 9/11, all through the Middle East, and then public television in Poland, public in Spain, you now basically they're PBS.

So, overseas there was quite a bit of interest. I mean, it's hard to remember even back to 2006, what the environment was still like. Two years after the re-election of George W. Bush, three years after we had invaded Iraq, and it was still, it was becoming more acceptable to sort of just to have some dissent, if you want to call it that, to question what the hell had been happening the last few years. But it was not, yeah, it was not something they wanted to touch.

JON Well, 9/11 has always been a third rail. It was not during before the 9/11 Commission, during the 9/11 Commission, the Jersey Girls were on the TV all the time. They were on MSNBC—so it was somewhat acceptable. Even though they didn't get a lot of coverage, they did get coverage (Mmm-hmm) and it was somewhat accessible. But after the release of the 9/11 Report, when the narrative was set in stone, the Jersey Girls became persona non grata. (Right) They would release all these press releases calling into question that, this, that, and the other thing, and they would get no attention. And it just, it was amazing to me, you know, it's unfortunate that at the time *9/11 Press for Truth* was released, do you know who was getting more attention than the movie? It was Ann Coulter, and her remarks against the Jersey Girls. She was all over the networks, and they were—

RAY And her timing on that comment, it was like she'd given us a gift. So we were able to kind of go out to the mainstream outlets that we were seeking and say, "Hey, Ann Coulter just attacked the Jersey widows. It's getting a lot of press and we've made a movie about them" was basically what would be their response. (But, the--) And yeah, the fact that it didn't get attention at that point is—

JON Well, we have to make everybody understand the fact that the media, you know, it's not like we didn't tell them this documentary existed. We worked with DownsizeDC.org, to try and get the word out. We made sure that every member of the House and Senate got a copy of the documentary. So, it's not like—it's not like they weren't aware—

RAY Jon, I got called—I got called in 2007 by a producer from 60 Minutes who said that he—I'm sure he lives in New York, he has a friend who had seen it, was raving about it, something, and he was like "it seems like something

I could see we're doing—we might be doing a story related to these issues and then maybe we could talk to you or talk to Paul Thompson or something. And I said, "Sure." So I waited a couple days, never heard back, and finally I called him and left a voice mail and called him again and got a hold of him and he basically said, "Yeah, you know, I watched it. I don't really see what the story is here." And it's like well, then maybe I could be working at 60 Minutes, because I could think of probably 20 stories you could do just starting from this film, you know? (Right) Go figure.

JON Well, the corporate media ignored it, but the people that did give it some attention were some movie critics and every single movie critic that reviewed the film, gave it positive reviews. How happy were you about that?

RAY It was nice, yeah. That part was good. I mean, you're right, but audiences in general that I saw were mostly positive. The reviews were mostly positive. We got, what was it, *The Boston Globe* film critic who was also reviewing for AM New York at the time gave it 3.5 out of 4.0 stars on AM New York, so we thought well that's something. But, ultimately our goal was not to get reviewed. Our goal was to get viewed.

JON To get attention. At every showing of the film that you attended, how was it received?

RAY My favorite screening was—short answer is, that at every screening—actually, let me tell you about the first one. It was before we—we only had it in a rough cut and we did a test screening for friends, family, and friends of friends and we filled a theater in Indianapolis and they watched it. And when it ended there was just this dead silence in the theater, which I usually take as a bad thing. (Laughs) (Right) Credits were rolling. I was kind of hoping there might be some claps or something. I finally just got up and kind of awkwardly said, "Hey, well, I'm going to be in the lobby if anybody wants to talk." And, what I kind of heard from everybody later was that they were just so bothered by what they had seen and they were still processing. They didn't want to applaud. They wanted to sit there and go "what the hell is going on?"

JON I know. Well—

RAY We had this great screening in Minneapolis. I think it was 9/11 Anniversary 2007, and there was a 700-seat theater that was oversold, and there were

people in the rows, and it was attended by former Governor Jesse Ventura, and the *Time* magazine person of the year Coleen Rowley, who also introduced the film, and that was my favorite. Everybody was incredibly supportive. The media came out. And we ended up going across to a wine bar for the Q&A afterwards, and half the audience followed over and packed in and were asking us questions. Yeah.

It served a purpose. What I wanted to do with the film was—I remember fourth of July, 2002, first fourth of July after 9/11, and I'm at a family barbecue and I remember my aunt saying, "You know what I want this fourth of July? A big bomb dropped on Saddam Hussein." And I thought to myself how does that follow suit at all? Like where is that even coming from? There was no way I could download all the things that were in my brain from Paul Thompson's timeline, from the Jersey widows . . . I just needed to put it out there in a thing where people could sit and watch the journey and get it. And I feel like, at the very least, it accomplished that goal from what people have said.

JON Well, the very first showing that I ever went to of *9/11 Press for Truth* was at a conference that was held in Chicago, in June, 2006, and I sat through the showing and it was actually the first time I had seen this version of the film, so I was just as interested as everybody else in seeing it, and, I always cry at the end—it doesn't matter how many times I see the film, I always cry at the end. (Laughs. Right) And, that's how you feel at the end of the film. I mean, you're just so heartbroken that these kinds of things can happen.

Now, I got to say, with regard to the promising or favorable reviews that this film got, it's gotten more positive feedback in that regard than anything else created for this cause.

And so now, my next question to you is that—some people in the "9/11 Truth Movement" said that the movie was "soft and misleading" and that it "didn't go far enough." What do you have to say to those people?

RAY Well, if you think basically that Cheney was controlling a joystick that morning and flew empty planes or hologram planes into the side of buildings and that there were bombs that took things down, etc., etc., then this is not the movie for you. (Right) Because it's not what we talk about. So, actually, I like that a certain sector of people were so adamant that—I think the term that got used was, a limited hangout. (Right) That's okay

with me. Because, I didn't want to tell their story, that they believe so passionately. I wanted to tell the Jersey widows' story and, hopefully, touch on most of the things that they felt. Although there was not time and we ended up on our own dime doing an additional piece that was a DVD called *In Their Own Words*. It was kind of a companion where we could kind of pull all these other issues that we just weren't able to put into the framework of the narrative to tell. I know you've said you almost felt like that stuff was better than what was in the movie. But, yeah—

JON Well, the second—*In Their Own Words: The Untold Stories of the 9/11 Families* is actually two hours long, which is longer than the Press for Truth movie (Right) (Laughs). There are things in that film that get me angry, get me upset, when I watch Lorie Van Auken start to cry, I get so angry, Ray (Yeah). You don't understand the anger that I feel. Because I want these people to have the justice that they so richly deserve.

I mean, I talk about this a lot. I say I'm familiar with the anger that I feel knowing everything that I do about 9/11, but I can't imagine being somebody who knows what I do on top of having lost someone that day? (Right) That's just unfathomable to me. It's unimaginable to me. When you put yourself in their shoes, it just—to have to watch the names of their loved ones used to do all these horrific things (Yeah) in this country and around the world, and all the while they're being lied to?

RAY The anger that you would feel, right? I mean, and you know, I actually think, see you're a very empathetic guy, and I actually think that's a fairly rare trait among humans. I wish more of us had it, because I think it'd be a much better world if you even try to put yourself in other people's shoes and feel what they feel, you know.

JON Right. All right. The next question is: How important is the site www.HistoryCommons.org and the Complete 9/11 Timeline, in your eyes?

RAY Yeah, Derek Mitchell started HistoryCommons and basically just kind of developed it around, initially around Paul Thompson's timeline working with Paul to give him an outlet for all this sort of research. But they used—I mean, it's so helpful because now they've expanded beyond a single issue. There's Iraq. There's U.S. interventions in various countries. There's all kinds of different things that they—history of CIA torture. And, again, the difference between somebody writing some essays or writing a blog on some different subjects and this—is that every single thing in there you can

click a hyperlink and you can go back to the original story. You check it for yourself. You can learn more if you want. Or, after a while if you've done that enough times, you kind of get to trust—okay, this is a trustworthy timeline, you know. They're not misrepresenting the information here. So you can just read—and then putting it chronologically so that you can really sit there and go like, how did—let's say with the NSA thing—like what is all the information that we publicly know about the NSA scandal, and let's read it in order, skip around, let's just do a certain point, or let's just look at Snowden's role and click that and just see that portion of the line. I think it's a really amazing tool that I think will end up, hopefully, eventually be up there with kind of a Wikipedia, where they do crowdsource information, but this is sort of expert driven information told from all mainstream sources. Yeah, I mean, I can't rave enough about it. And anybody who's a journalist who's been covering War on Terror issues, in particular, uses that site all the time. And I hope they all donate. (Laughs)

JON Well, that's what I want to say. I say this a lot and I think that HistoryCommons.org is literally one of the most important websites on the Internet, literally. (Yeah) I've been a contributor. I've contributed a couple of entries having to do with the family members in the Complete 9/11 Timeline and it was like an honor to me to be able to contribute to this timeline. (Mm-hmm) So again, they're in need of money. They're always in need of money. So if you can support them in any way financially, it would be greatly appreciated. I can't imagine—

RAY And they're developing the 2.0 right now, so now they're really going to kick it up a notch and go to the next level and they need support more than ever.

JON That's great. I just—I can't imagine that site ever coming down. Can you imagine that? I mean—

RAY I mean, think about it, if it ran out of money and one day you just couldn't access all that info (Laughs), yeah, I have no idea what I would do for my research.

JON I would feel naked without the Complete 9/11 Timeline. (Laughs) Anyway, all right. The next question is who is Rich Blee? What was Alec Station? And why did you transition into researching what's known as Footnote 44 of the 9/11 Report?

RAY

Right. Yeah, so by the time we were done editing Press for Truth, I had spent so many hours with the footage, with the 9/11 subject, and as I've think made clear, I don't really consider myself a single-issue guy. So I was really ready. I felt I'd done my little piece of it there and that was kind of going to be that. I wanted to move on.

But, the same month that Press for Truth came out, one of the Jersey widows, Kristen Breitweiser, who was the only one that never interviewed with us, put out a book called *Wake-up Call*. A very good read, would recommend it. It's a good book. But, she steered clear of going into many of the issues that they'd been passionate about for the most part in the book, except for one chapter. And she devoted an entire chapter to one subject and she called that chapter Footnote 44. And so in reading that it was really hard—as many people have since told us, and not random people, but people who actually worked in the Government—counter-terrorist FBI; counter-terrorist military; CIA; former White House counter-terrorist officials—like they've all sung the same tune there, which is basically to them, this is the 9/11 story. If you were going to look into anything, this is the one. And we just couldn't turn away from it. And it centers around this massive—I'll call it a screw-up, it was deliberate, but I don't think the intention was what the outcome was. But we can talk about that. (Laughs)

But, basically, what's in the CIA, there was this failure for a year and a half prior to 9/11, this deliberate decision not to tell any other areas of the Government that two future 9/11 hijackers who had just attended a major Al-Qaeda meeting, planning meeting, had come to the U.S. And, we can get into all kinds of details. So, basically, we thought well, okay, if people are calling this the worst intelligence failure of our time, or one of them, where does the buck stop? Who would we blame for this? While there are many people you could point to, we thought the number one guy would be the head of the Bin Laden station—the office at CIA that had been deliberately created just to handle Al-Qaeda issues. So who was that guy? And for the longest time we didn't know. And finally, thanks to HistoryCommons and one of the contributors, Kevin Fenton, we came to find out the name of the gentleman was Rich Blee. And what astounded me was a whole year after he had put that name out on the net, not a single mainstream media news source had cited the name. It was still sort of considered classified until somebody ran with it. And since nobody would . . . so we thought let's do a whole piece that examines who is Rich Blee? and why is this important?

JON Okay, so Rich Blee was the person that was in charge of Alec Station. He actually took the place after Michael Scheuer and so that's what that was.

RAY Yeah, he grew up across the street. He was the son of a major CIA figure during the Cold War, grew up practically across the street from the CIA, joined as soon as he was roughly old enough, right after graduate school, and had spent his life there and was advancing—it seemed to me that he was trying to advance a little faster than his father had. So he got his first station—he became buddies with George Tenet, the CIA director, was very close with him, was very close with Cofer Black, the head of the counter-terrorist center, and had come in to sort of shake things up and take things in a new direction. It was under his tenure that all of this, that the worst Intel failures occurred. They could have easily prevented 9/11 and many throughout the Government are still very angry to this day about the fact that they weren't given the info that would have allowed them to take action.

JON Well, one of the things, or one of the people that Kristen Breitweiser has a problem with, and she mentioned it throughout her book, was George Tenet. Now, can you tell us some of the lies George Tenet told to the Joint Congressional Inquiry and the 9/11 Commission?

RAY Yeah, absolutely. My favorite one is—so, this all centers—it doesn't all center around, but this story kind of really starts to get hot in January of 2000, when the CIA, via the Bin Laden office, finds out that there's going to be a gathering of various high-level Al-Qaeda figures in Malaysia. And so it monitors that meeting and coordinates quite a number of different CIA stations, different foreign intelligence stations to follow people from their points of origin to this meeting. They were outside the meeting. They got photos, they got video. And then, they supposedly—well, okay, so they find out that one future 9/11 hijacker has a U.S. visa—that's going to expire within a very short amount of time, so if he's going to use it, it's going to be soon. And they—there's a lot of things you could say about it, but bottom line is they prevented the information from going over to FBI and the White House and then they sent an internal email at CIA saying that info had been passed so that nobody would get a wild hair up their ass and decide to go ahead and do it. They thought it was already done.

And so the biggest lie from Tenet, one of the earliest ones, was when the first investigation by the Congress Intelligence Committee started with the Joint Inquiries. He went before them, and at that point all they knew was

that they had found one cable from March of 2000, that came from the Bangkok station that basically said: Hey, guys, we want to let you know one of these people who attended this meeting has in fact arrived in the U.S.—traveled to the U.S. And so somebody—I can't remember, you may remember—I can't remember which member of the committee asked the question, but they asked Tenet straight out—

JON It was Carl—

RAY Levin?

JON Yeah, Carl Levin.

RAY Okay. So, Carl Levin asked them straight out: "Why did you—or why did no one take action about this?" An Al-Qaeda member inside the United States. Tenet had the brass ones to say: "Nobody read that in the March timeframe." And Levin said: "You're telling me this came in your office saying Al-Qaeda's arrived in the U.S. and nobody read that memo?" He said: "Yes, nobody read it in the March timeframe."

Now, cut to a couple years later, his own Inspector General, the CIA Inspector General John Helgerson finishes an internal investigative report into this matter. He concludes that 50 people at CIA were aware of the information that these guys had a visa and that one had traveled to the U.S. And it just so happens that 50 was about the number of employees at the Bin Laden station working for Rich Blee (Right). So, that was a big one. A bigger one though, when we talked with the head of the 9/11 Commission—we managed to get an interview with him in his office back in 2008, Tom Kean—I found him a likeable guy. I know we've got our issues with the way the investigation was handled.

He, on a personal level, seemed all right. And, we asked him and he pointed us to the fact that they asked Tenet straight out—and I since have seen the video—did you ever meet with—it's the summer of threat, your hair was on fire you're telling us, you're trying everything to get somebody to take action: "Did you ever meet with the President in the month of August?" Remember, that was THE month before 9/11. And he said: "No." And then Congressman Roemer, he just seems dumbfounded. He's just kind of blinking and looking at him and he says: "You never met with—did you speak with the President on the phone?" And he said: "No, we weren't

talking about that then. I never got the President on the phone." Roemer: "You never talked to the President the month before...?" He said: "No."

Right afterwards they send a message: "Oh, George was mistaken." And, you know, this was after he can't be questioned about it. (Right) Oh, George was mistaken. He actually—he flew down to Crawford, Texas, and met with him once. Then met with him again at the White House on like two days before the end of the month. So he met with him twice. So now we have no way to know what they discussed during this key time period. And, Tom Kean, we asked him straight out: "Do you think he misspoke?" And his answer was: "I don't think he misspoke. I think he misled." (Snickers)

So—(Well—) . . . and he also said: "Look, nobody ever forgets a meeting with the President. You're working in the White House, you meet with the President a lot, nobody ever forgets a meeting with the President. When you get time with the President, that is special and you remember it." So—

JON

Right. All right, now, you kind of went over this really quickly, and this is one of the most interesting aspects of the whole Alec Station story to me. And it has to do with Doug Miller and Mark Rossini, they were two FBI agents assigned to Alec Station, CIA Officer Michael Anne Casey, also assigned to Alec Station and, Alec Station's deputy chief, Tom Wilshire. And I'm going to read—this is a rather long (laughs) question, but it has to be read so people understand exactly what happened. And all of this information is from www.historycommons.org.

On January 5, 2000, Doug Miller writes a cable to notify the FBI "that 9/11 hijacker Khalid Almihdhar has a US visa." Under orders from Tom Wilshire, Michael Anne Casey blocks this cable. Later in the day, Casey distributes a false cable to CIA stations overseas "saying the information that 9/11 hijacker Khalid Almihdhar has a U.S. visa has been sent to the FBI 'for further investigation.'" The next day, according to author James Bamford, Mark Rossini was "perplexed and outraged that the CIA would forbid the bureau's notification on a matter so important." He confronted Casey on the subject. And the reason according to Casey for not notifying the FBI was that "the next attack is going to happen in Southeast Asia—it's not the bureau's jurisdiction. When we want the FBI to know about it, we'll let them know." Rossini protests, saying, "they're here!" and, "It is FBI business," but

to no avail. Even though he is an FBI agent, he cannot pass on the notification to the bureau without permission from his superiors at Alec Station. The Justice Department's Office of Inspector General will later call the failure to pass the information to the FBI a "significant failure" but will be unable to determine why the information was not passed on.

So, let me recap this really quickly. Somebody from the FBI wanted to draft a cable to send to the FBI to notify them that one of the hijackers has a U.S. visa. They were blocked by somebody from within the CIA who later that day sent out a false cable saying that the FBI was notified. And then the next day was confronted by one of the FBI agents, Mark Rossini, and she said, she gave a reason as to why they couldn't do it.

So, my question to you is—It sounds to me that the real reason for not sending this cable has a criminal aspect to it. Do you agree or disagree?

RAY I don't know if the REASON for not sending the cable has a criminal aspect to it—the not sending the cable has a criminal aspect to it. And it's only further so when—so at the time we could call it a breach of protocol. Now, I actually have been trying to get in touch with a lawyer to break down each of the myriad crimes associated with some of these figures over the years, beginning with that and moving forward, but when it absolutely became a crime was in October of 2000, several months later.

So let's say the CIA has their own gameplan—and I tend to believe that the CIA had not had a lot of victories on the "War on Terror" and was feeling a lot of—the pre-9/11 War on Terror, the one going on that nobody really knew about it. And the FBI had been the lead agency under Clinton and they had taken this law enforcement approach, and they'd been fairly successful. If an attack occurred or an attack, you know, sometimes they would stop an attack, but they would round up a cell, they would put them on trial using the old-fashioned justice system, and they would put them away.

And, so, the CIA needed a big win. And they hated John O'Neill, the head of the FBI's whatever, the counter-terror unit, and so they wanted to, in my opinion, they took an opportunity they knew if they gave the lead to O'Neill, it would become an FBI thing and maybe they felt he would bungle it—I don't know. I can't get inside their heads. They decided to go another way, and we could speculate on what that was, but they withheld the info.

Now, cut to October of 2000, the USS Cole gets bombed. Well that same planning meeting that the guys who had entered the U.S. had also been attended by the leaders of the Cole bombing—the masterminds. And so as these crack John O'Neill FBI investigators starts using old-school techniques, no torture, tried and true techniques, detective and interview and so forth, they were able to figure out basically who the masterminds were and started to see that all these people had met and also exchanged money in a time period in January, 2000 in Malaysia.

So they asked CIA: "Do you know anything about this?" And Ali Soufan, the FBI agent in charge sent three messages over the course of about a six-month period, each one more detailed. Each one asking: "Do you have any info?" The first one they sent back a message—and, again, this went to the Bin Laden office, so we know who can take some blame here—they sent a message back that definitively said: "No." They ignored the second two requests. What Lawrence Wright, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who wrote *The Looming Tower* about this subject, has said is that he's always felt that this was obstruction of justice and the criminal investigation by the FBI of 17-dead U. S. sailors.

But I also think it was part of the reason why they continued to withhold it up until 9/11—and, again, this is only my view. But, at that point they had a choice to make. Either come clean and say: "We have information about these people connected to the Cole." And then just take a giant slap on the wrist because they basically are responsible for these deaths by not sharing that information. Or, they could double-down and keep withholding and sort of hope that the FBI finds out these guys are in the U.S. on their own. And, I believe that's basically the choice they made and it blew up big time in their faces, quite literally, on 9/11.

JON

Well, now, we talk about one of the things the 9/11 Commission emphasized a lot was that people weren't sharing information. And I, I don't know why they were not sharing information, but to me the individuals who made the decisions not to share information should have been held accountable. I've said this before. If you own a business and somebody loses a million dollars in your business, do you reward that person? (Right) Or do you fire that person? And you fire that person. You hold them accountable so that these kinds of things don't happen again. And in a lot of cases, in too many cases, with regard to 9/11, we saw that people who failed to do their job were rewarded and promoted. And Michael Anne

Casey, the individual who blocked the cable under orders from Tom Wilshire and then sent the false cable out, she was actually promoted, I believe, after 9/11.

RAY Well, certainly the mysterious redhead, the one named Alfreda Bikowsky, who was the office manager working closely with Tom Wilshire and the direct supervisor of Michael Anne Casey, she certainly was promoted and was just promoted again and again within that—even before 9/11 she got a promotion to deputy chief of Alec Station and then, I think, within about a year or year and a half after she was promoted to chief of Alec Station. And then when they closed the Bin Laden unit Alec Station, they formed a sort of larger War on Terror unit that was called the Global Jihad Unit and she became in charge of that. And to this day, continues running the War on Terror in collaboration with the counter-terrorist center chief of CIA.

They're basically the two key players. So she was involved with drones, she was involved with the failure, to some extent, to get Bin Laden the first time. She was involved with the development of the torture program, the mistaken rendition of at least one individual that's German, an innocent German who happened to have the same name as an Al-Qaeda guy, and on her instinct alone, they held him and tortured him for five months. So you point out in kind of an abstract way, the beauty of this idea of accountability and how simple it is—that you reward the behavior you want to see, and you punish the behavior you don't want to see because you're trying to create an outcome that's positive going forward. Well, this story gives us the lesson of that. Why did we need to fire her? Hold her to account, or all of these people, at that time. Post-9/11 when we had the opportunity. Why? Because if you don't, you get all of this stuff that I just listed that they continue to do afterwards.

JON Right. Well, I've always, and this is pure speculation on my part, but I've always felt that the reason that nobody was held accountable with regard to 9/11 is because the minute that you start holding people accountable, they start to talk. (Right) For instance, you tell somebody they didn't do their job and then they say: "What do you mean, I didn't do MY job? I DID my job. It was so-and-so that blocked me (Right) from doing more of my job." And that's—names start to be told. And that's why I think people were honestly not held accountable. And—

RAY I agree, the other issue too, was that they were in a little bit of a spot. So, right after 9/11, the Government announces a new era and they realize

they're going to need a lot of experts on Al-Qaeda. But there weren't that many. There were like 50 inside CIA, somewhere in that number in FBI. So, they immediately turned to those people.

But their greatest mistake became the springboard for promotion because they suddenly were not only sought after and needed but the group that they were a part of, that office and agency, suddenly became the most important at the CIA. Came to dominate the agency, and ultimately dominate U.S. policy and strongly influence it going forward.

So when George Tenet found out in November of 2001, when basically a CIA historian came up and said: "We've been combing the archives and we basically found this whole story" that you and I have just been talking about having Tenet on record, a couple of times actually having said: "This is bad." And so one must question why the Congressional investigation didn't have more information about that story when it started the following year. Why the 9/11 Commission a whole three years later still didn't get that story, there was clearly a cover-up. And that can be a loaded term. It certainly applies here. Keep that story under wraps and protect those individuals and that has resulted in multiple tragedies led by those individuals.

JON Absolutely. And the families certainly deserved to see people held accountable, I believe (Yeah), which is something they never saw.

Anyway, my last question to you is: Is there any website or something you would like to promote?

RAY Yeah, not really. If you haven't seen *9/11 Press for Truth* yet, you can rent it from Netflix, or you can find it online. We've never taken it down (Laughs). Or buy a copy, if you want to support it. And then I would send people to the Facebook page "Secrecy Kills." You just search "secrecy kills." If you go into the "about" section and you will find links to the Who Is Rich Blee podcast which goes into first-person stories telling them essentially what we've discussed here and gives links to the other works we've done in this area, and regular updates on the subjects.

JON And also, obviously, HistoryCommons.org. (Of course) We want to bring as much attention to that site as possible.

RAY Listen, before we wrap up, KBDI was the only television agency in the country to give us, not once but twice, platforms to play Press for Truth, basically the PBS of Colorado and so we've got to thank them and we've got to thank the folks who hosted screenings of the movie in the first couple of years it had come out. The massive support. We made a movie, but it was everybody else that actually got it out there.

JON Right, and also to point out KBDI, they got so much praise from so many people for showing that movie. It was really quite amazing and it kind of made me feel good to see all that praise.

Ray, I want to thank you very much for your time today. It's really been an honor for me to have you on the show today. I want to thank you for making this film, and I want to thank you for continuing to seek the truth. And for being a friend.

RAY Well, Jon, back at ya on all of that. There's no better person to have this conversation with than you, so as soon as you asked me, I knew it was going to be a conversation that I would enjoy, and I really appreciate it.

JON Well, thank you very much, Ray, and good luck with everything, with all of your endeavors, and hopefully maybe we can have you on again sometime.

RAY Sounds good.

JON All right, thanks a lot, Ray.

RAY Take care, Jon.

JON Bye, bye.

RAY Bye.



Chapter/Episode 5 – Coleen Rowley – September 16, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Coleen Rowley (COLEEN)

JON Hi everyone and welcome to my show called "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show is going to focus on the importance of whistleblowing. Many people have put their jobs, their lives, and their freedom on the line by whistleblowing. If not for many of the whistleblowers that have come forward, we would not know about much of the corruption taking place within our Government and elsewhere. They are an essential part of having a true democracy and, in my opinion, should be treated like the heroes that they are.

Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Coleen Rowley.

COLEEN Hi, Jon.

JON Hi, Coleen. How are you?

COLEEN Hi, fine.

JON

I'm going to go ahead and read her bio for us.

Coleen Rowley grew up in a small town in northeast Iowa. She obtained a B.A. degree in French from Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa and then attended the College of Law at the University of Iowa and graduated with honors in 1980, also passing the Iowa Bar Exam that summer.

In January of 1981, Rowley was appointed a Special Agent with the FBI and initially served in the Omaha, Nebraska and Jackson, Mississippi Divisions. In 1984 she was assigned to the New York Office and for over six years worked on Italian organized crime and Sicilian heroin drug investigations. During this time Rowley also served three separate temporary duty assignments in the Paris, France Embassy and Montreal Consulate.

In 1990 Rowley was transferred to Minneapolis where she assumed the duties of "Chief Division Counsel," which entailed oversight of the Freedom of Information, Forfeiture, Victim-Witness and Community Outreach Programs as well as providing regular legal and ethics training to FBI Agents of the Division and some outside police training.

In May of 2002, Rowley brought some of the pre 9-11 lapses to light and testified to the Senate Judiciary Committee about some of the endemic problems facing the FBI and the intelligence community. Rowley's memo to FBI Director Robert Mueller in connection with the Joint Intelligence Committee's Inquiry led to a two-year long Department of Justice Inspector General investigation. She was one of three whistleblowers chosen as persons of the year by TIME magazine—and that was in 2002.

In April 2003, following an unsuccessful and highly criticized attempt to warn the Director and other administration officials about the dangers of launching the invasion of Iraq, Rowley stepped down from her (GS-14) legal position to go back to being a (GS-13) FBI Special Agent. She retired from the FBI at the end of 2004 and now speaks publicly to various groups, ranging from school children to business/professional/civics groups, on two different topics: ethical decision-making and "civil liberties and effective investigation."

I'm going to read a little personal bio that I had written for Coleen. On September 11, 2004, I attended Pacifica Radio's "9/11 People's Commission" in Washington D.C. Coleen was one of the panelists, along

with other people like Sibel Edmonds, John Judge, Ray McGovern and others. That was the first time I'd met her. She probably doesn't remember, but I just walked up to her when I had the chance to thank her for what she had done. Like many whistleblowers, Coleen is a hero to me. Over the years, I have watched her grow as an activist, and it truly has been a pleasure. She tries so hard with all of her endeavors and, as I said, it is a pleasure to watch her. She is a true leader, and I know that many people appreciate what she does.

So, hi again Coleen. How are you doing? (Laughs)

COLEEN Yeah, that was the long one. The short one is just that I taught Law and Ethics. But, that's—thank you so much for having me.

JON That is not a problem. I figured you deserve the full treatment, so I read the whole bio.

Okay, so we're just going to get right into the questions. What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

COLEEN Well, it was ordinary until I walked by a television when—and I don't, till this day, recall now if it was the first or second plane. I think it had to be the second plane. But, there was either—there might have been a re-broadcast of the plane flying into the building. And so, like within—I walked by and a secretary was in there watching it and I turned around and I said, "Oh, my gosh, it's—this is connected to the guy that they're investigating in Minnesota." And I walked right into my boss's office and he had already called the agent in whose name is known—I should say, too, that nothing I really talk about is—it all comes from public documents because there was a trial in the Moussaoui case, one of the only 9/11 suspects to be tried in all these years. What they call the mastermind is still in Guantanamo and hasn't even had a trial. (Right) All these years later, and maybe can't. I mean there's been a lot of talk that they can't even have a trial because of what's gone on with torture, etc.

But, in the Moussaoui case, a lot of the information did come out. I think it was in 2006, that that trial took place. So it still took a long time, but some information, public documents came out that way. So, I'm speaking only from those and from the investigative reports, the Inspector General, and the 9/11 Commission reports. Otherwise, even retired FBI agents cannot speak freely. They must get everything they write or say pre-approved by

the FBI, until they're a hundred years old. It doesn't matter the age. Which is something people don't understand, how tightly guarded information is now. I know I'm digressing here, but it kind of does tie in with the whole situation of 9/11.

JON No, no, it's okay, go ahead.

COLEEN Yeah, I'm digressing, but this is the top—this is how it works. People talk about, they have like war stories that they will tell about their famous kidnapping case they worked and they won't ever get pre-publication for use of those things. They'll talk in their own settings and to like the "Jaycees" and things like that. They'll even in some cases even write stories about this. But those are never a problem.

But when it is something that they really are tightly controlling, then of course they will use anything you say as a pretext to be classified. And this has happened now with you where they classified information that was not even originally classified. That's the case that's going to the Supreme Court right now of Robert MacLean. Yeah, he got a telephone call, a text on the telephone call that was not classified at all about a threat and he talked about it. So that's a case. Thomas Drake—none of the documents that Thomas Drake had with him were classified.

So they use these things. And, in my case, the memo that I ended up writing later was not classified, but they used the words "French Intelligence" on that memo to black that out, as if that was classified. And even though that was all over the news that the French had given him intelligence.

So, that's the kind of environment we're dealing with to begin with. But on 9/11, of course, the first thing that we on the way to trying then after all those weeks of the agents not being able to search Moussaoui's personal affects and laptop, the first thing that the thought was well, will there be anything in the items? Or, are they that compartmentalized, ya know that there won't be? And, of course, it did turn out once that warrant was obtained, and some further investigation took place, and the information that connected Moussaoui was not in his laptop. It was in his personal affects, and there were two or three things, through telephone numbers and to an indirect money receipt that came actually from the mastermind Ramzi bin al-Shibh. Had a fingerprint right on the receipt, on the money order that was sent to Moussaoui.

So, in any event, the day turned into obviously, a nightmare for everyone. (Right) And, your heart's in your mouth when you see those things. We had seen Oklahoma bombing. Not that—you know, a few years before, and it's like you see this kind of bombing thing occur in the United States, or even in an Embassy, and it's like Oh my gosh! Oh, this is terrible. You can just imagine how many people are being killed.

But, the thing about 9/11 for the agents, is that they immediately knew very quickly. I mean, knew, I say know but within a high degree of probability who were the culprits. The idea that it was Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda's group is right in the affidavit that was already drafted. And so, I mean, this is already drafted in August. And so, this is what the reaction I had AFTER 9/11 when Condi Rice and many others—"no one would have known that they would hijack planes"—and all this idea that no one would have known these things. Well, it was known and there were warnings. And that was the part that I think my memo served to eventually to try to uncover.

JON Right. Absolutely, there was so much information. It's really unbelievable today, 13 years after the fact, knowing what was available and what wasn't done. Now—

COLEEN And people forget those—the part that people—of course, we all have very short memories on this stuff, because things keep happening. The events are unfolding now as a result of 9/11. I mean, you can trace so much. Many of the—even the Islamic State now can be traced to 9/11. I mean, really, there's a dominoes almost. One hits another. And so, because of that people focus on the latest things and they forget the earlier part. Most people have forgotten the Anthrax case. They don't even recall it now, and it happened just a week or two after 9/11. It looked quite connected, by the way. And there's a book out now about the Anthrax investigation and really showing a lot of the gaps and flaws and that, etc. but people don't even remember that that had happened. (Right)

In the eight and a half months before the first bit of information, before journalists like Michael Isikoff and eventually Seymour Hersh was one of the first, but Isikoff was there, and there were a few others, too. They were getting little bits and pieces of this information, and the Phoenix memo had leaked maybe two weeks before I was called in to the Joint Intelligence Committee. And this was actually nine and a half, eight and a half months after 9/11. Up till that point, even the Senators on the intelligence committees were really clueless. Because again the administration—Condi

Rice is telling them nobody had any idea. They were really covering up all of the warnings that they had even gotten. (Right) Richard Clarke, who later spoke out about this. He wasn't obviously not talking publicly.

JON That's one thing I've always wondered, Richard Clarke, like him or not, when he came forward and he apologized to the families, it put him in a great light. People loved him for that. And so imagine the Bush Administration, they could have gone that route. They could have said that yes, there were clues that this might have happened. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful or something. And they would have come off in a better light, and people wouldn't think so much into the information that they were aware that this was going to happen.

So, it tends to, at least for me, it makes me think that they knew a hell of a lot more than we even know. The fact that they went through all those trials.

COLEEN Well, but you have to—I think a lot of people that are maybe outside, not only Government, but just big institutions, institutions that have a lot riding on their reputation and on—and it's not just—their money, their reputation—look at the Catholic priests. My goodness, they believe themselves protecting the Catholic faith by keeping their dirty little secrets secret. And not being more honest about it. (Right)

So, when those groups occur that way, and certainly Government is one, there is always, I mean, you might have been slightly more honest. You might have found someone that would have been not quite as, almost in a way, that's a reckless statement to say, "we had no idea that someone could fly a plane into a building." Especially when you know there's a document that shows that there were plots before this.

And so you think, well, Condi Rice, my goodness, she has a PhD., and she's got to realize that somebody's going to find that there were actually documents about plots that said planes could fly into buildings. So why would she have said that? I mean that was really, you know, whatever. But, you know why? I think this happens because the very first thought that occurs to people in these situations—and it's really everyone. Again, when you're in a big institution and you have a lot to protect if you've—this idea that the truth has to be covered up. And maybe it's almost subconscious. Again, I don't think that people in these things are necessarily any worse or badder than others. The Catholic priests here, but the first thing is we can't

tell anyone. We can't tell anyone, what happened. The truth. We'll find a way to get this out so it'll be a little sugar-coated, or whatever. Eventually, they might learn, but we're not going to go out on day one and say, yes, we were getting lots of warnings and we didn't even hold a meeting beforehand, etc.

So, I think it's kind of the norm and there is really the rare exceptions where officials have this more enlightened view that they have to be more honest, at least from the start. That is quite the exception when you find that happening. (Right) And it's much more the norm that—gather the wagon, circle the wagons and we'll figure out what to say. We'll have our story, you know, this is my story, and I'm sticking to it. That's much more the norm on any bad thing that happens.

JON Right. Now, you testified before the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11, but not before the 9/11 Commission. Your story is mentioned in a footnote in the back of the book on page 540. Did you try to contact them, or did they seek you out at all?

COLEEN No, and there's a reason for that. Nobody in the FBI that I know of would have done that. And here's the reason is because the Joint Intelligence Committees that began, like I said, about eight, about seven months after 9/11—and the backdrop to that was that the Bush's team were fighting this like tooth and nail. They had written letters, I think, to some Senators who had floated the idea of having an investigation of 9/11. Dick Cheney, especially, had written a letter saying you can't do this, etc. So they were really against it.

So the only way that the House and Senate Intelligence Committees were even able to start this—the only way they could even get this started a few months afterwards—and, by the way, all along the time the agencies were compiling their story, or their timeline of events. They would say it was the facts. But it was, they were very skewed and cherry picked, etc. And they would probably circle things in red that were too secret that they couldn't come out, etc.

So, that process started in the agencies about compiling a timeline, etc. but the actual intelligence committees did not start until about, I think, seven, six-seven months after 9/11. And the only way they were able to do that, I think a couple things, was—I've discerned this from news articles that there was a deal made, and I discerned it from Eleanor Hill's talk, too—the head

staffer of the Joint Intelligence Committee, when she finally gives the report, she prefaces her report by saying: "But, you know we were not allowed to look into the highest levels." The actions of the President. (Right) Says: I'm not of that rank. I don't know what rank Eleanor Hill was, but you know, in the very same thing happened with General Taguba, who was a 3-star general, so he could perhaps look at people lower than his rank, but to look at people up the hierarchy, General Taguba can't find fault of the people at the top. Because, you know, he can only find Lyndie ENGLAND and the people at the bottom.

Eleanor Hill essentially said the same thing. She said: "I can only—I was limited." Well, that's probably why it was even allowed to get started in the first place is that it was agreed that they would not go up. That they would look at the mistakes made at the lower levels. (Right) People like myself, people like the agent in Minneapolis, and Harry Samit, etc. So, that's what they were looking at to begin with. But that Joint Intelligence Committee was to look at the intelligence—intelligence oversight. So, they were supposed to be looking at FBI, CIA, NSA and maybe some others, but those were the main ones. Maybe, I don't know, some others but the three main ones.

So, when that was in the process, my memo led to a more in depth investigation of the FBI's failures. So, that went to the Inspector General, and you'll see that cited in the footnotes also in the 9/11 Commission. My Joint Intelligence Committee's work is cited as well as the Inspector General of the FBI. Maybe there was a little bit of the Inspector General at the CIA. I'm not sure how much they did, but I have also gathered from everything I've read since then that the only reason that you know more about the FBI failures is then that later—it took years and years, of course, but later then the Inspector General report that my memo had actually directly led to, it finally became declassified in 2006. And so, after—oh, maybe it's 2007. No, it's 2006. And so—it was right about the time after the Moussaoui trial I think they declassified it.

So, that's why people even know a little bit about some of the failures in the FBI. To this day, because there were no whistleblowers that I know of at the CIA or the FBI, or at the NSA—excuse me, there were at the NSA, but they were either fronted to the side or their information—I know Thomas Drake, gave his information about 9/11 and I don't know his information just went into a black hole or something. (Right)

So, that's what I'm saying is that the only reason we even know a little bit about the FBI—there's three main ones. One is the Moussaoui case. One is the Phoenix memo. And the third one were the two hijackers who had come into California but the the information the FBI finally got, but very late. And then what actions they had taken. And that was kind kind of the biggest one. But the only reason we know about those things is that Inspector General report was conducted and later was declassified.

So, the 9/11—now we're going to fast-forward. Your question about why the 9/11 Commission—the whole, at least this is what my understanding was, and I don't know if this is in writing anywhere, but this was definitely, I think, a verbal, verbally said, and you could probably find news reports that when they finally, when Bush and Cheney finally had to allow, in the summer of 2001, after some of this had hit the media—my memo, the Phoenix memo, and some other, maybe Richard Clarke. No, he wasn't speaking out yet, but some of this is starting to become public. The families were, of course, pushing, pushing and finally Bush and Cheney had to allow this 9/11 Commission. But, it was to be extremely limited. I suppose, again, they were to be off-limits, they themselves. That was one thing. They were not to be re-doing or reinventing all of the work that had been done already by the Joint Intelligence Committee. That was a pre-condition of the 9/11 Commission. As far as I know. This is at least what I was told, and I think this is actually, verbally was said.

Now, they were supposed to look at things like the communications SNAFU and why the first responders were not communicating. They were supposed to be looking at, I think, building structure and why would it have collapsed. Issues more on the FAA business and why the response was not quick enough. There were other things. Other issues, that were considerable actually, too, and when you look at the whole 9/11 Commission, the one chapter, which is called, let's see, System Was Blinking Red. I think it's Chapter 8, or something like that—The System Was Blinking Red. That's a small, tiny part of the 9/11 Commission. And that's the part about what intelligence was known. And the reason that probably Zelikow just wrote that from these earlier, the work done by the Joint Intelligence—you can just see. I mean, he's footnoting everything and they write a little narrative of this.

Probably, between you and I, too, I think Jamie Gorelick maybe said this once—that 9/11 Commission report might not have gotten read. It didn't get read very much anyways. People bought it for \$10, but I don't know how

much it actually got read. When I give talks I've often said, "How many people have read the 9/11 Commission Report?" And I may have one in a hundred. And I'll say, "Well, how many have just looked at it?" And then I may have like one in a hundred people in an audience that will actually say they've looked at part of it. (Right) And I'll say, "Well, Chapter 8: The System Was Blinking Red. Have you read that part?" you know? But I think that was the part, actually, that was more interesting. And so, for readers, to put that in there and basically rehash what was the conclusion of the Joint Intelligence Committees investigation and the Inspector General's report, that actually made it more interesting. The rest of the stuff that seems—to be honest, I haven't read it all myself.

JON Well, from what I've seen, there are memorandums for the record available from the 9/11 Commission that shows that they did speak with certain FBI agents who were part of this investigation or that investigation. And the mandate of the 9/11 Commission as it says was to provide a full and complete accounting of the attack and specifically including those relating to intelligence agencies, law enforcement agencies, diplomacy, immigration, non-immigrant visas, and border control, the flow of assets, the terrorist organizations, commercial aviation, the role of Congressional oversight and resource allocation and other areas determined relevant by the Commission for its inquiry.

So, they could have spoken to you, and from what I understand the 9/11 Commission, yes, it did start where the Joint Congressional Inquiry left off from, that was the basis or the foundation for a lot of what the 9/11 Commission had to say. But I still think they should have spoken with you. Anyway, let me get to my next question.

COLEEN Yeah, it would have been consistent. Because they would have said: Well, she's already—and I did get extensively debriefed both—and actually even also by the Inspector General investigation afterwards, so—I mean, I was debriefed a couple of times.

The one thing—yeah, I know, I'm, you haven't asked me this, but—the one thing that was left out of the Inspector General's report that I was told would be a part of it, was the cover-up. That was the part, because when I wrote my memo and they started this, I said well, okay, but now will this be a part of it? What happened after 9/11? These things? And, yes, oh of course. And when you finally get that Inspector General 400-500 pages,

there's nothing in there. That was totally left out. I sent them documents. I sent them all kinds of things, and that was left out.

JON So what was left out, specifically?

COLEEN Well, okay, after 9/11 my memo is written about what occurs after 9/11. You can just read my 12-page memo. (Right) It's about the fact that they weren't being forthright about this. And the more or less the cover-up and stuff, and that—there's even a meeting in the FBI after 9/11 and all—I'm sure, you can just imagine CIA and NSA were more so than the FBI even. And so, that was supposed to be in that Inspector General, in the purview—and I was told it would be. And it never—and, of course, we talked and I was debriefed about that. That's just left out. (Right)

So, I—and the bottom line is I don't find it serious that I was not called by the 9/11 Commission because that would actually be consistent because they are picking up from—they already talked to me. Am I going to say something different to new faces? Obviously. I mean, that would have to be the case though. Now they may have talked to people that for some reason hadn't been talked to in the course of the Joint Intelligence Committees.

Mueller, I know, and Maureen Baginski were interviewed by the 9/11 Commission and they are at the highest levels.

JON Well, according to 9/11 Family Member Patty Casazza, many whistleblowers were afraid to come forward before the 9/11 Commission on the basis of what happened to Sibel Edmonds and the retaliation that she received.

Did you receive any retaliation? And what's the worst case of whistleblower retaliation that you're aware of?

COLEEN Well, in my case, I was able, and I was extremely lucky, so mine is an unusual case. I did not actually—ya know, they couldn't make this distinction between leaking and going to your Inspector General. But if you go to an Inspector General internally, as Thomas Drake did, or internally even on 9/11, his information never even surfaced. Oh, and then yes, you are retaliated against. Or at least they put you in the insider threat program, or whatever.

And so, in my case, I wrote this memo in the course of the investigation, I myself did not hand it to a reporter or anything, but it got out—probably Congress did it. And they probably knew that this was the only thing that would really start maybe to help open up some of this investigation and information. I'm guessing that somebody in Congress has been around the block before—

JON Can you tell me—

COLEEN And knew this, and knew that if you did not get it public, that it would have no—would not be able to get the truth out. Now I've since learned, I didn't know any of this at the time, but I've since learned that unless the information gets out to the public, if it's held inside a secret system, then the chance is it would still, it will still, it can be buried for 40-50 years in some of these cases.

And, so, I think maybe someone in Congress said: We want to know the truth about 9/11. This memo is important. And probably somebody there leaked it to the press. Because it leaked to the press, then Leahy and Grassley called me to testify to the Judiciary Committee, which was—they were having. I forgot there's a third one, the Judiciary Committee had its own investigation about the judicial issues. So, there were actually three investigations. And so they called me to testify just about two weeks later. Now when I was going to be testifying to the Judiciary, four Senators—Leahy, Grassley, who were the two heads of the Judiciary, and then our two Minnesota Senators, Paul Wellstone and Mark Dayton—all four of them wrote letters to Ashcroft and to FBI Director Mueller requesting that I not be fired, okay?

So, it took four Senators, along with being on the cover of *Time* magazine—because I was on the cover within about a week and a half of this—it took being on the cover of *Time* magazine and four Senators to keep me from being fired. I mean, if you're asking what retaliation, that was extremely lucky on my part. (Right) I probably wouldn't have actually been fired. I was a very well respected person. I had no blemish on my career, nothing in my personnel file that they could pull out. But, what would have happened is yes, I would have been persona non-grata. I would have been treated like, terrible—

JON Well, I remember you telling me that people within the FBI may not have been retaliated against, but they certainly looked at you differently. And I think you were—

COLEEN Yeah, and there's one other thing that's different in my case, too, but it's not different in every case is it wasn't just me. All of the agents, the case agent and the supervisor were all determined to tell the truth. So, determined, in fact, that in the FBI, knowing that this would still be buried, the Moussaoui case itself could have been buried. This happens. There are whole entire cases that rather than tell the truth they don't even prosecute. This happens. When there's really egregious—why am I talking? Whitey Bulger—I don't have to go too far. All I have to do is mention the Whitey Bulger case. He committed like 20 murders in the course of the time period that the FBI was operating him, for heaven's sakes. (Wow)

And so, you have some of these egregious cases. I mean if you don't understand the dynamics of what you're dealing with in Government, then you have this kind of naïve attitude. And, by the way, it's not just Government. It really is any of these big institutions that have a lot riding on the line. And when they do something bad, of course people are always going to make mistakes, and we're human, and some of them are negligent, some of them are reckless. But even the negligence things, people are loathe to tell the truth about.

JON Well, there's one thing—

COLEEN But in this case, the agents were determined to of course not to—they had a lot of integrity. One was a former military officer, a lot of integrity. And so, I knew that there would be, in my memo, for instance, I knew that there were documents and I knew that there were other people who would be telling the truth. And that's the same, really, with Thomas Drake. He knew there were others that knew the truth about the mass surveillance and stuff. So, when you're completely alone, and that's another—even Sibel Edmonds, she tries to get other people around her that knew things to come forward. So, when you are completely alone, there are some cases where you are the sole person who knows the truth. That is even quite a bit even more difficult. (Right)

JON I asked what's the worst case of whistleblower retaliation that you're aware of. To me, it was Bradley or Chelsea Manning, who had the worst form of

retaliation being put into that cell and now he's serving years in jail. (Yep)
Do you agree?

COLEEN Yeah, of course. And, of course, he also in terms of the number of documents that were, that he obtained and gave out, that is a large number. It's not just like one document. There's all different examples and as time has gone on, the draconian punishment that any whistleblower is facing has gotten greater and greater. Of course now we're looking at life in prison as being the highest punishment under the old 1917 Espionage Act.

JON Right. We'll get to that in a little bit.

COLEEN Edward Snowden, you know, was indicted and would be facing probably the same, almost life in prison term, as the Daniel Ellsberg case. (Right) But, there's something even worse than that, and I'm looking for that next one, which is actually now execution. (Jeesh) Because the Espionage Act allows—well, the death penalty. (Right) And every time, even when Manning was first arrested, that was the question is will he face the death penalty. (Right) And it was no, no he'll face life in prison whatever.

But now, there actually is something more. And, of course, this is the sad thing about people in Government. If it's a minor thing, a fraud. Let's just say a fraud. Because most people think of whistleblowing about fraud, that the tax payers' money is being spent on a \$500 toilet seat, and some contractor is making \$485 of profit on a toilet seat. (Laughs) That's the old fraud that was outed, actually by Grassley—Pentagon fraud in the '80s or something, '70s or '80s.

So, that's what's normal—you know what? You would never in your right mind something that minor if it is just something like monetary fraud. You would hardly ever even consider taking these kinds of risk to be a whistleblower at this point. (Right) What really has to be is perhaps not even the risk to a couple of people. Look at the Anthrax case. There probably are people who know a little bit more about what happened in the Anthrax case, or whatever. But only six people died in the Anthrax case. (Right) So maybe that isn't even enough. Maybe it actually has to be a threat where thousands of people or more, if it's a lie about starting a war or something, maybe it has to be a million people or more that we actually say: Well, my life doesn't matter. I'm just this little person down at the bottom of the level here and who am I when we have thousands of people that could be facing this serious threat, or whatever. That's maybe what it—

I always talk about the significance of the issue and the significance. It absolutely has to be significant. It has to be a very important thing. It has to be almost life and death. (Right) And I think as time has gone on, and now the pressure and the administration's willingness to use these draconian punishments in order—and now, not only on whistleblowers, but on members of the press. On people that—

JON *The New York Times* reporter. I can't remember his name.

COLEEN Risen.

JON Risen, James Risen.

COLEEN Yes, Risen's facing being jailed because the Supreme Court denied hearing his case that there could possibly be any protection of a journalist source. They turned that down about three months ago, I think, four months ago. (Right) And now, he is facing being jailed. He probably won't be just as a strategic move. I don't think so, because he won the Pulitzer Prize and there's just a lot of backing for James. The New York Times backs their reporter. But you wait and see, like that case of the AP where they called and Fox when they called the reporters conspirators (Mmm-hmm), they called them espionage conspirators. The next one, you don't have a reporter of the same stature as Risen and the New York Times, yes. They will probably be then prosecuted. Every one of our generals has called for this now. Petraeus has called for it. Keith Alexander has called for it. They are calling for treating members of the media as "spies" under the Espionage Act if they publish—

JON That's ridiculous.

COLEEN Well, it's ridiculous! You have to understand, this is where it's going.

JON Yeah, I know.

COLEEN And the public doesn't understand this. They are still—Oh, Hillary Clinton, she's our first lady President. So, people are really don't understand that we are in this situation now after 12 years after 9/11 and it just continues to deteriorate in terms of adhering to the law.

JON Well when each abuse takes place and nothing is done about it, it just continues to happen (Exactly), we see it over and over again. All right, let me get to the next question.

This is a quote from 9/11 Family Member Patty Casazza:

"Sibel Edmonds brought us many whistleblowers and I submitted them personally to Governor Kean who was the Chairman of the Commission, the 9/11 Commission and I said: These people are not being subpoenaed. They will not come before the 9/11 Commission voluntarily unless they are subpoenaed, and he promised me to my face that every whistleblower would be indeed heard and most were not heard. Sibel was only heard because we dragged her in and surprised the Commission on one of the days we were meeting with them that we had her with us."

Now, what does it say about the credibility of the 9/11 Commission that it did not hear what every whistleblower had to say or apparently didn't seem to even seek them out?

COLEEN Right, right, very good point, and that would probably be the crux, or I would say one of a—a main rationale for calling for a new or further investigation of 9/11. That alone would be enough. In addition to Patty's firsthand information about Kean promising her and then kind of renegeing on this. Besides that, I think Shaffer, Anthony Shaffer, who knew about Able Danger. Didn't he go directly to Zelikow? (Yes) Did he actually talk to him? There you go.

JON He spoke with Zelikow and a couple of other people and none of the information ever found its way into the report. And after it was reported, I think by *The New York Times*, that Able Danger identified four of the hijackers a year before 9/11. Then the 9/11 Commissioners, I think, denied knowledge of Anthony Shaffer and then it was found out that he did in fact meet with Philip Zelikow. So, that's how I seem to remember that story.

COLEEN Yeah, I kind of—I have a vague—that jives with what I remember, too. So, he's another case. He's actually one that they talked to but it never makes it way. The other one I mentioned already is Thomas Drake. (Right) A senior executive at the NSA is—I don't know if it was the 9/11 Commission directly, or if it was the Inspector General—again, what I said before, with

some of these Inspector General investigations on the side were also then incorporated into the 9/11 Commission (Right) and so they obviously were keeping tabs.

So, this is what I know about the NSA and again none of this seems to find its way into the 9/11 Commission report is that Bill Binney, one of the—highly respected, 31-years in the NSA, one of their top mathematicians and code breakers, of course, they realized about this massive surveillance after 9/11 and he then retires, or resigns, because he doesn't want to be a part of this unconstitutional illegal action that Bush has gotten Michael Hayden to go along with after 9/11. But they knew the information about the programs that were targeting that Yemen safe house and calls—we all know, this comes from public documents, by the way, I had no way of knowing this when I worked in the FBI. This would never have—we're all compartmentalized so this was nothing I learned in the course of my career, but I've learned it since in all of the things that have been made public. And Bill Binney went to the Department of Defense's Inspector General and, this information, so did Thomas Drake. They all made a complaint. And this led to an investigation. But, again, it's an Inspector General. That's all in a secret system.

JON Well, Inspector Generals from what I understand, they can't actually hold anybody accountable. All they can do is recommend that people be held accountable.

COLEEN That's right, and it's worse than that because when an Inspector General—they'll often say that they're independent, but in many cases the Inspector General isn't really independent if they're inside—

JON Well that's when we found out about with regard to the DOD Inspector General is that he may have been corrupt. That he may have been helping, you know, cover up like Able Danger, like NORAD lying before the 9/11 Commission, and so forth. I think that was reported by the New York Times.

COLEEN Yeah, I mean, there's maybe three or four reasons for this. One is that you don't get to be an Inspector General—nobody's going to call me, after I retire and say: "Coleen, do you want to be Inspector General?" [Laughs] That ain't gonna happen. So, the people that are selected to be Inspector Generals had sterling insider careers, typically, and that's why they get asked to be this position in the first place, and they can be counted on, etc.

Then the structure itself, like they'll say they're independent, but many times they still are inside the agency. (Right) The structure of the Department of Justice one was external from the FBI. So, that was already a plus. And there were Inspector General investigations, of, for instance, the FBI lab before this that actually were able to put out a lot of truth. And the reason for that is they weren't working for the FBI Director. They were working for the attorney general or to the side of the attorney general, but they were, kind of even though in some ways in a little competition with the FBI. And so there were—they had some capability. But, yes, even in cases where they found pretty clear wrong-doing. Let's go back to the FBI lab one and the cover-up afterwards and, oh my gosh, it's an egregious thing when you know the whole truth about Frederic Whitehurst was the FBI laboratory whistleblower and, they practically forced him to have a nervous breakdown and fired him, and he turns out to be vindicated by the Inspector General. But, yet, nobody was, of course, not disciplined. Not even disciplined as far as I know, let alone fired. And then, and what happened as a result of that is the same persons now go on from there and there's been more results of even that case.

And so, that's the problem with being in a secret system. If it's not—and Congress knows this. Why do we have Feinstein—bless her intelligence heart when she's quite sympathetic with secrecy and everything else, but yet —

JON Sure, now that she knows she was spied on (Right). But before that she was all for—

COLEEN Well, she's got a strange stance because she's for secrecy overall and certainly in a general way she was friends with Clapper and all of these, very close with them, but she even before the torture issue apparently of course we don't know how bad this is right now but it sounds like it is really pretty egregious, and the fact is covering up for lower level people like these contractors and people did die and drills to their heads and guns to their heads and all these things that they even exceeded the guidelines. So even that has turned Dianne Feinstein into someone who wants the information public. And she's been fighting tooth and nail for this. For what? Five years. This torture report is now five years, costs \$40 million. It's 6,000 pages. They've whittled it down to just a few hundred, I think, four or five hundred pages, and even then they're fighting over black-out redactions. If you can just imagine this kind of situation, and this is actually on lower level the findings of course that are the most strident are going to

be on the lower level not even Government employees but contractors. This is how bad the system is. And, again, it's why information is power and people know it. Of course, this is well known. And why you have this really strong reluctance to tell even this little bit of minimal truth unless a reporter gets hold of a photo. Unless a reporter gets hold of a memo and then they're—or you have Edward Snowden or Chelsea Manning giving documents to a reporter, or sources like Deep Throat giving information out, you will almost never have an ability to unravel the truth. (Right) Every case you look at where even a little bit of truth came out, it really required this extreme—If we had good systems and everything, it should not require people risking their lives to just get the little bit of truth out, but that's—

JON Well that also gets into the press issue of this country which is abhorrent. The corporate news is just—there's no investigative journalism anymore. They're just essentially handed talking points from the Government and, you know, that's the news. But—

Okay, let me get to—we only have a couple of questions left, and I know you're limited in time.

Whistleblowers under Bush were retaliated against, but it seems that retaliation against whistleblowers has increased under the Obama Administration. In an article by Peter Van Buren entitled, "Obama's War on Whistleblowers" he writes, "The Obama administration has been cruelly and unusually punishing in its use of the 1917 Espionage Act to stomp on Governmental leakers, truth-tellers, and whistleblowers whose disclosures do not support the President's political ambitions," and that "the Obama administration has charged more people (six) under the Espionage Act for the alleged mishandling of classified information than all past presidencies combined." If you could have a sit down with Obama, what would you say to him?

COLEEN You know, to be honest, people in power, power corrupts, and so after six years as President, he's been around the block and he knows the score, etc. so in straight terms of giving him some kind of facts or whatever, it would be like—do you remember, Sherron Watkins goes in to the boss, the head boss of Enron, Kenneth Lay, thinking that she's revealing to him about the inflated profits and the misreporting, etc. in the shell companies. She thinks that if she can just get this info to Kenneth Lay and tell him the truth that she knows about Skilling and the other ones at Enron, then she walks out thinking oh, now he knows, something can be done. He writes, he turns

around, because he's the head of the whole thing (Right), and he turns around and writes a note: "Fire Sherron Watkins." (Laughs) Okay, so this is out of the movies, by the way, but this is the type of people—many people when they're working, do think that if they can just get the information to the right person—

Okay, in the United States, we of course people think of the President should have the power to, you know, let's say to tell the truth, to really do the right thing. They think he should be because that's who they voted for. And there's a lot of power around that President that are really pulling the strings and controlling, in many cases almost making the puppet just a stand-up figure that, you know, reads speeches and isn't really making any decisions on their own. (Right)

What I would do, if I had a time to do this, is I would try my hardest, I would ask, of course, Obama to bring in some of these powerful people that he knows are powerful—(Laughs). No, but maybe it's people from Wall Street, maybe it's people from military industrial and maybe it is people like Clapper and Alexander, etc.—Alexander is no longer because he's gone—but people like that. So, bring those people in. And then the way you would approach talking to them is trying to tell them why these things are not working and why this is all back-firing and hurting them. I think very few people understand that we are in a way all of humanity are in this together and without truth you just keep building on sand and everything that you're doing—right now, some people it's kind of becoming obvious that this supporting terrorist groups in the past, and if we are talking about 9/11 that Charlie Wilson's War and, all of those things that were covered up. They end the Charlie Wilson's War on a high note as if arming the Mujahideen in the Taliban that became the Taliban in Al-Qaeda, like that was the end of the movie. Oh, boy, we really accomplished something. That was just great. Charlie Wilson was a hero. The CIA gives him their top prize.

Okay, so, that's, that's—of course people who watch the movie still thinks that's the case.

JON

Well, now that you brought that up, I have to mention that throughout the '90s we used the Mujahideen and other terrorists in the Balkans and in the Caucasus and, after 9/11 we used terrorists like Jundallah within Iran. We used—we aligned ourselves with what they call Al-Qaeda-linked groups. We've done it in Syria with the so called "Free Syrian Army." A lot of those people were supposedly linked to Al-Qaeda and so on and so forth.

So, this is something that we have been doing for years.

COLEEN Not only have been doing—there's—in the course they always say someone's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter. (Right) So when we're on the other side and we want to either destabilize a Government that we don't like, yes, then we would pick a group. The ones we think are best controlled and best in line with the U.S. national interest and there'd been—there had been whistleblowers about this before, because it almost never has worked. And it's always led to the problems of the group either—or, dictators, too, picking people to topple and installing somebody else who's a dictator, and this almost always turns badly.

JON It sounds like you're talking about the Ukraine. (Laughs)

COLEEN Yeah, well, there are all—there was a CIA whistleblower John Stockman, who wrote a book decades ago about Angola, and how they picked this rebel group, you know, freedom fighter, but yes, a lot of terrible killings and violence involved, and then eventually later on they turn against each other. The CIA turns against the guy that he had been operating and stuff. This happens all the time. It's really a norm.

Now, the public can't know this, of course. Because they are told these myths about fighting for freedom and all the rest. So, this kind of stuff can only be in secret systems like the CIA (Right), where you pick groups. And the Charlie Wilson War, of course, because they're trying to make this into a heroic thing because this is, it led to the end of the Soviet Union. So, this was this big victory for the United States, and yes, it was through Arming of the Mujahideen.

Today—by the way, this stuff never ends. Today, they are debating in Congress—in fact, I just made a call to my Congressman that they are going to be discussing arming, the so-called moderate, good rebels, because Obama's plan—

JON We have a patented, moderate rebel detector, you know (Yeah) (Laughs) (Right), we only pick the good rebels. (Right) I always found that so funny. Like, basically, it was becoming public knowledge that we were aligning ourselves with "Al-Qaeda-linked groups," and once that information came out, we started to hear about how they're trying to differentiate between the

good rebels and the bad rebels, and that they had the ability to do this. And that's absolutely absurd.

COLEEN Well, the latest news from the family, or a representative of Sotlof's family, is that the good rebels sold him to the bad rebels that beheaded him. I mean, you can't get more direct than that. I mean, one of the victims of Islamic State was given to them or sold to them by the good rebels. (Right) I mean this is—and so to say that you're fighting Islamic State? I mean it makes no sense at all. (You know--) Yet, today, I will just venture a guess. I'll venture a prediction that probably overwhelming vote, maybe a couple of people will vote against arming the group that actually sold the poor journalist who got beheaded. If that's—that's—it's mind-boggling how terrible this is. But I will imagine that will happen. And do you know why? Because the truth is buried in this stuff, and luckily, that family member's representative did go public on this a few days ago, but that's just one little fact, but there's more than that.

Chechen, the Boston bomber, for instance, was connected, or had gone back to Chechnya, and stuff, well, there's a whole group led by one of them, former CIA director Woolsey, and he's got a group of this, you know, trying to help the Chechen rebels in Russia. And so, they'd done this with the Mujahedim-e-Khalq in Iran, which was a dissident group in, Iranian group, that were on the terrorist list but they took them off the terrorist list—

JON You're talking about the MEK?

COLEEN The MEK (Yep) that just happened about a year ago and now there's a move the same thing with the Chechens. Well, that has, these all have impact, because this idea that there are so-called terrorists that we're told that we have to fight, and meanwhile, the truth is a lot more complicated, in that (Absolutely) that our own Government is working with and behind and arming, and you're starting to see this a little bit. When I write on Facebook a lot of times they'll say "we've seen this movie before." (Laughs) "Have you seen this movie before?" and I'm referring to Charlie Wilson's War, because at the very least there's some little bit of public information that has made it into popular culture. That was on PBS as well. The American public should know that this was a mistake to have armed this group and that they later turned against us, etc. but it's continuing even today as we speak.

JON Well, it's insanity and the definition of insanity is repeating the same mistakes and expecting different results. Now—

COLEEN If I was able to talk to Obama, I would try to really be on his side, on all of their sides, and explain why this is so—they're being very short-sighted and that this isn't going to work. That's what you have to—I think—you never just say, oh this illegal, this is unethical. You have to explain why this is really going to come back and blow back. I you think about somebody would have warned Nixon. Maybe if Chuck Colson hadn't been the creepy person he had been involved. Maybe if he had taken Nixon, says: You really can't be doing this. This is all going to come out later, and boy are you going to look terrible. Blah, blah, blah. Maybe if they had done that. If you listen to the tapes of Nixon, nobody is telling him that he's going to be hurt as a result of this. Years later if he'd known or been warned he was going to be hurt about this and it would hurt the country, etc. you never know. (Right)

But I think that's really the only shot you have with most of these people is explaining how this is going to hurt their own interests and actually hurt the larger interests of the entire United States.

JON Well, but I start to think that destabilization of the region might actually be something these people want to happen. We got Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, the U.S. helped to create the so-called free Syrian army and then, you know, that incorporated into the Al-Nusra Front and then Al-Qaeda in Iraq went into Syria and it all became basically a blur, just the whole thing was a—they all became essentially the same and now we've seen, you know, they got rid of Al-Maliki who was Iran-friendly. Basically, Isis—to those who want the War On Terror to continue, they are the Isis on the cake, so I say. (Laughs) And they were essentially created by the same people when you look at it. And it's just insanity.

Okay, let me get to the next question and we'll finish this up soon.

Are whistleblower protections that exist today adequate? And I think there's an obvious answer to that—

COLEEN There have been some—I will just say one thing. There have been some recent changes and some of—and there's also a major whistleblower case going to the Supreme Court, going to be argued in November by this air marshal Robert MacLean who only gave information to a reporter when the

TSA was cutting back on marshals on flights that there was a threat to. I mean, you can't from a factual standpoint, you can't get better facts for whistleblower protection. If our Supreme Court, heaven knows, because in their so-called wisdom what they might do, and there's four or five of them that I have very little faith in. So, if they—that case would be a real bell weather for people to be watching. If that case loses, if Robert MacLean is not vindicated and not—and actually the lower court held in his favor and the information wasn't even classified—if the Supreme Court says: No, Robert MacLean, you're out of luck. You need to stay fired. You need to be punished for speaking out of school, there's no hope. There's just zero hope. If that happens. But there—wait and see what happens there. If they hold in his favor, we still probably don't know how this is working out behind the scenes. They claim you can go to Inspector Generals, etc. and they claim there's been some fixes to it. So, I would perhaps—maybe I'm too optimistic, but I might hold out a little hope that it has improved slightly. I simply don't know and I don't think anyone knows until that first case comes along. The next Thomas Drake. The next Bill Binney and we actually know if there's any chance of something working. (Right) And certainly this Supreme Court case everyone should watch it in November. Robert MacLean is the name of the case.

JON One thing about Bill Binney, I recently wrote an article—one of the things that he brought to light was the fact that the NSA was aware that the two hijackers in San Diego were in San Diego. They previously denied having that knowledge because they said that they were tapping the phones of the terrorists but they could only get the one side in Yemen, they couldn't identify where the call was coming from. That was their story. So, Bill Binney exposed the fact that the NSA did know about their location and so forth and they didn't tell the FBI, to my knowledge.

COLEEN And the CIA knew too.

JON Right, none of these things happened in a vacuum. There's a whole list of things. You know, we talked about Inspector Generals. Porter Goss went to, I think it was John Helgerson who was the CIA's Inspector General, and asked him to write the report about the CIA's negligence or activities concerning 9/11, to not call anyone out essentially. Not to give the idea that these people need to be held accountable. I think—and I think he did that. I think Helgerson rewrote the report for Porter Goss to be like that. But, anyway—

COLEEN Like I said, it's not surprising. In fact, you don't even have to be very explicit in these systems. There's no need for explicit, explicit—everyone knows. Everyone knows what's expected of them. (Right) And they know if they're going to act like General Taguba and tell the truth that they tortured at Abu Ghraib, they know what's going to happen. They know what's expected. They wanted Taguba to say something, and he knew that. Everybody knows. (Right) You don't have to say: General Taguba you better whitewash it. You don't have to say that.

JON One last thing, with regard to the Isis and so forth—and what I said was that I think destabilization may be the goal—that essentially enabled us to get back into Iraq, which is where we wanted to be in the first place. Obama fought to stay in Iraq, but was forced out because of the status of forces agreement and that they couldn't have immunity for certain people. So that—we're now back in Iraq and we now may have an excuse to bomb Syria, which is what we've wanted to do all along. So, that's why I said that.

But, anyway, what do you have to say to potential whistleblowers out there?

COLEEN Well, I said this earlier, this is going to have be a personal decision and, I think, someone like Edward Snowden learned from the experiences of the prior NSA whistleblowers and Risen's sources, etc. so he was watching this and knew that he could not—the only chance he had of getting the information out and of possibly succeeding in making a difference. Although we still have our fingers crossed on that, because the reform is still attempting not to reform at all. But his only chance was to get out of the—leave the country and find some relatively—asylum safe place. The world, these places where you could possibly be safe is shrinking. Because the U.S. now controls, what, 800 military bases all over the country, the NATO, the Five Eyes, and we're kind of now witnessing of back into a Cold War situation, or maybe even like a pre-World War I situation, where China, Russia, Iran, and maybe some others are in that category. Again, the U.S., the NATO, and that Pacific Rim—Japan, South Korea, and so—

JON The client-states of the U.S. Empire.

COLEEN Right, so we're witnessing this kind of bipolarization again, very similar to what happened—and all it takes when this happens, it's extremely dangerous, extremely stupid. Now, that's again what I would tell Obama. Very stupid what you're doing, because all it takes is a spark and you end up

with World War I, and it could even be mistaken now. Now we're nuclear-armed, so it's like this is the most dangerous and stupid thing that we could be doing. We need to be—at the very least, people talk about a multi-polar world, which actually then you have a little more balance and people are going to tend to maybe get along a little bit better in a multi-polar world, rather than a bipolar. (Right) Us versus Them.

And, so, whistleblowers are needed, and I think that if you're looking at keeping quiet about something very important, and very wrong, and also so critical to life and death and the future of humanity, etc., I think that you have to figure this out for yourself and then, I think—I always say, always try. I mean, that's what I said right from the start. I always said: Always try. And sometimes I even have to argue with myself, because it seems so futile many times to try and, especially like we are, always trying to stop the next wars, and now here we are in like this rollercoaster (Right) of war after war, and they get worse and worse.

And now we're facing off against Russia, a nuclear-armed Russia, and you can hardly explain this to people. And then the apathy in the United States, because there's no media. There's no mainstream media that will. (Right) But, a tipping point—these things, the reason people should stay somewhat hopeful and a whistleblower should still be hopeful that they can accomplish something. I mean, Edward Snowden is an example. He's so far managed to get a lot of information out. He's even appearing in these electronic appearances through encryption (Right) and stuff. And so, he's been successful. In some ways, the modern technology facilitated someone like Snowden to be able to get information out and still from a distance and still be safe. And, the other thing is all it takes is for this tipping point to be met, and I look at Vietnam War, which was not ended by Daniel Ellsberg's whistleblowing, you know? He did what he did, ready to go to jail for decades, and after two years, the Vietnam war hadn't even ended. And then, you had Deep Throat being a whistleblower. You had Jane Fonda. You had, of course, the rising public protest against the Vietnam War. And then people like Walter Cronkite turning, finally.

You probably can identify five or six things independent of each other that all came together and when the final thing came together, which was then, was kind of the unraveling Deep Throat through Woodward and Bernstein, because that was the final nail in the coffin—then, things changed.

JON Well, you know, my hope has always been that people come together for 9/11 again, but this time to expose the fact that we were lied to about 9/11, and thereby taking away the justification for all the horrible atrocities taking place in the name of that day. When 9/11 happened the first time, we came together and were told to go shopping and so forth, to continue our daily lives (Right), when in fact we should have been asking the questions: How did this happen? Why did they, you know—How did this happen? Why did this happen? And who was ultimately responsible for this? You know, those are the kinds of things we should have been asking, and we weren't. But the families did and the rest is history, but—

The last question: Are there any actions or websites that you would like to promote?

COLEEN The main action that I want people to promote is do something. You know, just the Nike motto: "Do something, at this point." (Right) There are lots of things that can be done. Watching this happen is not an option. And I don't care even if you are kind of, oh well—I mean, I called my Congressman just now about this vote on arming the so-called good rebels in Syria, and my Congressman is a war hawk. He's never seen a war he didn't like, so. But, you know what? I think—I talked to a staffer, maybe it helped influence his staffer. I think that you've got to try and I think people should not give up hope. I think that we never—they always say the dawn—the night is darkest before the dawn, or whatever. And I think that people have got to do something now. There's some chance that—I'm looking out at the tea leaves in the media and I think that there are the wiser people out there that are—well, Kissinger, I mean, I'm no fan of Kissinger. He has blood on his hands from all the things he did, but when he is finally getting a little bit afraid of what's going on. And even he has been cautionary. When Henry Kissinger is out there trying to caution us, I'm telling you folks, this is the time, get off the couch and really say: Hey, we have got to stop this. We have got to really reverse, reverse course from where from what put us on this path after 9/11—this so-called War On Terror that has just metastasized. And we have got to reverse this now and really, absolutely, start with the truth. (Right) And a truth commission about this should be one of many things that should be done right now to reverse.

JON Well, one thing that Cindy Sheehan says is that everybody should do at least one thing a day for peace. And, by the way, she asked me to say hello to you from her.

COLEEN Well, I'll pass it back. She's still one of the few with integrity. It's real difficult to fight against the wars of an empire when you're living inside and you see people constantly being swayed by these humanitarian war arguments, etc. by their political party, and she is one that really has integrity on this. So, please, give her my best too.

JON And you're also one who has major integrity. All right, Coleen, I want to thank you very much. It's been an honor to have you on the show. Maybe sometime I can have you on again. But I hope everything's going well for you. And, again, thank you for coming on.

COLEEN Yes, thank you so much for everything you do.

JON All right, thanks, Coleen. Have a good day.

COLEEN Okay, bye, bye.

JON Bye, bye.



Chapter/Episode 6 – Lorie Van Auken – September 27, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Lorie Van Auken (LORIE)

JON

Hi, everyone. Welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week's show is going to focus on the 9/11 Commission. The 9/11 Report was sold to the world as the definitive account of 9/11 and nothing could be further from the truth. Many people continue to point to the report as if it's credible and it's not. There is an old saying: "It's not the crime that gets you. It's the cover-up." The 9/11 Commission and its report is the cover-up. It's so important for the world to know how corrupt and compromised the 9/11 Commission was.

Here's a quote that is relevant to today's topic:

"You can do an investigation and if you don't really want to research an area, you just don't look at it. If you don't ask them all of the questions or you don't let them tell you the whole story, you know, then you can write a report based on half-truths."

And that is from 9/11 Family Member, September 11 Advocate, and Jersey Girl, Mindy Kleinberg.

Okay, this is Jon, and I'm here with Lorie. Hi, Lorie.

LORIE Hi, Jon.

JON How are you today?

LORIE I'm doing well.

JON All right, wonderful. All right, what I'm going to do, I'm going to read your bio.

Lorie Van Auken was the wife of Kenneth Van Auken, a bond broker at Cantor Fitzgerald on the 105th floor of Tower 1 who was killed on 9/11. She, along with 9/11 Family Members Kristen Breitweiser, Mindy Kleinberg, and Patty Casazza were greatly responsible for the creation of the 9/11 Commission. Together, they were famously known as the "Jersey Girls," but are also known as the "September Eleventh Advocates." Lorie was part of twelve 9/11 Family Members that made up what was called the 9/11 Family Steering Committee. She, along with the others, helped to monitor the 9/11 Commission, to supply 100's of well researched questions for the 9/11 Commission to answer, she worked with staffers of the 9/11 Commission, she helped the others fight for more time and money for the 9/11 Commission, and since the time of the 9/11 Commission, she has continued to be an advocate for 9/11 Justice.

And, that's her official bio. What I'm going to, I wrote a little personal bio for Lorie, and I'm going to read that now.

The very first time I emailed Lorie Van Auken was after the release of *9/11: Press for Truth*. I wanted to let her and the other Jersey Girls know that it was my pleasure to give the makers of the film the money they needed to finish it. I wanted them to know how important it was to me that their story be told. In that email I said, "This letter might seem a little odd coming out of the blue like this, but to be honest, this is the first time I've had your contact information. I asked a friend for it and he sent it along. I am very grateful that he did." Now, Lorie can attest to this. Since that time, I must have sent her well over a thousand emails asking questions about this or that having to do with 9/11, wishing her a happy Mother's Day, wishing her

well on the holidays, wishing her well around the Anniversary of 9/11, etc. and so on. I am honored to have been one of the people to receive the different press releases from the September Eleventh Advocates over the years to post on the Internet. In the original email I sent to her, I said I was "grateful" for her email address. Years later I can honestly say that I am grateful, honored, and humbled to have had the ability to communicate with her and to build a relationship with her. She is one of my biggest heroes and I can't say enough how much I respect her and I am honored to have her on my show today.

So, that was for you.

LORIE Thank you very much, Jon. That was very sweet.

JON Aw, you're very welcome.

All right now, if people have listened to my show, you know that the first question I ask is what was the day of 9/11 like for you? I have decided to make a rule not to ask family members that appear on this show that question. If you want to hear Lorie's story, I recommend listening to her testimony before the 9/11 Congressional Briefing that took place on July 22, 2005. I will provide a link.

So, Lorie, we're going to get right into the questions. (Okay) The first question is: How did you, Kristen Breitweiser, Mindy Kleinberg, and Patty Casazza meet?

LORIE Let's see, Mindy and I both lived in East Brunswick, New Jersey, at the time. We met through a mutual friend and it was right after it all happened, so we were pretty torn apart. We got to know each other going to the support group in Princeton where we were with other family members. And then, not too long after that, there was a family informational meeting at one of the attorney's offices and Patty and Kristen were there and Mindy and I met them and started speaking with them and the rest is history.

JON Really? Okay, that's interesting. Do you know how Patty and Kristen met? I think it was at a church or something? I don't remember.

LORIE That may be. That sounds familiar. We actually started to speak to Patty. She reached out to our support group for some other issues and we offered

our help to Patty and then some other things occurred and we just started to talk to Patty. And we just started to exchange ideas and that's how it began.

JON Right. Okay, next question is: For most Americans, questioning the 9/11 attacks didn't come naturally. However, to people that lost someone that day, questions would inevitably come up. What was one of the first things you questioned about that day?

LORIE I think one of the first things I ever questioned was how the south tower fell. It was hit in the corner and it seemed to me that that top piece of the building should have just fallen over, but it kind of righted itself and fell straight down. And that was weird. I was an art major back in my college days and that just didn't seem like the right physics for what had happened. So, that was my first question, and also on that day I remember seeing footage of President Bush sitting, reading to an elementary school class, and I just was wondering why he didn't get up and just kind of do something Presidential. It just seemed to me that having him stay in that classroom while the country was under this attack was bad form. (Yeah) And I was screaming at the TV, "Get up! Get up and do something! We're kind of in trouble here."

And, so those were, I think, my first questions.

JON Right. You told me, long ago, that you're a visual person and you said that you're an artist. I actually saw a picture of you doing a doodle—I don't remember where it was at, maybe the Louvre or something, and it was very good. (Oh, thank you) With regard to the buildings, because you're a visual person, it didn't look right to you, so that makes sense. With regard to Bush in the classroom—what I generally do is I ask people to put themselves in the position of the President at that time. And, it made no sense whatsoever.

First of all, he was in a highly publicized location. They made sure people were aware he was going to be there. They were five miles away from an International airport during a time when kamikaze hijackers are supposedly slamming them into buildings, or were slamming them into buildings, and so forth. And if this President—we've learned over the years how much information was given to the administration, so they had a pretty clear understanding, as far as we know, that something was coming and so here was this President just sitting there. And if I was President, I would say: "What do you mean America's under attack?" Or, after hearing about the first plane, obviously, you would think that after hearing all the warnings

and so forth that something would have clicked. And he would have gotten up and excused himself from the children and gone into the other room. And said this is what we've been told about and so forth, what—

LORIE But the children would have been in danger. If those were my kids in the room and the country was being attacked, you would think the President would have been one of the first targets or a high-level target. (Yeah) And so the children sitting in that room—because people always say well, what was he supposed to do? Scare the kids? Well, you don't have to scare the kids. You just say, excuse me children, the President has something important to take care of. You don't have to scream it. And the children would have been in mortal danger being in a room with somebody who was a potential target. So, it seems to me that anybody that gives that any thought would have said, oh yeah, he probably should have gotten out of there.

JON And there's a story of Ari Fleischer holding a sign telling him not to say anything yet. (That's right) So, he was being directed—

LORIE To stay there. (Right, exactly) Which seems in contrast to what we heard had happened to Vice President Cheney who was supposedly whisked by, I think those were his words (Right). Whisked. They carried him under his arms, whisked him out of the room that he was in. Why did that same treatment not happen to the President of the United States. It never made any sense to me. I mean, once they—

JON Exactly, and he stayed there for the seven minutes after being told America's under attack, and he stays there for a half hour longer, and then gave a little press briefing. So, it's really incredible.

All right, the next question, and I want people to listen to this question because these words, once they were told to me, I've never forgotten them. You said that at a time when your children were traumatized by the loss of their father, you had to go to Washington D.C. to fight for an investigation. When was the first time that the four of you went to Washington D.C. to fight for the 9/11 Commission, and who did you go to see?

LORIE We went to Washington—Chris Smith, our Congressman Chris Smith was absolutely great and his—Mary Noonan works in his office as the chief of staff, and they were really helpful. I think they were Patty's Congressmen in that part of New Jersey that she lived in. And they were really very helpful.

I think the first time we went to Washington was—we weren't fighting for the Commission yet, but I think we went to Chris Smith's office for some reason. I think it was February, 2002, that we went. I believe it might have even been Valentine's Day. But the first time we went to Washington to, as a group collectively begin the fight for the commission, it was actually for a rally, which was June 11, 2002, I believe, and we, the four of us went down. We had really begun the process of gathering the families and beginning to ask questions and started to say we need an investigation. So, I believe that was the first time we ever went, and we went to see—I think we saw Chris Smith. I know we saw Don McKean and there were others that we went to visit that day.

JON There were family members from another tragedy that influenced you. I don't remember what it was. Can you tell us about that?

LORIE I think it was Pan Am 103 and Bob Monetti was in our support group in Princeton. He helped start the support group up. And they lost family members. A few of the people that had lost family members from that tragedy helped being our support group. It was sort of like pay it forward. And Bob Monetti was really very helpful to us. He's one of the first people that suggested to us we should go to Washington to fight for an investigation. It wasn't going to happen. There was legislation for an investigation that was just languishing and nothing was happening, and if we didn't go fight for it, nobody would. So, he encouraged us to go, and that's really where the fire got lit.

JON Right, and I remember reading about the rally and that took place a couple of months after the leak, or a month after the leak, of the August 6 PDB, which so people know, was a warning that Bush got on August 6th, 2001. It was called "Bin Laden determined to strike within the U.S." It talked about hijackings or other types of attacks. It talked about 70 FBI Al-Qaeda related investigations currently taking place within the U.S. And it talked about other things. But if everybody remembers, after 9/11 we were told repeatedly by our politicians and by the media pundits who repeated what they said that there were no warnings. That we had no idea this was going to happen. And so on and so forth. So, after the leak of the August 6th PDB, the fight for an investigation became polarized a little bit and helped, I think, with the rally, I would think. Did it?

LORIE The rally was not as well attended as we would have hoped. But it was well attended and there was press there. As far as what the family members,

people that were affected by September 11, as with all groups were not a homogenous group. We were all very, very different. Some people had very young kids. Some people had just gotten married. Some people weren't married, yet some people had lost children. (Awful) It was just—everybody was different, at different grieving stages, and it was hard to get people up and out of bed. People were really in a bad way. And it was so, everything was so public. And it was really very difficult. You were watching the planes hit the buildings over and over again. (Yeah) Pretty much on a daily basis, hourly in some cases. And it was very difficult.

So, to get everybody mobilized and get everybody down to Washington was, for some people, just too hard to do.

JON I remember it was reported on by *The New York Times*, but I don't remember seeing a lot about it elsewhere. (Mm-hmm)

Now, how many hours did you spend reading and researching about 9/11, and do you still do this to this day?

LORIE I spent pretty much all my time reading and researching at the beginning, because it was really hard to find things. I kind of had like a graphic image of myself being sucked in the computer with just my feet sticking out. (Laughs) You know, my kids were upstairs and I was in the basement where my computer was researching, so people would call me up that they were hungry and things like that. So I had to stop for wheels and to drive them places. But at night, especially after everybody was in bed, I would go downstairs. I couldn't sleep, so I was very busy researching and I was on the phone with different people and emailing different people. And it was, it was a rough time. But a lot of hours. Pretty much all my free hours.

JON You were kind of like the designated researcher of the four of you, weren't you?

LORIE We all researched, but I guess some of us were sort of more addicted to it than others, whatever. (Laughs) So I was pretty, I got pretty good at it. But, everybody did. Everybody got pretty good at it. So, and each of us had our own areas of interest. The timeline always fascinated me, so I sort of—that was sort of my thing.

JON Right. The timeline she's talking about was created by Paul Thompson. It was originally at CooperativeResearch.org. It has since changed over to

HistoryCommons.org and I honestly believe it's one of the most important websites on the Internet.

LORIE But that came later, actually. The timeline I'm talking about is the things that actually happened on September 11, like what time the planes took off (Okay), what time they hit the buildings, what time they were hijacked, what time—that sort of thing. I was actually interested in the timeline just because it was also one of those visual things to me. Something I could sort of wrap my head around and understand.

Yes, Paul Thompson—when he started sending out—we started to see his research, that was, for me it was like a meeting of the minds. Because it was like, oh my God! This is what I was looking at. There was somebody else that did a timeline. I don't remember who it was—that did everything color-coded, and it was also a revelation because it was like wow, look how organized this is. (Right) Because that's what you needed to really begin to try to figure out what had happened, what the protocols were supposed to be, what was supposed to happen, how that should have gone, and how it went instead. And the timeline was pretty critical to understanding that.

JON Right, absolutely. When you start to look at things in context by going through the timeline, certain things start to make sense. So, it's very important to look at the history starting from the day of, or starting from as far back as 1979, when Zbigniew Brzezinski made the decision to arm the Mujahideen and so on and so forth.

Now, with regard to 9/11, I always ask people: "What qualifies as suspicious behavior?" Patty Casazza once described the Bush administration as being the "biggest adversary" for the creation of the 9/11 Commission. As it turns out, they were also the biggest adversary against the Congress investigating 9/11 and there were also shenanigans with regard to the different Inspector General reports.

How surprised were you that they did not want this investigation?

LORIE I wasn't surprised. Each of us had our own levels of surprise of the four of us. And, of course, with the rest of the Steering Committee later on. I was not surprised, because as I started to look at the different things, it looked to me like the behavior was very suspicious in a lot of cases and people were all of sudden doing jobs that they normally wouldn't have done. People that were supposed to be at different places in different positions in Government

were just, that day not there. It just went on and on like that. So, I wasn't particularly surprised if they didn't want an investigation, because it sounded to me like they may have had something to hide. You didn't know what. What we're talking about there, I still don't exactly know, but it's—it wasn't a surprise.

JON Their excuse at the time was they didn't want to take resources away from the fight on the War On Terror. And that's just such a ridiculous argument. In past incidents, like Pearl Harbor, they set up commissions within days to investigate.

LORIE And you would have thought that if it was a surprise attack, that they themselves would have wanted to know how it was that they were able to—that the terrorists could succeed against this big nation of—with all of this budgeting for this very thing, you would have thought that they would have jumped at the chance to investigate this because it was incredible that 19 people could really defeat the U.S.—entire U.S. military. You would have thought they would have been really good to see how that happened.

JON It really is unbelievable. When I read in January, 2002, on CNN that Bush and Cheney asked Tom Daschle—CNN said they asked him to limit the scope of the investigations, but Tom Daschle later told us that they asked him not to investigate the attacks at all. When I heard that, you know, a light bulb went off in my head and I asked my question: "Why would the President and Vice President, of all people, not want to know exactly how and why this happened, so as to make sure that it could never happen again?"

And, because of that, I started to pay attention a little bit more to what was going on with regard to 9/11. So, to me, it was just unbelievable.

Now, looking back, how surprised are you that people—and I use that term loosely—like John McCain and Joe Lieberman were two of your biggest supporters for a 9/11 Commission. And, I say that—I use the term loosely, John McCain and Joe Lieberman have been such supporters of the wars that are going on. It's really criminal as far as I'm concerned, but anyway—

How surprised were you?

LORIE Joe Lieberman was Senator for Connecticut and there were people who lost family members from Connecticut. So, he had a lot of constituents coming

down to ask him for an investigation and things like that. So, that wasn't too much of a surprise.

John McCain didn't come to our rally. I believe Joe Lieberman came to the rally, but McCain didn't come to the rally. And our rally was pretty early on in the whole process and they were—some of the Republicans—okay, Chris Smith is a Republican, and he was concerned that if he went it would seem that he was partisan. But we kept saying, no, if you come, you're going to make it bipartisan and that's really what it should be. People that died on September 11th were members of all different parties and many countries, as well. (Right)

So, we weren't really concerned with politics and partisanship. To me, this was, and for all of us, it was necessary for everyone to get involved and ask the questions that needed to be asked and investigate as to what had happened to, again, yeah, keep the country safe and never have this sort of thing happen again. What had gone wrong, that 19 hijackers could defeat an entire U.S. military with a budget that is pretty astronomical.

So, John McCain did not come to the rally that day. He sent his people to the rally and then we met with him afterwards. And, Lieberman and McCain worked together on a lot of things, so I guess, ultimately, it's not that much of a surprise that they worked together with this.

So, Lieberman was actually really helpful. We got sort of at the end of our ropes with shenanigans. The way things were being handled were like we were getting the runaround. So, somebody would say, well this person doesn't want the investigation. And then we'd go to that person and they'd say, no, it's not me, it's so-and-so that doesn't want the investigation. Then they'd go, no, it's not me.

So, we got crazy, and after a little while, we were begging Joe Lieberman to please have a meeting with everybody in the room, all of the parties in a room, and that way we could see who really was sort of stopping things. And Lieberman was cooperative and he had everybody come to his office, and we met around a giant table. And we could see that it was Bush and Cheney that was good at keeping things from moving forward. You know, it was the White House.

So, at that point, we were able to circumvent that, and that was sort of really the turning point for when we got the commission.

JON Right. I had read that John McCain, one of the reasons that he did it was because of how he was treated during the 2000 elections by Karl Rove, and so he wanted to get back at Bush and so forth. I don't know how true that is, but—

LORIE I never heard that before, but as our events sort of unfolded, back then, like McCain and Lieberman worked on a lot things together, so it doesn't really surprise me that, if Lieberman was sort of on the side of doing it, that McCain would have helped. And I—listen, we really had a pretty good reason for wanting an investigation. It was kind of hard to argue once you really looked at it.

JON To me, the idea of even thinking about terms like Democrats or Republicans, with regard to the murder of 2,976 people, it's absolutely absurd. It has nothing to do with politics. It's non-partisan—as far as I'm concerned. I mean, it really has nothing to do with it, as far as I'm concerned.

LORIE Right, that was our attitude and I think eventually that argument became hard to refute.

JON Right. When the 9/11 Commission started its work, one of the first things Thomas Kean said was that they were not there to "point fingers." Were you and the other family members expecting the 9/11 Commission to use their subpoena power and to hold people accountable for things like perjury?

LORIE Yes. We were. We were very dismayed when we learned—because that was the point of the investigation was to sort of find out what had happened and then, if people had not done their jobs, they should have been reprimanded, fired, you know (Yeah), whatever happened, because you really wouldn't want people that couldn't handle an event like that to just stay in a position where they might've needed to make those kind of decisions.

So, it didn't really make sense to keep people in those positions, or promote them, or whatever else, if they really weren't able to handle the stress of that position. And, so they should have been held accountable and they should have been demoted or fired or whatever else. Criminal behavior should have been punished. And none of that happened.

JON Right, and at the end of the 9/11 Commission they said people all across the Government are responsible and so forth, so we can't point fingers. It was really ridiculous to me—

LORIE Everyone's responsible, therefore, no one's responsible.

JON Exactly. Now, when Kristen testified before the Joint Congressional Inquiry, making the argument for the need for an independent 9/11 Commission, she explicitly said that we need accountability. So, obviously, it just seems like that's what everybody was fighting for and it never happened.

How was the 9/11 Family Steering Committee created and what was its role?

LORIE Well, there were a group of us that sort of kind of got together and worked together when we were fighting for the commission. It was different family groups, the heads of different family groups that had already been created for other reasons, and a bunch of us just started to go down to Washington and kind of continue the fight and really understood the continuity of what we were doing and who we needed to go speak to. And it became this sort of dance where you understand that you have to go to this person to get to that person to understand what this committee is doing and that committee—you know, Washington is a very interesting place.

And so once we got the Commission up and running, the Family Steering Committee was that group of people that had done all this sort of background legwork already and really knew what was going on, so we continued to do our jobs and then called ourselves the Family Steering Committee, as in steering the commission. We were supposed to, in our view, really sort of watchdog the Commission, make sure that the areas that we wanted to see investigated got investigated. We had high hopes that we'd have influence on people that would be testifying and the questions that were being asked of the witnesses. And, it was disappointing. (Laughs)

JON Right. To say the least.

LORIE —the way things went, but that's how it turned out.

JON Well, in the beginning, when 9/11—oh, by the way, with regard to the 9/11 Family Steering Committee, just so people know, there is a website out

there right now that was the 9/11 Family Steering Committee's. It's 911IndependentCommission.org. And—

LORIE We chip in—the Family Steering Committee chips in to keep that running.

JON That's great. That is very important. There are so many things on there, and I've read as much as I could. As far as I know, I've read it all. But there's a list of unanswered questions. There are statements made by the 9/11 Family Steering Committee during the time of the 9/11 Commission, which to me are invaluable, because it shows the problems that they were having all throughout the 9/11 Commission.

LORIE Yeah, it's a pretty accurate history because it was done real-time, so when you look back at it, you can really see the roadblocks and what issues we were faced with real-time during the fight for the Commission and during the Commission.

JON Right, exactly. It's a wonderful resource of information.

In fact, just briefly, the issue of Government minders, the individuals who accompanied witnesses and intimidated witnesses, and answered questions for witnesses, and you know, gave witnesses the idea that their agencies might hold them, might retaliate against them if they said such and such, were a problem during the 9/11 Commission. And there was a document that was found, I think in 2009, from the 9/11 Commission that talked about the Government minders. And, I had no idea, I went through the statements of the 9/11 Families Steering Committee during the time of the 9/11 Commission and on three separate occasions you guys addressed the Government minders. You did not want them there.

That's just one of the many things that you learn—

LORIE Yeah, we were pretty outraged about that because we really felt that if you're going to have people come testify, they need to be able to tell what they know. They need to not be intimidated to not be able to do so. (Exactly) And we were intimidated, so we were outraged really at the time. We knew about it and we were really besides ourselves trying to get that to not be, but we were not successful.

JON Just unbelievable.

In the beginning, the 9/11 Commission didn't hold people under oath, and you had to shame them into doing so. What kind of steps did you take to do that?

LORIE We begged. We pleaded. (Laughs) We explained why this was a terrible idea. They had subpoena power and they had the power to put people under oath, and we said what you're doing is going to make your work look really insignificant if you don't have—if you don't swear people in. That's how that's supposed to happen. (Right)

The first, I don't remember how many hearings, they did not swear people in, but a few hearings into the whole process they began to swear people in. I think even they saw—maybe they watched the tapes, and it just looked like a Mickey Mouse operation when they didn't swear anybody. (Smirky laugh)

JON Right. It's a shame—the idea of when you hold people under oath, is the idea that if they lie, they're held accountable. And, even though everybody eventually was starting to be held under oath, nobody was held accountable. So, it didn't mean anything anyway.

LORIE Yeah, I mean, you know the bottom line is I think, however, if you're a Government person and you're sworn in, I think that it makes you be more truthful even if you're not going to be held accountable. (Oh, right!) Because you never know in the future what could happen, and so therefore, I suspect that it was a little helpful to have people sworn in.

JON No, no, absolutely, it was very—it's a good thing to do.

LORIE It also got us off their backs. I suppose that was helpful, too.

JON Right.

In 2006, you and Mindy Kleinberg released a report showing how poorly the 9/11 Commission answered the families' questions. On the 9/11 Family Steering Committee's website, there are a list of questions the 9/11 Commission failed to address. How did the families decide on which questions would be submitted to the 9/11 Commission?

LORIE We all wrote questions and we submitted them.

JON (Laughs)

LORIE We would just write them and we passed them around. We had a very rigorous editing process which took forever, but we'd write questions and we'd pass them around and whoever was next on the list to get the questions, or whatever was being passed around, would edit it and clarify it to make the question clearer, to make sure that everybody knew what the person meant (Okay), so that if the question got asked, it would be clear.

So, we all—with a group effort, people would submit questions. And, like I said, different people had different areas that they were more interested in, or an area of expertise. So, that was kind of the questions you tended to ask anyway. Then you'd pass it around to the group and everyone would see the questions and we'd write the list and we'd edit it, and bring it with us to Washington and we'd hand it to the commissioners and we would sit there with bated breath hoping they would ask the questions.

JON Right. How frustrating was it to see witnesses brought forward to testify, and not see your questions being asked?

LORIE It was really very infuriating, because a lot of times our questions were more in depth than the questions the commissioners would ask. We researched everything and we had better follow-up questions in a lot of cases, and it was very frustrating and very infuriating to not get to the point, which is what we were—had gotten pretty adept at, because we really spent so much time doing this, so it was upsetting to not see our questions asked.

JON When I would watch the 9/11 Commission Hearings—and I couldn't watch them live. I watched them on their re-broadcast late at night on C-Span. It was infuriating to me to see—it was like the friendliness, the camaraderie between the commissioners and the witnesses—the friendly banter back and forth.

LORIE It was a waste of time. Our thing was that it was a waste of time. There was a time limit on each commissioner on how long they had with each witness, and every time they spent five minutes saying how great the person was, their hairdo (Right), they were really taking away time from the point of the entire investigation or the entire commission, and why we were all in Washington, not with our families. So, every time they did that, we were really upset by it. (Right) And it wasted a lot of time.

JON It's unbelievable to me. When you wanted Condi to testify, there was a time when Condoleezza Rice and the rest of the Bush White House didn't want to testify, and they had sent in Richard Armitage in Condi Rice's place and you guys walked out in a protest. Did you ever actually see the Richard Armitage testimony?

LORIE We probably saw it broadcast because we did a silent walkout when Armitage was testifying and we were, so obviously—we started to watch it and then we were just, they were asking questions of him that should have been asked of Condi, and so we all silently got up and walked out. And we did a press conference at that time and said—and I think we watched it later on, but it was what we thought. They were asking questions of the wrong person who could not answer those questions that Condoleezza Rice needed to answer.

JON The reason I asked that was it was infuriating to me to watch him testify. They were asking him questions about basketball. You know? It was just absolutely absurd.

The next question, in this line of questioning: How infuriating is it not to have all of your questions answered, and in a credible fashion?

LORIE Well, I mean, I think that's pretty obvious. It's completely infuriating. The reason that we asked for the investigation was because we were told it would be very difficult to really have any kind of court action against anybody in the Government. So, this was sort of our only hope at getting at these answers, and to not have the questions asked in any fashion at all, and then to not have the follow-up questions asked, which after somebody answers something, there comes another question a lot of times that wasn't asked either. It was really, it was very tough, because we would have rather have done all of this in a court of law. (Yeah--) Where there are rules about stuff like this, you know?

JON It seems that when 9/11 gets into a court room, like the Moussaoui trial, things get exposed. Like Harry Samit came in and testified that he—

LORIE That's because there are rules. You have to be sworn in. You have subpoena power. You're not asking for subpoena power, you have it – (Exactly). There are rules about cross-examinations, and about—it's already done. We had to reinvent the wheel with the 9/11 Commission, using that as best we could, using the court as a model. But the bottom line is it wasn't funded

properly, it wasn't handled properly. The subpoena power wasn't used until way later in the game. People were not sworn in. I mean you could just go on and on. If it was all just handled in a system that's already set up to do this—the court—you would have hopefully seen more truth coming out. But, I guess not necessarily, because things get blocked and there was always the answer that they couldn't subpoena something, or they couldn't have something because it was being—sources and methods needed to be protected. Or whatever. (Right) There still would have been things that they could have done to block information from coming out even in a court.

But yes, a lot of things came out in this stuff. You read those transcripts in the Moussaoui trial and you look at that information. There's a lot of information there.

JON Yeah. In your opinion, which people in Government should have been held accountable, but weren't? And how ridiculous—and we already talked about this—but how ridiculous was it that people that should have been held accountable were instead rewarded and promoted.

LORIE Our opinion was that everybody that had anything to do with things going wrong on September 11 should have been held accountable. And we were outraged that they were rewarded and promoted. It was very upsetting to see that.

JON Well, are there any specific individuals that you would have liked to have been held accountable?

LORIE Well, I mean, you could just go through the list. George Tenet probably should have been held accountable for some of what went wrong. Rumsfeld should have been held accountable. Cheney, Bush, I mean, there's a whole line of people in the Government that should have been held accountable for what happened, and they weren't.

JON Yep. Condoleezza Rice, she should have been held accountable. (Exactly) So many people should have been held accountable.

What kinds of things did the Bush Administration do to give the 9/11 Commission a hard time?

LORIE Well, we talked about this already, as well, with the minders. (Right) What comes to mind. The funding. I mean, just the fact that Bush and Cheney

would not be called in to the Commission. They wouldn't testify in front of everyone and that they did it—

JON How ridiculous is that?

LORIE —behind closed doors with no recording devices so nobody knows what they said even to this day. I mean, they gave them a hard time from A to Z.

JON Right. I remember that there was something about how Alberto Gonzalez was stonewalling. Anytime the 9/11 Commission wanted documents, he made it very difficult for the 9/11 Commission to get documents. And with regard to documents, I heard that they were given a lot of junk. Like things that had absolutely nothing to do with 9/11. Just boxes and boxes of paper that really wasn't relevant to what they were trying to investigate.

LORIE Yeah, we heard the same thing. (Laughs)

JON Wow, yeah, that's ridiculous.

At the time—just so everybody knows, the following questions are about Philip Zelikow, and Philip Zelikow was the Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission. He was in charge of the staff. He was in charge of the investigation, essentially. He decided which witnesses would be brought forward, what questions would be asked, etc. and so on. And the man, essentially, to me, is a criminal. But take that in the context for these next questions.

At the time, what kinds of things did Philip Zelikow, the Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission, do that frustrated you?

LORIE He was a little difficult to deal with. He basically didn't really like it when we spoke to staffers. So . . . we used to have these kind of conference calls where Phil Zelikow would be on the phone and the Family Steering Committee would be on. And there'd be staffers, but he really didn't like us to address the staffers very much and he really wanted to see what was going on all the time.

JON How did he expect you to communicate with them?

LORIE We communicated with some of the staffers really before Phil Zelikow had the kind of idea that we were. But then later on I think he probably told

them, told the staffers not to talk to us directly so much. So that's sort of the message that we got. So that was pretty upsetting.

But, it was just hard to understand that there was this sort of—these figure heads in Kean and Hamilton. And then really what was happening behind the scenes was that Zelikow was sort of running that show.

JON Right. And—from what I remember, he wrote a complete outline of the final 9/11 Report with Ernest May. Before the investigation even started. You guys called for his resignation I think on two separate occasions and they refused. There were a lot of things—

Oh, one of the things I wanted to talk to you about was his attempt to try and link Iraq with the 9/11 attacks. There's a story in Phil Shenon's book, I think after Laurie Milroy testified, you went up to him and confronted him about that. Do you recall that?

LORIE Yes, we had a meeting after that and I was outraged completely that he was trying to say that Iraq had anything to do with September 11, and Laurie Milroy's testimony was really laughable at the time. It was just really beyond the pale that they were trying to sort of put that off on the American public that people would now have to, you know, would believe this at all (Right) that Iraq had something to do with September 11. We knew at the time that was just ridiculous, and it was just another horrible—

JON It was a pretty good indication to me as to who he was working for. You know? Who would that had benefitted? The Bush administration. (Yeah) Who did relentlessly try to tie Iraq to 9/11.

LORIE Yeah, I think that's probably true.

JON Now, knowing what you know today about the kinds of things he did, how much would you like to see him in jail?

LORIE I'd certainly would like to see him demoted. (Snickers) I'd like to see him never work in Government again. That's what I would like. Because I know that would be really a pretty big punishment for him. Not just in Government, but he teaches and, I don't know if he's just retired, but he is a teacher and I would like to see him just sort of be put out of business. That would be great.

JON Right. You'd like to see everybody know that this man, his credibility, he has none. He did horrible crimes, as far as I'm concerned, during the time of the 9/11 Commission. And, you're right, he shouldn't be brought out to do lectures and the things that he does. Anyway—

When people openly lied and you knew about those lies at the time of the 9/11 Commission, did you take any steps to tell staff or commissioners that you were aware of these lies?

LORIE Yes, any time we saw something that was not right, we would email the commissioners. We emailed them every single day. We were either emailing them questions, or we were telling them what follow-up questions that they should have asked, or we would like them to ask in the future, or that somebody did not tell the truth about whatever we knew to be true. And we would send our evidence and our research and we were very busy, very busy.

JON Right. Especially the NORAD lies, which they told a lot of lies.

LORIE Yeah, there were three different versions of their timeline and it was pretty ridiculous, actually. (Yeah--) We were like, well aren't those the 0800 people? The people who like keep track of every minute and log everything in and have the time down to a second of what they're doing. How would they not know their timeline or have it not be logged in somewhere? It never really made any sense to us, not from the beginning.

JON Well, there was a meeting, I think, between NORAD, the FAA, and the White House on September 17, 2001, and Bob Kerrey said that it seemed like something happened in that meeting that caused almost a necessity to deliver something to the public that was different than the truth. So, that's like an indication that the White House is directing the lies being told by NORAD, but we don't know for sure.

LORIE Well, we know that their timeline—again, back to the importance of a timeline—we know that their timeline would really tell us a lot if we actually knew exactly what unfolded and what should have happened with protocols and with fighters being sent out after the hijacked planes, and things like that. We would know a lot if we knew the real facts about how that all that went down that day.

JON Right, there were so many contradictions—go ahead.

- LORIE Yeah, so I mean, that would be a reason why they would not want that to come out. If they were hiding something, there's a lot of factual data that timelines just don't lie.
- JON Right. And with regard to NORAD and things like Able Danger, they were referred to the DOD IG, Inspector General, and it seems, apparently, I forget what the report was. I think it was Frank Rich from *The New York Times* that said the Inspector General that worked for the DOD was essentially corrupt, was a Bush puppet. So, any of the reports that he wrote, which let NORAD off the hook, which said things like Able Danger, they never found the chart, or whatever, we can't trust those Inspector General's reports, essentially. So, I just wanted to point that out. (Mm-hmm) During the time of the 9/11 Commission, you and the other Jersey Girls were on TV a lot. After the release of the report, and the official narrative was set in stone, you very much became persona non-grata. Every effort that you made, every press release you wrote, were virtually ignored by the corporate media. How frustrating is that for you?
- LORIE At the time, it was very frustrating. We just had hoped that we'd be able to really reveal more of what we knew, but once the Commission came out with its report and everything had a nice little neat bow on it (Laughs), they were done, because they didn't really want anybody questioning that anymore. So—
- JON I just think people should really take a look at that. That the fact that the corporate media—they just started to ignore them. And that should say something about how horrible—
- LORIE They basically were saying this was the answer that we got. Your investigation is done. There's a bow on it, a nice little tied gift here. And so, that's it. You're done. (Right, exactly) It was very hard to sort of go back and say, but you didn't answer ex-amount of questions, because they were moving on. They were done.
- JON It was unbelievable to me. There were so many press releases that said things that were so explosive, to me. Like you called the 9/11 Commission derelict in its duties. You questioned the voracity of the entire report. I mean, these were just some of the statements that were made in some of these press releases. And it was just—if the American people knew what

you were trying to tell them, it would just be a different world today, I think. And, it's just a shame.

LORIE We felt that we would just get everything down on paper. We would just write what we knew and anybody that had enough interest to read it, would know what we had to say. And that was the only thing we had at that point.

JON Well, I highly recommend that people do read the press releases that you've written over the years.

Does this have an impact on your willingness to remain active?

LORIE You know, essentially, yeah, I guess you get a little bit crazy from beating your head against the wall, but you know, you just also get tired. And I think they count on that. It's a pity that we couldn't really get a real investigation to see what had happened and then hold the people accountable the way they should have been. That would have been much more justice, in our view, for the victims of September 11.

JON Right. Is there anything you would like to say to the corporate media who has ignored you all these years?

LORIE I just guess they're doing what they perceive, or what they're, you know—the corporate media is basically paid for by the people that advertise with them and they have their own marching orders. So, it's not—the press is not necessary free is what I'm trying to say.

JON Right, and I, many times over the years, I've said shame on them for ignoring you guys. And, again, shame on them.

Right now, there is an effort underway to get the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry released. Greatly so the families can use them in a lawsuit against Saudi Arabia. You fought hard for their release at one time by releasing a petition that ultimately got 17 thousand signatures, and even then, Washington D.C. didn't budge. Do you think D.C. will budge this time, and are you part of the lawsuit against Saudi Arabia?

LORIE I am part of the lawsuit against Saudi Arabia. We said, okay, if the 15 of the 19 hijackers were from Saudi Arabia, and the funding came from Saudi Arabia—even though the 9/11 Commission said the funding was of little practical significance, we disagreed. We think that the funding of anything

we would hope that eventually those pages would be released. It doesn't seem 13 years later that you're hiding—that sources and methods are relevant anymore, and that's the only real reason for redaction. So, it's time. It's time to release the 28 pages. For anybody that's listening.

JON Right. And, we pretty much have a good idea as to what's in those pages. You know they talk about, or Bob Graham has written about the fact that the Bandar Family was connected to money of two of the hijackers in San Diego, and one of the things I heard about during the—when the 9/11 Commissioners interviewed Bush and Cheney is that when Bush was asked about this he pretty much ignored the question. When he was asked about Bandar, specifically, he avoided the question. So, I thought that was interesting.

With regard to the 28 redacted pages—with regard to the 9/11 Commission, they have yet to release all of their documentation and a lot of the documentation that they have released is greatly redacted. So, the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry are important, but there's also a lot of other things that have to be released as well. And you'll find a lot times in the documentation that's released from the 9/11 Commission, it contradicts what's in the report. So, that's why it's very important to get a lot of these—to get all of these documents released.

BREAK

Okay, we're recording again. Unfortunately, we had some technical difficulties. Lorie got disconnected. And I think you're on a landline.

LORIE Yes, I am.

JON That's pretty weird. Anyway, we were just talking about Saudi Arabia, the 28 redacted pages, the pages from the 9/11 Commission—all these things need to be released.

Is there anything that you would like to say to someone that is just starting to question 9/11, or is there anything you would like to say about why it's so important to point out the fact that we were lied to about that day?

LORIE I would just say to anyone that was starting to question 9/11 that they should just read everything they can get their hands on. They should look at the Family Steering Committee's website, as we said before. They could

watch *9/11: Press for Truth*. They could read Paul Thompson's timeline book. They could read—there's a ton of books out there that really speak to different questions about September 11. The Moussaoui trial documents are very interesting to read.

It's to really—our history is to—what's important really for everybody to understand.

JON Right. There's a lot of information out there and it's very—if you really look at 9/11—I tell people, don't listen to me. Do your own research and eventually you'll come across something that you'll question about the 9/11 attacks. It's virtually impossible to avoid it if you honestly take a look at that day.

Now, is there anything that you would like to say to the people in the Middle East and elsewhere that have been affected because of how that day is being used?

LORIE You know, just that it's a pity, it's a terrible thing, people are blamed for things that they didn't do. Or, it's a terrible thing for people to have a country that they're living in be attacked by anyone. So, it's just a really sad situation.

JON And they're still using 9/11 as the justification. The bombing in Syria, the President said the authorization for use of military force that was implemented after 9/11 is the justification for the bombing in Syria. I mean, it's used for so many horrible things—and we were lied to about that day. And so, in my mind anyway, I don't think there's a justification for anything that's being done in the name—of that day, in the names of your loved ones, and so forth. At least that's my opinion.

LORIE Well, we were pretty upset about the whole, you know, Iraq, them trying to connect Iraq and September 11th and, you know, we did try to speak out at the time, so. (Right) It's really hard to fight City Hall, as they say.

JON As they say—but one thing Kristen Breitweiser said—look what four people did. Imagine what eight people could do, what sixteen people could do, what 32 people could do, etc. and so on. People do have power. They just have to get together and use it.

And we talked about does this have an effect—with corporate media ignoring you, does that have an effect on your activism. And I think that the family members have given us the tools over the years. Movies like *9/11: Press for Truth, In Their Own Words: The Untold Stories of the 9/11 Families*, your report from Mindy telling us how poorly the 9/11 Commission answered your questions. As you said, there's a multitude of things out there. They've given us the tools. The families have given us the tools that we need. We just need to use them.

And, Lorie, I very much want to thank you for taking the time today to talk about the 9/11 Commission. I'm very sorry for your loss, for the loss of Kenneth and I hope that one day we manage to get you some form of legitimate justice and truth for what happened that day.

LORIE Thank you, Jon, that would be great. (Laughs)

JON It would be great. So, again, thank you very much for taking the time today. And, good luck!

LORIE Okay, thanks. You're welcome.

JON Thank you very much, Lorie.

LORIE Okay. Take care.

JON Bye, bye.

JON This show is dedicated to Kenneth Van Auken



Chapter/Episode 7 – Dr. Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed – September 30, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Dr. Nafeez Ahmed (NAFEEZ)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show is going to focus on how Governments use terrorism as a proxy. If you saw the film *9/11: Press for Truth*, you will hear Paul Thompson ask the following question: "The question to me is who else was involved with Al-Qaeda? Was Al-Qaeda used as a tool just as in the 1980s the Mujahideen were basically used by the U.S. Government?" I believe with regard to 9/11, this is an extremely important question that needs to be answered.

Okay, hi, this is Jon and I'm here with Dr. Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed. How are you doing, Nafeez?

NAFEEZ I'm great, Jon. How are you?

JON I'm doing well. All right, I'm going to read your bio.

Dr. Nafeez Ahmed is an investigative journalist, bestselling author and international security scholar. He has contributed to two major terrorism investigations in the US and UK, the 9/11 Commission and the 7/7 Coroner's Inquest, and has advised the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, British Foreign Office and US State Department, among other Government agencies. His new novel, *ZERO POINT*, predicted a US-UK re-invasion of Iraq to put down an Islamist insurgency there. Nafeez is a regular contributor to *The Guardian* where he writes about the geopolitics of interconnected environmental, energy and economic crises via his Earth Insight global column. He has also written for *The Independent*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *The Scotsman*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Atlantic*, *Quartz*, *Prospect*, *New Statesman*, *Le Monde diplomatique*, among many others. And I also think *Raw Story* was one of them at one point. Is that right?

NAFEEZ That's right! (Laughs)

JON I'm glad I remember that. All right, and I wrote a little personal bio for Nafeez.

He does not know it, but Nafeez is a mentor of mine. Over the years, Nafeez has given me insights into many things that have been invaluable for my activism. He is a walking encyclopedia for many issues, and not just about terrorism and 9/11. I highly recommend watching his movie *Crisis of Civilization*. In my opinion, Nafeez is brilliant in his analysis of many issues. I highly recommend reading and watching what he has to say.

So, with that, how are you doing, Nafeez?

NAFEEZ I'm great. Thanks for the bio, was very kind of you.

JON Oh, no problem, you deserved it. Just so everybody knows, this is actually the first time that Nafeez and I have ever spoken. We've emailed. We've corresponded. We've talked on Facebook. I was at locations that he was at and we just never got around to talking. So, this is our first time.

Anyway, my first question to you is what was the day of 9/11 like for you?

NAFEEZ Oh, wow. I mean, that's—I mean, what I remember really is just it seemed like a lot of people just being completely, utterly shocked watching it on television. I think at the time I was living in Brighton and had been living

there not too long, actually, about a year or so, and it just completely was, just I mean, happening. It was just completely and utterly just shocking. It took me, and obviously everybody else, completely by surprise, and I think glued to the screens all day long. I think it was awhile before I began to think of it more critically about what actually happened on the day. It certainly was a catalyzing event, as it was for many people in terms of my writing and my desire to kind of get to the bottom of things. I think 9/11 was a major push in that regard. I mean, I'd been writing a lot at the time. I mean, I didn't actually have a degree at that time, but I'd been writing a lot. I'd been publishing on a couple of small alternative news outlets and I remember when 9/11 happened and I began kind of just trying to understand it, trying to deal with the kind of the backlash on Muslim communities in the UK. And, kind of, as a writer at the time, I wanted to find a kind of a way of responding to that and a way of kind of understanding and making sense of 9/11. And so that kind of led me on a path to just reading, learning, trying to understand more, and eventually I began to put together the bits and pieces that came to form my first book *The War on Freedom*, which came out nearly six months later, actually. I think it was summer of 2002. Yeah.

JON I don't know if that first book is actually still available to get—*The War on Freedom*.

NAFEEZ I think it is.

JON It is? I looked once, anyway, it was hard to get. When Nafeez's books, incidentally—when I go into a bookstore, they're one of the books that I look to see if they have, and they rarely ever—I don't think I've ever seen one. (Laughs) It's one of those books that you have to go to the front desk and order. But he wrote, yeah, *War on Freedom* and *War on Truth* and you talked about the backlash against Muslims because of the results of that day, and that's been one of the things that I've fought for, fought against, for as long as I can remember. It really saddens me when someone, for instance, pushes someone who looks like a Muslim in front of a train in New York City just because they're Muslim. And it doesn't get nearly the attention that it should in this country. And it's just horrible. Muslims are our friends. No differently than Christians, Jews, and so on and so forth. But, yeah, that really hits home for me. The hatred against Muslim people as a result of 9/11.

What is your definition of Al-Qaeda?

NAFEEZ I mean, my definition of Al-Qaeda, this is an interesting one. I think the basic way of understanding Al-Qaeda at the moment is that they were basically an organization of a loosely kind of—a loosely organized network of militants that were originally recruited in the context of the Cold War. You know, and the Mujahideen, recruited by the CIA, and used against the Soviets. And that core kind of organizing principle that brought these people together around which we saw the kind of development of the Islamist ideology that has defined Al-Qaeda's vision of the world, and its ambitions for expansion and the way it operates toxically in the kind of terrorist attacks that it undertakes and so on and so forth. I mean, I think this Cold War period was a very crucial period for the formation of the group. And, of course, I think after that I think we saw the expansion of the group due to the fact that so many different foreign fighters were recruited from many different parts of the Muslim world, hundreds of countries.

And I think that's, I mean, that is really the essence of Al-Qaeda is that. What we have today is the legacy of that network, where we have multiple different ethnicities of people who have basically some kind of relationship to the network in the past and then have gone on to be involved in new theaters of conflict and that kind of have continued the kind of efforts to basically expand and can kind of grow this network have also gone on in many different ways. I think what you're getting at with that question, I would imagine, is this debate over Al-Qaeda's kind of existence in relation to different state intelligence agencies. And I think, obviously, that's a pretty important question, and it's worth remembering that, you know, Robin Cook, the foreign minister, British foreign minister, the Guardian actually wrote a few years back before he sadly passed away. I think this was about one year after 7/7 and he was talking about Al-Qaeda and the origins of Al-Qaeda. And interestingly he pointed out that Al-Qaeda at the time, when it was first conceived, really actually referred to a database of Mujahideen. So it was used by the CIA. Which is interesting, it was the first time that anybody had, anybody at that level had officially kind of referred to Al-Qaeda in that sense, as relating to some kind of intelligence database of operatives. So, that was an explicit indication of Al-Qaeda's function when it first came into existence as some kind of an arm of, a covert arm of CIA or other intelligence agencies. And, of course, I mean, what's interesting, something that I've also mentioned in the past is that the Arabic for "database" qaida ma'lumat and Al-Qaeda as is known, Al-Qaeda means the base and ma'lumat means data, or information.

So, actually, the kind of colloquial term for database often used in Arabic is simply in some parts referred to in short Al-Qaeda. So, that kind of explains the origin of the term. So, I mean, that kind of brings us into a whole other set of questions, but I think it's very difficult to pin down, you know, come up with a very simplistic definition of what Al-Qaeda is today as a consequence.

JON

In my opinion, I've said before that I think there are many definitions for what Al-Qaeda is. There's the variety that are created through FBI entrapment. There's the "long-reaching tentacle" myth created by the corporate media. There's the variety that are labeled Al-Qaeda that are actually insurgents against the Empire. There's the variety that believe they're a part of Al-Qaeda or believe in the things Osama bin Laden has said. And, finally, as you were just alluding to, there's the variety that have a multitude of intelligence agencies and/or Pentagon connections and are used as a proxy to destabilize countries and Governments.

And, you were talking about Robin Cook and the database, there was actually a formation, I believe in the early 90s of what we would consider to be Al-Qaeda and it has a list of names—it's on HistoryCommons.org, I'd have to go look for it—but there was a meeting of the minds and they formed what they called Al-Qaeda and it's unfortunate that no one else has verified Robin Cook's claims, and unfortunately he passed away, so we can't really ask him about them.

Now, can you please tell us what the strategy of tension is?

NAFEEZ

Well, the strategy of tension originated as a description of covert operations that were going on in western Europe that can now be traced back to the CIA and MI6, particularly, operating through an architecture of secrets, secret agencies, a network of secret agencies that were really to do with the NATO countries and not to do with NATO military units that were linked to the respective Governments and national military intelligence agencies of the respective countries. And the idea of strategy of tension was the notion that there would be an effort to basically mobilize right wing groups to either masquerade as communists or actually fund and create communist groups that would engage in various kinds of provocation and insurgency or various kinds of activities that would ultimately discredit them in the eyes of the general population. So it was very much in the context of the Cold War and of the U.S.'s kind of geo-political goal to dominate western Europe and to exert NATO as hegemony over western Europe as a kind of principle

security architecture. And to kind of, basically, to push away the kind of danger that these countries might shift toward socialist kinds of values or of course, the danger of it described as being a communist threat. And this is quite interesting because a lot of the historical data shows that the Soviet Union—there was really very little prospect of the Soviet Union actually invading western Europe at this time. But there was a need for—in order for Europe to stay within NATO, and for the U.S. to kind of consolidate this western European security architecture through NATO, which involves, obviously, all sorts of things from economic aid to military aid, intelligence corporation, or the rest of it. There needs to be this idea that the Soviets were ready to invade western Europe. For me the strategy of tension was actually about, very much about, kind of trying to demonstrate the extent to which the Soviets were involved in subversive and dangerous activity which could indicate a threat that required the U.S., and European countries, to kind of be ready and to kind of police the domestic communist thoughts and to kind of keep an eye out for radical communist activities and all of the rest of it. Essentially justified an extensive surveillance of academics, of activists, journalists, all sorts of political, all sorts of kind of surveillance and kind of monitoring.

So, I mean, that sums up the idea Strategy of Tension and people who are interested to come and read more about how this policy played out as it should read. I think it's definite historical work by Daniele Ganser in his book *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation GLADIO and Terrorism in Western Europe*, specifically focusing on Operation GLADIO in Italy. The book is called *NATO's Secret Armies* and it's published by Routledge, which is you know a very, very reputed academic publisher.

JON Right. I also recommend—there's a documentary from years ago from the BBC that did a series on Operation GLADIO, and we'll get into GLADIO in a little bit. So, essentially, the strategy of tension is using, I guess you could say terrorism, or what people consider false flag attacks in order to influence policy and so forth.

NAFEEZ That's it. I mean, I think—I mean, I'm wary of using the term, terms like false flag attacks—

JON Oh, so am I. (Laughs)

NAFEEZ Yeah, I mean, it's fine, I mean, it's just that I find the term to be used in so many different contexts by people who—reading about these things but

often believe in theories which don't really necessarily have much evidence for them. And then so the term false flag has become this kind of catch-all term (Yep) to kind of capture anything that happens. So, I'm quite wary of using that kind of terminology. I think it's really important that people who are serious about understanding history and understanding what's going on in the world today, will try to be as precise as possible in the type of language that we're using. I mean, obviously, I understand what the term is getting at, and I kind of agree with it to that extent in the sense that what we're talking about here is deniable operations. Operations which are carried out that the CIA can basically wash its hands of and say but we didn't do that. We're not involved in that.

And obviously that's the whole point of having a secret intelligence agency, to be able to do things which a Government will not be able to do publicly but do secretly so that it can deny involvement in that. And that's kind of the essence of the idea of false flags. But I think in this particular context we are certainly talking about operations where we have terrorist activity being in some way promoted or facilitated in order to influence the decisions, political decisions of local populations. And in that context where the idea of false flag does become relevant is in the sense that, you know, there is a very deliberate and conscious effort to project an enemy external to whoever, you know us. And that enemy is basically where we have then this idea of a false flag. But what's interesting with that is that sometimes it doesn't have to be a false flag.

Sometimes it can be a case of actually having a real group of terrorists do something that they've provoked into to doing it, or that kind of thing. But, I mean, people often find it difficult to stomach, but it's worth looking at special forces operations manuals over the last few years. I mean, there was one that was released by Wikileaks—I think it was 2008, a special forces manual, which was restricted. But if you have a look at these kind of documents, you begin to see how actually central that kind of thinking—you know, whether we call it the strategy of tension, or we call it more colloquially false flag terrorism—actually, this kind of strategy's referred to very, very directly in these documents as the kind of use and abuse of terrorism in order to covertly, in order to basically influence populations.

JON

Right. Well, you were talking about the terminology of false flag attacks—honestly, I got that from Wikipedia. I looked up the definition for strategy of tension and I got that from Wikipedia. But, I hate that phrase. And the reason that I do is that as you said, it's been so over-used and like within

hours of something horrible happening there are people out there saying false-flag attack, false-flag attack. (Absolutely, absolutely, yeah) And what's happened, you know, what's happened is it's become a keyword that essentially shuts people down from hearing anything else you have to say after that. (Yeah) Because it's been so over-used. It's like the boy who cried wolf. (Yeah) So, it's definitely one of those phrases.

Now, we were told that any relationship that we had with the Mujahideen ended after the Afghanistan/Russia war. Why is this statement false? And can you name some instances in the 90s where terrorists were used as proxies.

NAFEEZ Well, this is obviously something I've been working on for a long time. But I think just the narrative that we kind of separated from Bin Laden after the Cold War. It's still today promulgated very widely as conventional wisdom. The story is, essentially, we teamed up with—we used the Mujahideen in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union and after the Soviet Union collapsed, there wasn't any need to kind of maintain connections with these guys and they turned against us, and ever since then Bin Laden's been fighting his War on Terror against us.

War OF Terror against us. I mean, and that's the kind of general way of seeing it. There's certainly some truth to that in the sense that clearly there are these networks. We've seen from information that has come out in the media and from whistleblowers who've come out on the record and talked about what the thing they had been investigating.

It's very clear that there are very real—these Islamist networks affiliated to Al-Qaeda that have been planning attacks and killing people and committing atrocities sometimes against western targets. I mean, and this is a real phenomenon. But, where it gets complicated is in the claim that there was this clean break with these networks, which just is completely and utterly false. It's so false, it's absurd.

On the contrary, actually, after the Cold War our use and proliferation of these different Mujahideen networks really proliferated across many strategic areas. And I think one of the first operations began in 1991 in Azerbaijan when we had various groups that were literally flown in to Azerbaijan and they basically were on behalf of—all this happened under the kind of the rubric of this American company, interestingly called Mega Oil, but we had some of the same guys that were involved in the Iran

Contra scandal who were actually involved in Mega Oil and they were funneling the Mujahideen from Afghanistan into Azerbaijan in order to basically destabilize the Government and kind of install a Government that was more friendly to locals, to the United States' local interests.

And in the end they did succeed in changing the political configuration there and getting their favorite kind of client dictator Ilham Aliyev to the dynasty effectively in Azerbaijan has kind of reigned over there and has been very, very amenable to kind of corporate investment and British petroleum, and other major western companies are heavy investors there. And that, interestingly, then paved the way for operations involving the Mujahideen to extend into the Balkans.

So, from '92 to '95 we had this situation where, obviously, the U.S. was going through a crisis, the IMF World bank structured adjusted programs had effectively destroyed the Yugoslav socialist economy. They were increasing ethnic tensions due to the collapse of wages and sort of massive austerity measures and all that kind of stuff.

Interestingly, the CIA had actually predicted that the impact of the IMF World bank structured adjusted programs would basically be the complete justification of Yugoslavia. So, there were elements of the establishment that kind of knew what was coming.

And so, we had this situation where eventually that things really broke down. War began to—broke out in that part of the world. And our role in that was—people talk about our role in terms of trying to have humanitarian peace keeping and get peace keepers in, and that we failed to kind of protect Srebrenica, and all of that is true. We had the very real genocide of something like 10,000 civilians killed in Srebrenica by the Serbs, and that is a very valid reality.

However, what is not really looked at is the direct role that the Pentagon played in really accelerating the conflict because what emerged from the Dutch Government investigation into the failure of the Dutch U.N. peace keepers to prevent the genocide with Srebrenica even though they were there on the ground. The appendix to the investigation was written by a Dutch intelligence expert. I think he name is Professor Steve Weeb, who referred to Dutch intelligence files, which basically document extensively the role of the Pentagon in literally flying in Mujahideen from Afghanistan,

from other Azerbaijan from other areas into Bosnia, and essentially using them as shock troops.

So, that element of the conflict is something that isn't well known. Now these guys, obviously, were very extreme, they were quite happy to use tremendous violence, and they did play a role in accelerating the conflicts. There were faces of these shock troops, these mercenaries, that the Pentagon has brought in effectively, are killing Serb civilians and massacring whole villages and committing other types of war crimes—and so, we played a very interesting role in effectively dividing and ruling this territory and destabilizing the region.

We can have a big debate about why this took place and what the objective was and maybe it was just short-sited, or whatever. But that kind of strategy continued in Kosovo, again, when we kind of teamed up, teamed up with the KLA, which is, of course, much more well-known. But what isn't so well-known is the extent to which the KLA, again, was very much affiliated with Al-Qaeda and there are many, many press reports that confirmed, at the time, that senior Bin Laden operatives had actually got to travel to Kosovo, including Ayman al-Zawahiri's brother. Obviously, Ayman al-Zawahiri is currently considered the Emir of Al-Qaeda. His brother went to KLA and was a senior commander there, and he basically actually participated as a leader of the KLA unit and was involved in recruiting and funneling people into various Mujahideen networks into the KLA. These are the same people that we again sponsored in the conflicts of the Kosovo conflict.

Now, in the aftermath of all of this, we've now seen a situation where all of this destabilization has played an interesting role, and is essentially eroding any kind of drive that may have existed locally for nationalist, socialist types of politics. And, instead, served to allow the United States on the one hand to establish a series of military bases in all of these countries heading toward eastern Europe, towards the border of Russia. And, at the same time, also allowing the United States and Britain to have a much bigger political and diplomatic role in the region which has allowed them to kind of push forward a very market-oriented set of economic principles that has opened up the region to foreign investors and allowed the U.S. and Britain to kind of go in, most interestingly, to pursue this Trans-Balkan pipeline, which is basically, which is operational at the moment, and which plays a major role now in the transport of gas across Europe.

So, there's lots of different explanations as to whether—how this has occurred but at the end of the day I think it's pretty clear that throughout this period—and I'm only talking about the Balkans here—and there's many, many other cases happening around similar times in this context or where we've seen these Al-Qaeda affiliated groups being used by our intelligence agencies for these geo-political purposes.

And I think that's kind of the real issue—I think it raises the question as to what extent we really did break away from these groups.

JON

Well, there—just so everybody knows, there are entries on HistoryCommons.org that goes over some of this—especially the Pentagon, flying in people and so on and so forth.

One of the things that you mentioned was people from the Iran Contra scandal, and sometime in March, 2007, Seymour Hersh of *The New Yorker* wrote a report that essentially said that the Iran Contra veterans that were working out of Dick Cheney's office were using stolen funds from Iraq to arm Al-Qaeda-type groups and foment a larger Sunni-Shia war and—let's see—it's just interesting—people should know a lot of people from the Iran Contra affair are involved in these type of operations and they were very much involved in the Bush administration.

Now, after 9/11, there were other instances of us, again, using terrorists as proxies—and I want people to understand why it's so important to bring attention to this issue. One of the main reasons is that it takes away the legitimacy for the entire "War on Terror." If you're supporting terrorists, how can you be having a war on terror. And it's just absolutely ridiculous. And, people need to be held accountable for their actions with regard to this.

But after 9/11, we used the CIA, ISI connections, to use Jundullah in Iran—during what happened in Libya, we allied ourselves with Al-Qaeda-linked groups. The people John McCain photographed himself with, and in Syria, you know, the Saudi Arabians armed, funded, and sent in rebels along with Qatar and Kuwait, and then we started training rebels in Jordan to send in to Syria in an effort to take out Assad—and before we started arming or training rebels in Jordan, we were sending the "rebels" intelligence and some aid and arms and so forth.

So, there's no such thing as a moderate rebel. What do you have to say about moderate rebel?

NAFEEZ Well, I think—I mean, this is a complex issue because Syrian opposition and Syrian rebels are made up of like a huge number of different factions. I mean, by some estimates there's something like over a thousand different groups and entities. The one thing I would emphasize—again, when we kind of look at these issues it's important to step back and especially when we're not specialists in the regions. Kind of step back, have a little bit of humility and kind of try to understand the region. Try to understand the complexity, realize that we're probably not going to be able to.

And in that context, I think it's important for people to realize that what happened in Syria, there was a very real uprising. And after the regime—it was an extremely brutal regime. And, for people who are basically now—you know you get some idiots who basically think that because the Americans or the British don't like us so therefore we need to kind of recognize that Assad is a good guy. You know he must be a good guy because they're against him. We have to remember that before this whole kind of concerted effort against Assad began a couple years ago. Assad was being used in the concept of the War on Terror, there was ample cooperation with the CIA and with the rendition programs he was facilitating (Right), he was facilitating torture on behalf of the CIA. It's rough to turn around on the one hand and say Assad's a bad guy, he's a bit of a joke. Because he was a bad guy, we didn't like him, but we used him when we needed to. So, to what extent he was a bad guy is really relative. He was a bad guy, but you know, he kind of was bad enough for us to use him when it came to torturing. It's like with terror suspects, which you know, we decided that we didn't want to prosecute them in a court of law, so we'll just torture them instead. So there's a real question mark over there. But in terms of—Assad is a genuinely horrible guy and he did run a very sectarian regime that generally discriminates against [AUDIOBAD] And I think in the context of some of the problems the country was facing there was a regional drought in the country which led to migrations of farmers inter-cities because their crops were failing. And most of those guys therefore would soon be moving to these kind of slightly wealthier urban areas that were dominated by the elitist. Those were the kind of clans that were dominated by Assad. So, what we have that kind of created these more sectarian tensions because obviously at the end of the day, you know, Assad's favorite people are from his own clan, people of his own ethnicity. And so really tensions started to build. And people really started to feel the

problems. This kind of recession and the unemployment issues kicked in and all the rest of it. So when the uprising took place, in the context of the wider, you know, Arab Spring, which was already kicking off everywhere else, it was a real uprising. There were people who were genuinely on the street. They were angry. (What---) But what we all know—

JON Go ahead. I'm sorry.

NAFEEZ No, it's fine, don't worry, Jon. What we now know is that there were efforts to co-op this uprising, to co-op this rebellion, which actually began even before it kicked off. In a recent *Guardian* piece I wrote, I mention a Wikileaks cable that showed that the State Department was actually aware that the drought in Syria was causing problems and they knew there was going to be unrest. And that was early as 2008, I believe. Now, in 2009, we know according to the former French Foreign Minister, Roland Dumas—speaking on French mainstream TV, he said—he was in Britain in 2009, and he was told by foreign officer officials that they were planning something in Syria and they were working with people on the ground, opposition groups, rebels to foster some kind of move against Assad. So what they showed as early as 2009 the British and U. S. Special Forces were on the ground doing something, messing around. So when the uprising kicked off, we already had people there.

Now, in 2011, we know from the cables that, not the cables, the emails that were obtained by Wikileaks from STRATFOR—the U.S. private intelligence firm. We know that those guys had meetings with Pentagon officials where they were told that in 2011, they were on the ground, working actively with rebel groups, conducting operations, planning operations, providing aid, providing training and that the whole point of this kind of activity was to destabilize the Assad regime from within. So, this process of co-opting these rebel groups was accelerating. We also know from all of the kind of press reports that have come out, whether it's *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, that the United States began covertly coordinating funding for these rebel groups from some of the most dictatorial regimes in the region, namely Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Kuwait—and we also know that classified assessments of the nature of this funding and who the funding was going to shows that the vast bulk of the money was going to essentially the most virulent, Islamic extremist rebels that were affiliated to Al-Qaeda. And that's not of a surprise given everything we've discussed because that's who these guys have always been funding—Saudis, Qatar—that's who these guys know. They don't know

anybody else to fund. They have established networks and links with these guys, so they're going to fund the same guys. They're increasingly—the rebel movement began to get hijacked. There were genuinely secular, moderate factions—and there still are moderate factions in the Syrian movement. However, those have increasingly become marginalized as this money has poured in. And it's got to a point where when groups like Al-Qaeda kind of become, began to increasingly kind of hijack this rebel movement and rebel operations, and we had the emergence of the Al-Nusra Front and ISIS and all the rest of it, and you know, some several other kinds of Al-Qaeda groups have been active there as well. Well, the moderate rebels because they were having so many issues and so many challenges, they began to welcome these groups purely because they were militarily very competent. They had training, they had a lot of experience and they often came with heavy weapons as well. And we know, for example, that we have very, very strong circumstantial evidence that what was going on in Benghazi, in the U.S. Embassy in Benghazi, was a covert CIA operation to smuggle heavy weapons across the border to the Syrian rebels. So—and that was actually being done with support of local Al-Qaeda groups. So, this whole kind of involvement of Al-Qaeda is something that was directly facilitated by what the U.S. intelligence services were doing on the ground.

So, the question—that brings me to your question, Jon, of this issue of are there moderate rebels—I mean, I wouldn't say there is no such thing as a moderate rebel—I think that does a disservice to the people, the real kind of genuine people who are resisting Assad—and having a very genuine resistance movement. But I think at the same time we have to debrief this situation where to not call out the reality of the extent to which the moderates have been sidelined in terms of the power, it would also be a disservice, because they have been sidelined. And now we've got to this point where, before James Foley was killed, his location was passed on to ISIS by certain moderate rebels. So, we've got this situation, where I think the question of to what extent is there a real kind of moderate force in Syria, I think it's maybe a little bit too simplistic, but it is a legitimate question in a sense that, okay fine, we might have some moderate people there, but how the hell do we access these guys because they've gotten to the point where they're working together.

I mean, after the airstrikes—you probably maybe were going to mention this—after the airstrikes that we've had, the moderates have signed a pact with ISIS saying that we'll both fight with you.

JON The point of my question with regard to moderate rebels is that nobody has the ability to really differentiate between what would be a good rebel—yes, you talked about there being legitimate rebels out there, but when the U.S. is arming and funding and training people, I don't honestly think they care. Or I don't think they have the ability to distinguish or I don't think they put much thought into it.

NAFEEZ I think on that issue, there's two things to say, I think. First of all, there's the somewhat more measured kind of mainstream criticism which is the—they don't have the ability to really vet the rebels. And I think if we look at the vetting process, I mean, there was a Mother Jones investigation into the vetting process, which shows that basically the vetting process is completely pointless. And the arms are being supplied to so-called moderate or secular rebels and they're still ending up in the hands of the extremists. So, there is this thing of they don't have the competence. They don't have the knowledge. They don't know what the hell they're doing. You know, and I think that's obviously the case.

But the second issue is, like you said, do they care? And what we've seen consistently over the last three to four years that we've had this— involvement—been involved in Syria. It's not actually so much that—it's not even that we don't care. It's actually that from all the evidence that we can see, the United States and Britain are knowingly coordinating assistance so people that we know will end up with them basically being radical or passing the weapons on to people who are radical. By radical, I don't mean progressively radical in a good way.

I mean radical in an extremist way. In a very dangerous way. It's not something—you say two or three years ago we've had classified assessments which showed that we've got the Saudis going in there and we've got Qatar going in there and they're supplying according to some estimates, something up to a billion dollars of aid is actually being supplied in total by these gulf states. And we now—no, our classified assessments are saying the majority of that funding has gone to the extremists. Now for us to then be coordinating with the same people and keeping the same very loose vetting arrangements—there was an investigation by *The National*, which is the Dubai newspaper, which basically shows, again, the same thing. There's a command and control center in Jordan. And it's got Turkey involved. It's got Saudi, Qatar and all the other guys involved. You've got Israeli commandos, Jordanian commandos, U.S. and British and French commandos, they're on the ground training these guys. But what they said,

actually, these guys literally don't care. They've devolved the vetting process to local rebel commanders. (Right) There's no centralized vetting process. So they have deliberately devolved that vetting process to local commanders because—and they know that those guys are going to basically let in who they want, and train who they want, and allow who they want in. And, over the years, we've seen that despite our own kind of oversight processes determining that, these are the extremists that are getting funding here. We've just said, hey, let's just carry on. (Well, what--) And now we've got the same guys enrolled in this so-called coalition to fight ISIS who have been doing this—creating this problem, and now we're using them to fight the problem.

JON Isn't it ridiculous?

NAFEEZ Ridiculous doesn't begin to describe—I mean, it's literally like we have the same structure in place that has created this problem and we haven't even changed anything. (Yeah) What we've done is we've packaged it and said this is our coalition and we're now fighting a war.

JON One of the things—

NAFEEZ The only new thing in this picture is basically we now have airstrikes in Syria and Iraq.

JON And also Israel is bombing Syria. They just blew a Syrian jet out of the sky the other day.

With regard to Iraq, and I've been saying this for quite a while now, there are people in Iraq who just happen to be angry about a decade's worth of sanctions that killed one million people. An occupation that killed upwards of 1.25 million people. The wounding and displacement of millions more. The torture at Abu Ghraib. Flushing Korans down the toilet. Blackwater hunting Iraqis for sport and all of these things—there's no statute of limitations on the anger that these kinds of things create and I can imagine that there are a multitude of individuals within Iraq who still oppose essentially what the empire is trying to do.

What do you have to say about that?

NAFEEZ I think you've hit the nail on the head, Jon. I think this really speaks to the kind of the veil that we have on International politics today where we've

launched this self-righteous war in response to this network, this terrible network which is rampaging across the region, and which has committed these horrifying atrocities against journalists and aid workers. You know, and it's terrible. But, what's ironic really here is that we think that it's justified to go and bomb indiscriminately in these countries in response to these atrocities that have been committed by ISIS. And what's sparked off is not the killing of the Yazidis, which we've highlighted in the media, but what really triggered it was those beheadings of—and the televised videos which really made people angry. Understandably, made people very upset and so they need to do something to stop this, put an end to it.

JON Isn't it interesting—sorry, go ahead.

NAFEEZ Well, if you want to follow this logic through, with this particular type of moral logic, what then is the correct response of the Iraqis. The Iraqis who have been, as you've said, over a million people have been killed through sanctions, through war. We've had complete and utter brutalization of Iraqis in these state sanctioned prisons, which the U.S. has run themselves. Stories of rape. Stories of torture. Stories of electric-shock therapy. These horrific stories of extra-judicial executions. The shooting people in the streets. I mean, we've had stories, not just of Blackwater mercenaries contracted with the defense department shooting people in the streets. We've also had stories of U.S. Marines shooting people in the street, indiscriminately (Right), given orders by their commanders that anybody with a red scarf in the street should be shot. And then it becomes anybody who is out in the open outside of curfew should be shot. We had the carpet bombing of Fallujah, the complete and utter destruction of the –

JON Using depleted uranium which has caused thousands of people from what I understand, to become sick.

NAFEEZ Well, absolutely. I mean, look, we had the destruction of schools, hospitals, roads, sewage infrastructure. We've had the complete destruction of a society—

JON And on top of that—

NAFEEZ We had the chemical weapons, depleted uranium, as you said. In Fallujah, the rates of deformities that have been flagged up in multiple peer review studies is appalling. To this day, you have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of children coming out with these deformities, horrific

deformities, and there's no recourse. There's no—there's nothing that they can do.

So what is the—the question really is, what is the response then? Do the Iraqis have the right to now launch air strikes on the U.S. and Britain? Do they have the right (Sure) to basically now bomb London or Washington D.C., or New York? Because that's the logic. The logic is that we have the rights because of these beheadings, because of some of these killings that ISIS has done, we have the right to basically go there and basically conduct indiscriminate airstrikes and kill, some so-called terrorists. And I also think there are real terrorists who are being killed, but also there are civilians who are being killed.

JON In Syria—

NAFEEZ In Syria, yeah—by following this logic, what we see here is that this is the logic of the terrorist. This is the logic of terrorism. Is that you killed some of ours, so we now have the right to basically kill as many of yours as we want to. And that is exactly what ISIS is doing. ISIS is doing exactly what they've learned from the United States, from Britain (Right). We have the right to basically bomb the crap out of you. No wonder if it says they're planning to target us. Because that's exactly what we're doing to them.

JON To anyone who would have thought that 13 years of bombing and killing people indiscriminately wouldn't result in a few people getting angry, are just not very intelligent.

NAFEEZ Well, our intelligence agencies predicted this. Again, another thing which is kind of left in the memory hole is that MI5, MI6, the CIA, all of these agencies predicted that the war on Iraq would be a recruiting target for terrorism, and that Al-Qaeda would become more prominent in Iraq as a direct consequence of the U.S. invasion and occupation. And that's what's happened. So—

JON Well, one of the things I wanted to point out—

NAFEEZ --exactly what we expected to happen.

JON One of the things that I want to point out and I mentioned this earlier as far as one of my definitions for Al-Qaeda. Glenn Greenwald wrote a piece years ago—let me see if I can find the quote. Right.

On June 23, 2007, Glenn Greenwald wrote about how insurgents in Iraq were being referred to as "Al-Qaeda" more frequently. He states: "What makes this practice all the more disturbing is how quickly and obediently the media has adopted the change in terms consciously issued by the Bush administration and their military officials responsible for presenting the Bush view of the war to the press."

And so, that's what I mean, the insurgents in Iraq were eventually started to be called Al-Qaeda—and I have no doubt that there are individuals in Iraq who believe they're part of Al-Qaeda, and so on and so forth, but you know, how did it start? Were we just calling them Al-Qaeda?

NAFEEZ You know, there's a really valid debate to be had around this, because on the one hand, it's clear that there was a deliberate effort to label any kind of insurgent groups in Iraq, any kind of resistance as linked to Al-Qaeda. Because this really allowed the U.S. to demonize these groups and see them as terrorists. And, of course, there were people conducting various terrorist activity.

But this is where it gets murky because, you know, I mean, [AUDIOBAD] who is—he was one of the only unvetted reporters in Iraq at the time. And he did an extensive investigation into Zarqawi and the role, the way in which the United States really latched on to the persona of Zarqawi and used the ideas of Zarqawi as really a lynchpin, to kind of promote this specter of how there is this centralized Al-Qaeda resistance group that is—that has got its tentacles everywhere and is responsible for all of the different attacks and everything else going on.

But when he tried to track down this Zarqawi guy and his personality, and who he was, and where he came from, and the nature of his network, he found increasingly that it was just really nothing there, substance, to really back up who this Zarqawi character was and whether he really existed. And there were real question marks in Iraq as to whether Zarqawi actually existed. And the deeper he dug, the less kind of firm ground he found to really justify this idea. And to kind of back that up in my recent piece which is published in a number of places in truth-out and a couple of other places, how we created the Islamic state, this article I wrote.

I look into some of the kind of the backgrounds of what we did in Iraq and one of the things that was interesting was a U.S. Special Operations

University report which referred to the psychological warfare operations where the United States is covertly promoting the Zarqawi ideology in order to basically discredit him in the wider Iraqi public. And it referred to the U.S. prompting press reports and making radio broadcasts to show how horrible and kind of demonic and disgusting Zarqawi and his ideology were.

But this is where we start to get this kind of image that the U.S. was really playing a big role in projecting this kind of idea of this resistance. And what was interesting in this Special Operations University report is it refers to very specifically as the goal of these kinds of psyops, I mean, refers to psyops quite directly in the text, was to accelerate what it says. Red on red operation. So, in other words, red refers to enemy. It's color-coded for enemies. In other words, to get the enemy fighting the enemy, in other words, divide and rule. All of this stuff was kind of promoting that Zarqawi was effectively about trying to get the different groups in Iraq that could be a problem that were opposed to U.S. occupation fighting amongst each other. And the report specifically said that they wanted to get, they wanted to weaken, not just the militants but also the more peaceful Sufi groups in Iraq, who were also opposed to the U.S. occupation. As well as to basically to delegitimize the Bathists as well.

And this kind of feeds into this general idea that yes, there was a deliberate effort by the U.S. to kind of just demonize any kind of resistance in Iraq as part of the terrorist movement. It was kind of a catch-all term. But to kind of add insult to injury, the United States actually was funneling at one time arms to the Al-Qaeda-affiliated factions in Iraq, and this was occurring around 2005. There was a report in *Asia Times* by the late Pakistani Bureau Chief of *Asia Times*—he was actually murdered by people think elements of the ISI, the Pakistani Intelligence Services, but he's a very highly respected journalist. And he reports it from Pakistani Defense Forces that the U.S. was covertly supplying arms through Pakistan to—basically getting the Pakistani army to supply weapons to militants linked to Al Qaeda, linked to the Bathists in Iraq, and the idea, according to these sources, was that they wanted to head off the threat of a Shiites kind of dominated Government.

JON Well—

NAFEEZ It's interesting because at the same time they were actually supporting that Government and they still are. But you can clearly see that this divide and

rule strategy entailed playing off a lot of different entities against each other.

JON Well, now that we've brought up specific intelligence agencies—the Pakistani ISI, who incidentally is notorious for murdering journalists. My next question is which intelligence—and now we're going to start to talk a little bit about 9/11, specifically.

Which intelligence agencies are notorious for using terrorists as proxies?

NAFEEZ Well, I think the intelligence agencies that have been using Al-Qaeda proxies—United States intelligence agencies, and specifically I would say the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, indirectly the FBI in the sense that the FBI have used kind of moles and infiltrators to co-opt extremist groups—

JON And, also to create them—but go ahead.

NAFEEZ Yeah and to create them in order to have these entrapment organizations. Entrapment kind of operations.

In the UK, definitely both MI5 and MI6 have had links to terrorist groups or groups that are involved in recruiting terrorist activity. The MI5 has come up in relation to the group [AUDIOBAD] according to a number of intelligence experts, as well as MI6. MI6 has also had links to Al-Qaeda. In fact, I had a—I did a story on Sibel Edmonds' revelations on Gladio and her efforts to kind of release (Right), this information to the *Sunday Times* and one of the interesting conversations I had with the *Sunday Times* journalist who was covering the story is that he said he spoke to a senior official at MI6 who confirmed to him the central thrust of what Sibel Edmonds was saying about the financing and the covert support to Al-Qaeda affiliated groups in Central Asia all the way up to 9/11 was true. And this MI6 guy apparently told this guy that—but this was after a very real policy that both Britain and the United States were involved in together.

JON Well, what I would like to talk about with regard to that *Sunday Times* report, that very first one mentioned Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed as being a part of the nuclear black market. For those of you who don't know, there is an allegation that Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed, who was the head of the Pakistani ISI who was instrumental in getting Musharraf into

power ordered Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to wire transfer \$100,000 to Mohammed Atta, the lead 9/11 hijacker.

Now, I have never seen anyone in Government or in any of the investigations denounce these allegations or explain why they're incorrect. Because they're not reported in the 9/11 Report, even though it was one of the questions that the families put forward. So, with regard to Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed, he was mentioned in Sibel's story with regard to the nuclear black market. He's mentioned with regard to the 9/11 attacks, and yet, this is two times the 9/11 Commission was essentially told about Mahmud Ahmed and they really didn't focus on him to my knowledge in the 9/11 Report. So that was interesting. In other words, it was two times Mahmud Ahmed was brought before the 9/11 Commission and he seemingly wasn't a person of interest.

Now, you talked about the reason that the *Sunday Times* stopped doing their series was because of the fact that it was true? Who told them to stop?

NAFEEZ Well, I mean—I mean, this is where it's interesting, because when I spoke to the *Sunday Times* journalist he described—I mean, there was some kind of editorial pressure. Now, Sibel Edmonds had the impression that there was pressure from state department. That there was some kind of meeting between state department officials, basically people from the U.S. Embassy, and the editor from the *Sunday Times*. And after that meeting the story was pulled. Now, the journalist I spoke to wasn't aware of that specific meeting, but what he did say is that there was pressure of some kind. There was a sudden decision that was made to pull the story, and he basically—I mean that's when he actually got—I mean, this guy is actually not with the *Sunday Times* anymore. He left the *Sunday Times* to set up like some kind of charity. He's doing a lot of really exciting interesting work. But he's not a journalist. He's not even involved in journalism now. So, it was weird that he actually was frightened to tell me the mechanism that led to this. He actually really kind of sounded—what he did say is that Look—he said to me: "Look, I really don't want to go into this and I can't tell you this. But there is a mechanism linked to these intelligence services at the *Sunday Times* which sometimes can come into effect." (Wow) And I was like: "What the hell are you talking about?" And he just clammed up and said: "Look, I really can't say anything else. You know?" (Right) And, obviously, he was speaking off the record anyway. But despite the severity he just didn't want to say anything.

So there's something really murky going on and all I know is there was some element, from this—I mean, and this guy's a really good journalist and an incredible guy. So we know there was some kind of insidious pressure that was exerted at the *Sunday Times* to kill this story. To stop what Sibel Edmonds was revealing to come out—

JON

Let me explain who Sibel Edmonds is for those who don't know. She was a former FBI translator. She was a 9/11 whistleblower. She was someone who was retaliated against. Someone who had two gag orders placed on her. And she's actually someone the families snuck in to the 9/11 Commission because they weren't responding to her calls to come testify. They snuck her into one of the family 9/11 Commission meetings so they would be forced to hear what she had to say. And she testified in front of the 9/11 Commission inside of a SCIF, in what's called a SCIF, for three and a half hours. Now, there are things called Memorandums for the Record that were released by the 9/11 Commission, and essentially what they are is summaries of interviews of different witnesses. And Sibel Edmonds' MFR, or Memorandum for the Record, is completely redacted. Absolutely, from top to bottom, it's completely redacted. Now, just so people know, Sibel has testified under oath with regard to some of these allegations and early on there were people like Chuck Grassley and Senator Leahy who said there was something—that she was credible.

So, this never made it into the 9/11 Report. She testified for three and a half hours before the 9/11 Commission and was given a footnote in the back of the book. So, over the years, she broke her gag order and started to tell us the whole story, at personal risk.

Now, my next question is 9/11 related. In one of your books you harp at David Schippers, and for those who don't know, he was the Chief Investigative Council for the U. S. Judiciary Committee that was investigating the Clinton/Lewinsky affair. Can you please tell us about your interactions with David Schippers?

NAFEEZ

Well, I spoke to David Schippers for my first book *The War on Truth*. And, I mean basically, he was one of the first people that confirmed that there were FBI special agents who had been investigating a plot inside the United States, that we now know was the 9/11 operation that was being pursued by a number of Al-Qaeda-affiliated guys and that they had names. They had identities. They had been tracking these people. And they, something like three months before 9/11, came to David Schippers and said to him that:

"Look, we're investigating these guys. We believe that there's going to be an imminent attack on the financial district of lower Manhattan. And our investigations are being shut down from Washington D.C. There's a political bureaucracy—there's a political decision here, but these are very real investigations and something is going to happen. Can you use your influence to do something about this problem, because something needs to be done."

Now, I know—I interviewed Schippers about this and he spoke to me and he told me, he said he contacted a number of different agencies that he had spoken to, some people in Congress. He had even spoken to the chair of the Intelligence Committee and I think he said he'd spoken to the Speaker of the House as well. But no one did anything. No one, basically, did very much about this. And so, now some of these people they came and spoke on the record—Coleen Rowley, Robert Wright—a number of other senior FBI guys. We now know their names. And we now can piece together the information they had. And in all of those cases—now that this stuff has actually come to light, a little bit more available for public scrutiny, we can see how systematically the bureaucracy in Washington inexplicably shut down these completely legitimate investigations. (Right) And heads have not rolled.

JON Nobody was held accountable. And you mentioned Robert Wright, who was an FBI agent, who was a whistleblower, who David Schippers happened to represent a long time ago. And he was essentially investigating Saudi ties to terrorism, and he did this through a program he called Vulgar Betrayal. And this took place long before 9/11 and it seemed every time he would get close to something, he would get shut down from above. So the Saudi's and their connections to terrorism were essentially protected. And then after 9/11, again, the Saudis and their relationship to terrorism has been protected. The Bush Administration made sure that the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry were never released. Apparently, Obama promised two family members that he would release them and he hasn't. The United States Government has gone to great length to protect the Saudis against the 9/11 Family Members with regard to law suits and so forth, but now the families finally have a chance to sue and they're trying to get the 28 redacted pages released so they can use that as evidence.

And one of the interesting thoughts I had the other day, Philip Zelikow, who was the executive director of the 9/11 Commission, he was greatly responsible for the 9/11 Report not mentioning the information that was in

the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry. He recently wrote it off in an article that was written by Lawrence Wright. He basically said it wasn't credible.

So if the families bring forward this information from the 28 redacted pages as evidence, the Saudis can bring up the 9/11 Report, which [laughs] has nothing, it essentially got them off the hook (Yeah) as a defense. So I wonder if Philip Zelikow would ever be called in to testify? Or Dietrich Snell, who also was responsible for none of the allegations regarding the Saudi Government going into the 9/11 Report. It would be very interesting to see and I hope that made sense to people.

Now, there's a question going around right now—oh, by the way, Saudi Arabia, there are allegations that the Government was involved in the 9/11 attacks—the Bandar family, which was friendly with the Bush family—there are allegations that money connected to them made its way to two of the hijackers and so on and so forth, and all that has been protected. That information has been protected or concealed from the public over the years. But there's a question going around that I think is interesting, and that question is: Why doesn't Al-Qaeda attack Israel?

NAFEEZ Well, I mean, that's the kind of—I think this is an interesting question, but I think we need to basically think about it a little bit critically. There are, I mean, there are some people who think that Al-Qaeda is not attacking Israel therefore it proves that Israel is somehow sponsoring Al-Qaeda. And, I think on the one hand I think we need to kind of look at the internal ideology of Al-Qaeda.

But before we do that, I think it's important just to break down the logic of this. Just because a group doesn't necessarily attack, you can't basically, you can't conclude very much by looking at what a group attacks. For example, Al-Qaeda have actually attacked Saudi Arabia. Or have been attacked in Saudi Arabia. But they're funded by Saudi Arabia, not something which is very well known. So this kind of simplistic logic of if a group attacks somebody then it means they are not supported by them. If they don't attack them then it means they are supported by them.

You can't prove it. There's no kind of real basis for that kind of logic. It kind of ignores the fact that the real world is actually quite complex.

[Laughs] It's not as simple as these kind of artificial, theoretical constructs that we [AUDIOBAD].

JON Well, first of all, you know, I mean—

NAFEEZ Just to kind of emphasize that point, Greg Palast has documented and investigated this whole issue of the Saudi connection as well, and it just points out that effectively the Saudis are running a giant protection racket in that one of the reasons that they fund Al-Qaeda is so that they don't carry out their ideological objective, which is they believe the Saudi state is an illegitimate state and therefore they should be overthrown.

So, one of the reasons they fund them is basically so they can do what you like outside, but don't attack us inside Saudi Arabia. And, it's something which is not always—there are elements of Al-Qaeda which have operated in Saudi Arabia despite that. So I think just to apply that issue to Israel, I mean, there's a lot of interesting kind of permutations in relation to how Israel has basically dealt with Islamist groups generally. In relation to Al-Qaeda, specifically, I think this really is part of the way we understand Al-Qaeda's internal ideology. For the most part, they have a range of different priorities. And while Israel has certainly played a very important role, when we look at the way in which they have been financed and the way in which they've kind of been geographically active, they—we begin to see that they don't really have a foothold, or only until recently, but they didn't have a foothold in that part of the world. Most of their activities have been centered around Afghanistan, this kind of Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, but not in the area specifically around Israel were they active until recently.

Now, in the context of the Syria conflict, we've actually seen that Al-Qaeda-affiliated groups have become much more active in the region and much more active in that region surrounding Israel, and interestingly, this has coincided with all of the sponsorship that has come in from U.S. allies, and so on and so forth, and we've had this emergence of this new group ISIS, this break-away group, which is even more crazy than Al-Qaeda. And now we've had the emergence of these very disturbing reports that Israel has actually to some extent allowed some of the groups to actually become active in the context of their support for the rebels in Syria. And one of the sources that have described it was Jerusalem-based private intelligence DEBKAF, which certainly is not an anti-Israeli organization. And even though some people have questioned their reporting and their reporting isn't

always solid, but it's worth remembering that the people who run DEBKAFiles used to work for the Economist, for something like nearly two decades reporting on Middle Eastern issues.

So it's not that DEBKAFile are a bunch of crazies. They do have their ear to the ground. And they have been consistently reporting in the last year or so that Israel has, and the United States has actually tacitly and directly been supporting some of these Al-Qaeda-affiliated Islamist groups in the region. It raises a lot of interesting questions about ISIS, the relationship of ISIS to, you know, the wider geopolitics of the region, because of course, ISIS has now become to dominate—ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front are very active in the Golan Heights. And there has been some evidence that Netanyahu has actually been courting some of these groups, that there are Israeli military hospitals, which have actually been providing support to ISIS and Al-Qaeda groups in the Golan Heights. There's been some other reports of Israeli NGOs, which have been supplying so-called humanitarian aid to elements of the rebels. And, again, this has gone to some of the extremist groups.

So there are a lot of question marks, I would say recently, as of what Israel's relationship is to some of these groups.

JON Well, Israel was responsible, essentially responsible for the creation of Hamas back in 1986, I believe, as a counter to the PLO, and that's something that a lot of people don't know about. But during the recent "war" between Israel and Gaza, Israel was promoting so much propaganda about who was in the Gaza Strip. It was just so ridiculous that so many children were killed. It was a Hamas-run region even though they had just recently formed a unity Government, which Netanyahu told the world to disregard.

Anyway, so Israel helped to create Hamas, so that's an instance of the Mossad or whoever using terrorists or whatever you want to call it.

NAFEEZ Well, I think that's an important point. I mean, I think, I mean just for the listeners in case they're unaware, I mean, this is actually very well-documented. I mean, one of the guys who reported it was Richard Sale who was a—I'm not sure what he's doing now, but at the time he was a security correspondent for UPI, the wire service—the United Press International. And he basically interviewed a number of U.S. intelligence officials, active and former officials, who basically confirmed. That actually was earlier—late 70s, that Israel had actually very directly created the Hamas

organization. And that they had them counter the PLO because they felt that the PLO was—had too much international legitimacy. And so they wanted to really find a way of delegitimizing the Palestine self-determination. By creating this kind of extremist Islamist network was a way of doing that. And that's a theme which has remained present since then, and it speaks to the same thing that we spoke about earlier, this idea of the strategy of tension, where you have Government covertly empowering or manipulating or facilitating terrorist networks in order to influence population. Whether it's public opinion, whether it's local population, whether it's even on the international theme, whether it's manipulating the decisions that are made internationally. But either way, it's a way of kind of trying to make civil society move in a certain direction as a reactionary response to deal with terrorists and then get them to do what you like.

So this is a very, very kind of typical kind of case study of that type of activities.

JON Well, Nafeez, we've already been talking for well over an hour and a half, so I'm just going to ask you my last question. But before I do, I just want to thank you very much for taking the time today. So many important things have been said during this interview. I hope people soak in all the knowledge that you've provided. You're really just an amazing person. So—

NAFEEZ Thanks, Jon, that's really kind of you. And likewise, I mean, I've known you kind of virtually for so many years, and I've seen you grow. I've seen you kind of deal with so many different struggles. So it's really a great thing to be able to kind of speak to you in person and to see you kind of always doing something exciting and new.

And one thing I have to say, Jon, that I totally, really respect so much about you is that despite being like a—people might look at you and be like: "Who the hell is Jon Gold?" But what I think is inspiring and what I would love people to be able to take from the kind of, the stuff that you've done is to say that you don't have to be, there is no such thing as basically, a special kind of academic type of person, or an activist type of person, they can be an ordinary guy. But all you have to do is really stand up and take a stand and decide to do something and make a change. And I think the stuff that you've been doing with your book and with your new radio show is really an inspiring example of how anybody can really kind of, if they're really committed, to kind of trying to do something and make a change, all they need to do is do something different.

So, it's a privilege to be able to speak to you now.

JON Well, I thank you very much Dr. Nafeez Ahmed.

My last question is: You recently released a fictional new book entitled *Zero Point*. Can you tell us the premise of the book? Where people can find it. And how much of the book is based on real information?

NAFEEZ Well, you could probably have a whole show about some of the stuff that comes off this book. I mean, there's a lot of interesting—

JON [Laughs] We just did that, so—

NAFEEZ Yeah, I know. But, I mean, it goes into a lot of things. But the general premise of the book, I mean, the book was—I wrote the book because, I felt that we need to—you can't change things just by doing politics, because there's only a small constituency of people that are really engaged in those kinds of debates. And we need to—there's a need to kind of engage in cultural change, cultural transformation. So I wanted to kind of, I wanted to use the medium of storytelling as a way of getting out some of these ideas. Kind of looking at some of the interesting things—the kind of stuff that we've been talking about, but a lot of other different things.

So the story is basically set in a near-future world where we've actually had a 4th Iraq war and the U.S. and the UK have reinvaded Iraq. They've re-occupied Iraq and they've been actually in Iraq for many years and, in fact, societies have become quite jaded and quite used to this permanent state of war normalization in that part of the world.

And so, obviously, the story goes into trying to explore what that kind of means to your society when you're in that kind of state of war. And it tries to look at issues like blowback. At home, issues like mass-surveillance and civil liberties. But it also explores a lot of other more arcane issues that people probably aren't aware of, such as some of these covert operations that have been going on, some of these kind of disturbing relationships with terrorist groups, kind of corruption in the political and intelligence system. And also, generally tries to kind of set out a scenario to where we could go, where our societies could go, if these kinds of business as usual policies continue. So, it's all kind of, very kind of, a lot of stuff about espionage and kind of political shenanigans. But ultimately it's a story. When I wrote it, I

wrote it to be something people could be engaged in, could enjoy. It's supposed to be a fun and entertaining read. But the idea is that you really can enjoy it, but you'll also be empowered with a kind of new vision and a new kind of sense of where we are and where things could be.

In terms of—the book is out now. People can get a hold of it from Amazon, is probably one of the most easiest places to get it. But you can get it in e-book format. You can get it in paperback. You can easily order it from your local bookshops and I encourage people to do that.

So, yeah, that pretty much sums up what I tried to do with *Zero Point*.

JON Wonderful. I recommend that everybody pick it up and give it a read. Again, Nafeez, thank you for your time today. I wish you luck in all of your future endeavors. I look forward to reading everything you have to write. And, be well.

NAFEEZ Thanks a lot, Jon. Take care.

JON All right, have a good day.

NAFEEZ You too.

A blood-soaked race against time to stop quantum apocalypse. When the British Prime Minister is assassinated on the streets of a capitol city, the siege by rioting, recession and power blackouts, the ex-soldier and whistleblower who failed to save him Cop David Ariel is first in frame of a corrupt investigation. Determined to hunt down the PMs killers and clear his name, Ariel uncovers more than he bargained for. An ancient war to control horrifying technologies which could rip apart the fabric of space time itself. As the world he thought he knew unravels, Ariel faces off against bent coppers, double-crossing agents, psychic killers, and super soldiers to complete a black-ops mission like no other. Stop Quantum Apocalypse. This new book, *Zero Point*, from Dr. Nafeez Mossaddeq Ahmed is available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and other book sites.



Chapter/Episode 8 – Cindy Sheehan – October 7, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Cindy Sheehan (CINDY)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

The premise of this show will revolve around something 9/11 Family Member Patty Casazza said in the documentary *9/11: Press for Truth*. "Yes, they lied. They all lied. Whether consciously or unconsciously, it happened. Now we need to look into why they lied and what were the results of those lies."

This show will revolve around the results of those lies with regard to American soldiers and others that have died in this seemingly endless war on terror.

Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Cindy. Hi, Cindy.

CINDY Hello, Jon.

JON How are you?

CINDY I'm doing okay.

JON All right, good. I'm going to read your bio.

Cindy Lee Miller Sheehan was born on July 10, 1957. She married Patrick Sheehan and the couple had four children—Casey, Carly, Andy, and Janey. Casey was the oldest. The whole family was active in the church; Cindy was a Youth Minister. They were a tightly knit family that, in Cindy's words, "Did everything together."

Cindy's world changed forever when, on an April 4, 2004, a mission in Sadr City, Iraq, Army Specialist Casey Sheehan was killed. Cindy and other military families met with President George W. Bush in June of 2004. By October, Cindy's grief had led her to action. She wrote, "I was ashamed that I hadn't tried to stop the war before Casey died Well, I now felt that if I couldn't make a difference, I would at least try."

Sheehan became one of the strongest, most personal and persistent voices in the movement against the war in Iraq. Her quest to end the war, bring soldiers home, and hold politicians accountable for the decisions that sent the troops to Iraq in the first place, has been unwavering.

In early August of 2005, Cindy, or "Peace Mom" as she came to be called, camped in a ditch near President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas. She requested a second personal meeting with the President, who had declared that the fallen soldiers had died for a "noble cause." Cindy wanted to know exactly what that cause was, and to demand an immediate end to what she viewed as an unjust and immoral war.

So many people stopped by to show their support or join her camp that became known as "Camp Casey." A few days later, one of Bush's neighbors offered the Camp Casey participants some land to use as their base. Camp Casey became a regular protest event, popping up when President Bush was in Crawford for holidays and vacations.

Between Camp Casey operations, Sheehan traveled extensively to join anti-war rallies and to meet with activists and leaders from around the world. She has been credited with being the face for the peace and justice movement. Her published works include an account of her first year of activism called *Not One More Mother's Child*, a collection of her writing

and speeches, *Dear President Bush*; *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey through Heartache to Activism*; *Myth America: 20 Greatest Myths of the Robber Class and the Case for (non-violent) Revolution*; *Revolution, a Love Story*; and *I Left My Marbles in San Francisco: The Scandal of Federal Electoral Politricks*.

JON Okay, that's your regular bio. I wrote a little personal bio for you.

CINDY You're going to take up all our interview time.

JON No, it's okay.

CINDY [Laughs] Okay.

JON Well, what can I say to you that you don't already know? You're one of my heroes. You're one of my inspirations. You're one of my best friends. I am grateful for every experience I've had with you. I love you very much, and I believe that you are the equivalent of today's Martin Luther King. So, that's for you.

CINDY Awwwww.

JON All right, so, my first question: What was the day of 9/11—

CINDY Can I make one slight correction to your bio? (Sure) The title of *Myth America* is *Myth America: The 20 Greatest Myths of the Robber Class and the Case for Revolution*. Non-violence isn't in there.

JON Oh, well—anyway, it was in the—

CINDY Wherever you found that, send that to me so I can—

JON You've got to correct it, yeah. [Laughs] I actually—the book that it ended on, I think was *Mother's Journey* or *Peace Mom*? I actually added the rest of the books to get it up-to-date.

CINDY Oh, okay.

JON Anyway—

CINDY It's a revolution and non-violence isn't—it's an important distinction. Not that I'm for violence, but I'm for self-defense.

JON Right, you believe in self-defense. You believe in non-violence, but you do believe in self-defense. And I think Gandhi felt that way as well, if I'm not mistaken.

CINDY Well, I think that the violence of the revolution comes from the counter-revolutions and then the revolution has like no other option but to defend itself.

JON Right, exactly.

 All right, so my first question to you is: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

CINDY Well, I think that I had the same reaction that most people had. It was shocking and awful. The first days it was confusing and everything was mixed up about what happened and people were still looking for their loved ones and they were putting up big pictures like "have you seen this person?" I guess people who worked or were at the Twin Towers the day that it happened.

 But, one of my first thoughts after 9/11, on that same day, was—I mean, I woke up and I walked out into the living room and my daughter, Carly, said, "Hey, Mom, a plane just flew into one of the Twin Towers in New York City." So, I still hadn't even had one cup of coffee yet, before I had to start processing this. But one of my first thoughts was, oh my God, this is going to end up killing Casey. And, my horrible thought turned out to be true.

JON Sadly. Now, how did Casey's death affect your family early on? And the reason that I ask that question is because I want people to get an idea of what a soldier's family goes through after their death.

CINDY Well, I'm supporting, right now, two mothers whose children have recently passed away and they were both from illness, and the children were a lot older than Casey when they passed away. But, the only difference, I think, besides losing a child to illness or accident and war is the absolute certainty that having a child killed in war is 100 percent unnecessary and avoidable. And, I mean, if your child is a soldier or a member of the U.S. military

forces—though losing—having to bury a child in the first place is deeply unnatural. It's demented. It's not in the order of things. Children are meant to bury parents. I buried both of my parents, so I know how hard that is also. But it affected our family in predictable ways and unpredictable ways, also. In many ways it brought us together and made us treasure each other more. In some ways it tore us apart. Like it tore my marriage apart.

And, just little things that you—as a mother you think, Oh my God, I don't know how I would ever survive having one of my children die before me. It's just not a possible thing to survive. But, then every day, day-by-day, you survive it. And you wake up in the morning, the first thought is of your child who died. And your last thought before you fall asleep is of your child who died. For me, I dreamt of about him so much also. So, you're surprised that you're actually surviving, but then there's little things that you don't think of. Like, every time the phone rings, for a while, you think oh, I hope that's Casey. And then you get really super disappointed. And, I was so involved in my own grief, but I was also able to see how my children were affected by it. I just came to the realization that Casey was the oldest, so the other three had never known a life without Casey. Casey was always there. For them. And, Pat and I, his Dad, had, of course had a longer life without Casey than we had with Casey, so it's just a horrible thing that families have to go through.

It angered us. It angered all of us. We were all together in our anger against the Bush regime and against the U.S. wars of aggression—unnecessary, immoral, illegal wars of aggression—so, at least we were all united along those lines.

So, I just want to say that all parents and families who lose a child go through similar things, but it's not—as I'm supporting the mothers of the other young people who've died, I'm able to, ten years later, these are for them and just tell them about what I went through without having any expectations that they're going to go through the same thing. But they can look at me and say, Well, Cindy buried her son ten years ago, but she's still here. She can still smile. She can still laugh. She can still take joy in her grandchildren and other children. So, it's also, I think, a symbol of hope that they'll be able to survive it too.

JON

Well, I feel horrible—I've gotten to know your family over the years and they just—I know it's hard for them. They're so strong though. Your family is a very strong family.

And I just wanted to get into the numbers a little bit. The soldier deaths in Afghanistan is at 2,175. Soldier deaths in Iraq were 4,489. Soldiers wounded in Afghanistan is 19,890. Soldiers wounded in Iraq is 32,021. That's—I think that's based on official numbers. I got them from antiwar.com.

In this show, we're focusing on how families deal with the loss of the soldier. I do want to acknowledge the thousands that have been killed, wounded, and displaced in Afghanistan, and the upwards of 1.25 million killed in Iraq, and millions more wounded or displaced. We're focusing on soldiers, but I want people to know that we have not forgotten about the people that we've killed.

Now, my next question is: When you began to realize that Casey died for lies, what kind of anger did you feel? And you kind of talked about that already. So, it was a collective anger through the family.

CINDY Right, well, we already agreed that, even before he left, that if something happened to him, it would be for lies. It would be for just total and complete B.S. and for profit. And so, but anger—the anger, I'm still angry about that. I think we all are still angry (Yep) about that. And I think we're even more angry because we haven't had any accountability for Casey's death. And we're angry because the wars are still continuing and, not just continuing, but Obama's been able to expand the wars. He's been able to make the troops deaths lower, but of course the civilian deaths in the countries are keeping the pace.

And so, the anger, I think we've been able—well, I'm going to speak for myself, but I also want to, as close a family as we are I want to speak for what I observe about the rest of my family is the anger has been able to motivate us and not turn us into bitter people. And so, I mean, I've become politically cynical, but I'm not bitter. And I think politically cynical just mostly means I'm a realist about our system.

So, yeah, just crazy angry about what's happened. Crazy angry that nobody's been held accountable for those lies and I know—

JON Well, we have a—go, ahead—

CINDY Go ahead.

JON We have a two-tiered justice system in this country where, we are—the laws apply to us and sometimes they don't apply to the other people, the elite. But, go ahead.

CINDY Yes, absolutely, that's true. And at least a two-tiered justice system (Right). But, I'm also angry at myself. Because 9/11, you always say we were lied to about 9/11 and what's my response? We were lied to about everything, and 9/11 wasn't the first or the worst time we've been lied to about war or false flags.

JON The one thing about 9/11 is that it's seemingly acceptable—and you've made this point several times—it's seemingly acceptable to people that Bush lied about everything else but 9/11. (Right) That's a lot of what people think. A lot of what progressives think, or at least portray. That they have no questions about 9/11 and so forth.

CINDY Right. Well, of course, and most of our country is deeply in denial about our history. We have a history of war and false flags or real events that happened like 9/11 that they misuse and abuse for their agenda. And their agenda is global hegemony and profit. So, I'm angry at myself for not trying harder to keep Casey out of that situation. And I'm angry at the other people in our country that are so easily propagandized.

Look at what's happening in Syria, and Iraq again, and Ukraine, and China, and people in like mostly—

JON Somalia, Africa—

CINDY Right, and mostly liberals, they are buying the propaganda because Obama's saying it. But if Bush was saying it, they wouldn't be buying it. And then, of course, the conservatives think that Bush should just bomb these people harder. So, it's just—I'm just—it's just like a constant, motivating anger, I think, that keeps me going to try and—(Well, I—) I think accountability would go a long way to stopping the crimes. And I work to expose the lies.

JON The whole point of accountability is to show people that if you do something wrong, you're going to be held accountable and, therefore, it's incentive for other people not to do, not to repeat the crimes of others and so forth.

I want to read a little quote.

"President Bush and his top aides publicly made 935 false statements about the security risk posed by Iraq in the two years following September 11, 2001, according to a study released Tuesday by two non-profit journalism groups. The study says Bush made 232 false statements about Iraq and former leader Saddam Hussein's possessing weapons of mass destruction, and 28 false statements about Iraq's link to Al-Qaeda."

And that's from CNN from January 24, 2009. You're talking about people falling for the propaganda, and it's not only the statements that they make, it's the corporate media that parrot what they say over and over and over again. And it eventually, it just begins to brainwash people.

Now, Casey died on April 4, 2004, this is the same day that Dr. Martin Luther King died. How much of an influence has Dr. King been to you, and does it anger you that on Martin Luther King Day the corporate media seemingly forgets about his anti-war activism in their pieces about him?

CINDY Right, well, Martin Luther King, Jr. didn't just die. He was assassinated. (Right, exactly) And, of course, there's much evidence that there was a big conspiracy with our CIA involved, or FBI, or whatever the dark shadowy forces are, that assassinated him. So, I think that, of course, Casey was also born on John F. Kennedy's birthday.

JON I didn't know that.

CINDY And that's another person who was assassinated. Huh?

JON I did not know that.

CINDY Right. So, another person that was assassinated for whatever reason he was assassinated.

So, the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., especially his speech beyond Vietnam, the beloved building, the beloved community, that he gave on April 4, 1967, exactly a year before he was assassinated, have been very influential to my activism. Martin Luther King, Jr. on that speech gave the three biggest obstacles to peace and that's militarism, racism, and poverty.

And, so, those are still the three evils that we're fighting with today, and we're not just fighting with them, they're expanding. And things have only gotten worse since his assassination.

And the way that people portray him as a great civil rights leader is appropriate, but I've seen some incidences on parades on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day where there's military hardware on display and the military's out there trying to recruit the children (Jeez, right). Of course, those who come to those parades are usually minorities and poor people who are easy prey for the military, and so it's very frustrating. And he did get the Nobel Peace Prize. It would be the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965, I believe. But I think that was mostly for his civil rights work. And then in his beyond Vietnam speech he says, as recipient of this great honor, I can't be silenced any longer. (Right)

And I remember right after Camp Casey in 2005, you know who David Geffen is, right? (Yes) Yeah, I had met him at a dinner party that Arianna Huffington gave for me—here I am name-dropping. (Laughs) And, so I met David Geffen who was there, and shortly after that I wrote a piece called "What Kind of Extremist Will You Be?" Because that's what Martin Luther King, Jr. said. He said it's not—In this day and age, it's not IF you will be an extremist, it's what kind of extremist will you be? And so I said I'm going to be an extremist for peace and justice. (Right) And so I got an email from Jodie Evans, one of the co-founders of Code Pink, and she told me: "Oh, by the way, David Geffen read your piece about extremism and he won't support extremists." (Laughs)

So, I mean, it's been influential (Laughs) Martin Luther King, Jr. has been influential to my work, and especially recognizing that poverty and militarism and racism are intricately linked, and he was seriously thinking of running for President on a socialist ticket in 1968, before he was assassinated. So, I am—and then, of course, he started to be more reconciled with Malcolm X and Malcolm X's world view. So, I'm impressed with that Martin Luther King, Jr. and what he had evolved into. And, of course, over the last ten years since Casey was killed, I believe that my world view has greatly expanded.

JON

Well, what—as I said earlier, that you are today's equivalent of Dr. Martin Luther King, and I often ask people this question. Could we actually have a Dr. Martin Luther King in today's world with a corporate media that refuses to give attention to those that are really trying to make a change? You know,

the Tour de Peace—so many things that you've done, have essentially been ignored. (Right) They haven't let you get to that point where you're as influential as he was. And I think the media was a little different back then.

And with regard to his assassination, there was a civil suit in 1998, where they found there was a conspiracy (Right) to kill Dr. Martin Luther King.

CINDY Yeah, I think that was Dr. William Pepper. (Yeah) And I had him on the Soapbox a couple years ago.

JON Yeah, Dr. William Pepper was the one who represented the King family at the civil suit, and he won. And they found that—

CINDY I just like to say Dr. Pepper.

JON (Laughs) Yeah, Dr. Pepper. That's also something that's also left out of those pieces about Dr. Martin Luther King, for some reason.

Tell us about some of the lies that led us into war.

CINDY Well, I mean, of course that Saddam and Osama were working together. That Iraq had anything to do with 9/11. That Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. And when I was in front of the Downing Street Memo hearing in Washington D.C. on June 16, 2005, the one that John Conyers gave, I talked about how in 1999, an author Mickey Herskowitz was writing a book about George Bush that was going to be a biography. And he was interviewing George Bush in 1999, and George Bush said: "If I ever become President, I'm going to go get Saddam Hussein. I'm not going to stop at the border like my Dad did. I'm not going to make that mistake." So I'm paraphrasing because I don't remember the exact wording about that. But—so this was—and I think it was—was it the first cabinet meeting George Bush had (Yes), I think, Ron Epstein reported on this. He said so how do we get Saddam?

JON Basically, what Paul O'Neill said, the Secretary of Treasury back then, on the first principals meeting, ten days after his inauguration, the topic was Iraq and he said that topic A was Iraq and it was essentially about the President asking them to "go find me a way to do this." (Right) So, go ahead.

CINDY So, anyway, I mean, those are basically the mushroom cloud line that the next probable Democratic nominee for President, Hillary Clinton, was in on that scandal.

And then there was the Iraq White House group that actually was convened to figure out how to sell the war (Exactly), to the gullible American public.

JON That included Judith Miller. She was among the White House Iraq Group. And remember, she was the one to write those articles for the *Times*.

CINDY Right, right. They could all be tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity. They should all be in prison.

JON Yeah, they should all be in prison.

And with regard to the lie that Iraq had something to do with 9/11, I have a few bits of information that I'm going to read. And this is a quote from Helen Thomas. She said, "You couldn't sit in that press room day-after-day every time it was mentioned by Ari Fleischer or Scott, they would say in one breath, 9/11 Saddam Hussein, 9/11 Saddam Hussein. I don't blame the American people for thinking there was a tie." And that's from Helen Thomas.

And I have some polls. Nearly 7 in 10 Americans believe it is likely that ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was personally involved in September 11 attacks, says a poll out almost two years after the terrorists strike against this country. That's from *USA Today*, September 6, 2003.

Forty-one percent of Americans answered yes to the question: Do you think Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq was directly involved in planning, financing, or carrying out the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. That is 41 percent of Americans and that was in June 24, 2007.

There was a poll conducted in April, 2003, that asked whether or not Saddam was personally involved in 9/11. Fifty-three percent said yes.

And the last poll that I want to bring attention to is a LaMoine College Zogby Poll from February 2006. Taken of soldiers serving in Iraq said that "85 percent said the U.S. mission is to 'retaliate for Saddam's role in the 9/11 attack.' " That's 85 percent of the soldiers serving in Iraq. Seventy-

seven percent said that they also believe the main or major reason for the war was to "stop Saddam from protecting Al-Qaeda in Iraq."

Can you imagine what the soldiers were being told?

CINDY Yeah, exactly. He didn't want to go. (Huh?) Casey never believed it. He didn't want to go.

JON Right, yeah, that's a lie though a lot of people say is that Casey volunteered and he was so patriotic and it was nothing of the sort. He did not agree with this war at all. (Right)

Now, when you were at Camp Casey you wanted to ask the President for what noble cause did my son die? And here's some quotes for you.

"President Bush answered growing anti-war protests yesterday with a fresh reason for U.S. troops to continue fighting in Iraq. Protection of the country's vast oil supplies, which he said would otherwise fall under the control of terrorist extremists." And that's the *Associated Press*, 8/31/2005.

"Of course it's about oil. It's very much about oil, and we can't really deny that." That was General John Abizaid, March, 2007.

"People say we're not fighting for oil. Of course we are. They talk about America's national interest. What the hell do you think they're talking about? We're not there for figs." And that was Chuck Hagel, 2007.

And the last one is:

"I am saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows. The Iraq war is largely about oil." And that was Alan Greenspan in 2007.

There were other reasons for war in Iraq and Ray McGovern had an acronym once. OIL—O for oil; I for the protection of Israel; and L for the logistical placement of bases in that region for future use. Those were the three main reasons that Ray thought we were doing this. And, it's about money, obviously. It's about protecting America's hegemony and so forth. It was really horrible. And, I'm going to get into something with you that was sold to the American people, and that was that Obama ended the Iraq war. (Right) What do you have to say about that?

CINDY (Laughs) Well, at the very beginning when he—it was in 2008, as a matter of fact, when Bush was on his way out and Obama was on his way in. And then the U.S. negotiated a Status of Forces Agreement with the Maliki Iraq Government. So that was to remove the troops, I believe, by the end of 2011. But, Obama, when he came in—so, actually, even if the Iraq war ended, it wasn't Obama. It was under the Bush Administration that that Status of Forces or SOFA was negotiated. And, Obama's Administration did everything it could to overturn a provision that—most Status of Forces Agreements between our country and other countries have a little codicil that U.S. troops can't be prosecuted for any crimes that they commit while they are there. And, especially places like Okinawa the citizenry has risen up and uprising over U.S. troops raping and murdering while they're stationed there. And so the Iraqi parliament said no way, we're not going to give them immunity from these crimes. And so, Obama tried really, really hard to keep more troops there.

So, they never totally left. There were always troops in Iraq. (Right) There's an enormous embassy that has thousands of employees. It's the biggest embassy the U.S. has in Baghdad. Then there's a big consulate in Basra I believe. And so, of course, the U.S. never really leaves a country that is bombed to pieces except Vietnam because we were forced out. (Right)

And so, now of course, we're back in actively bombing and there's—

JON How lucky for Obama.

CINDY Yeah, I know.

JON How lucky for him that it's something he wanted in the first place and we're now going back into Iraq. And they actually, I think, they overturned that whole immunity issue that doesn't apply anymore—from what I read.

CINDY Well, not only that, but last year Obama was really jones-ing to bomb Syria and he didn't get to do that (Yep) because Putin kind of pulled the plug on that (Yep), and now we're bombing Syria. (Exactly)

And I really think the end game is Iran because now Netanyahu and other Zionists here in the United States are saying that ISIS is now in Iran. Isn't that convenient?

JON Well, the whole point—I'm sorry—

CINDY You know I think that Iran has been on the table since the Bush Administration. But there was actually active opposition against Bush and Bush wasn't able to complete his mission to go into Iran.

JON Right, he wanted to bomb Syria and now we're, amazingly, we're bombing Syria. (Right) What a coincidence. And, the whole point has been to take out Assad, to isolate Iran (Right), to take out Russian influence in the region. That's essentially what it's about is isolating Iran.

And, you know, Wesley Clark, agree with him or not, like him or not, he made that statement, that list of countries that we're supposed to be taking out and it seems as if, all of that is true.

CINDY Project for a New American Century, so people know—people in the Middle East know what this is all about, for sure. (Absolutely) So, we don't—we're running out of time and we don't even have time to talk about Obama's program in South America and Africa. We didn't even talk about Libya. And now Hong Kong. There's supposed to be some huge revolution in Hong Kong that's fomented—there's evidence it's being fomented by the National Democratic Institute, which is just the CIA to isolate China. So, China and Russia are really the two biggest stumbling blocks to the U.S. total hegemony and Obama, clever Obama, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, is figuring out how to slowly isolate and undermine those countries. (Right)

So, did you have another question for me?

JON I have, well, there's two questions. Casey was not buried in Arlington Cemetery. Instead, he was buried closer to you. How often do you go see him?

CINDY We go as a family on the special days—his birthday, his death day, Christmas. He loved Halloween, so we go and we put Halloween decorations on his grave or tombstone—or gravestone, whatever. And so, I just live probably three quarters of a mile from him, so I do go and I visit often. I make sure that he has appropriate flowers. And when I go—the last time I went there, somebody had put a symbol of—a First Calvary symbol on his stone. It had—it was the First Calvary, which is yellow with a black horse on it. I mean, I'm sorry—yeah, it's yellow with a black horse. It

usually has a "one" on it for First Calvary, because Casey was in the First Calvary. This one said 04/04/04 on it because eight soldiers from the First Calvary died the same day Casey died. So Casey and seven other Calvary members—

When he first died, I would go every day and I would take my journal and I would write letters to him and that's what I advised mothers or fathers to do when their children die is to write them a letter every day telling them how you feel and how much you miss that person, what that person's life meant to you. And just other things. Like I used to write what I did. Like Janey and I went to lunch, or whatever, just like I was writing to Casey if he was alive.

So, now, probably, I would say it's every four to six weeks that I go. I go up there now—because I recognize that that's not where Casey is. Casey is in his nieces and nephews. He's in us. He's in all of our memories and our love. That's where Casey is.

JON Well, I told you before that Cohen looks strikingly like Casey, in my opinion. And, I'm a little older than—

CINDY Cohen is my son Andy's son and Andy, the older he gets the more he looks like Casey, the more he sounds like Casey, and Andy has really taken Casey's life and tried to really make that a model for the way he lives his life. And, so, I'm just really proud of all my kids in the way that they have handled this, and the way that they move forward without losing touch with Casey and what an enormous part of our family he was. And still is. He still is.

JON Well, I'm a little older than Casey, but when I look at—right, he's still a part of your family. I'm a little older than Casey, but when I went to look at Casey's grave, it looks like that we could have been friends.

CINDY Superman—

JON He likes Superman, Van Halen. I used to watch the WWF when I was a kid. (Yeah) And, I want to end on this.

I've made this mistake a couple of times. I used to say, "Imagine how many more Cindys there are out there" as a reference to the mothers who've lost a

child in these wars. And the truth of the matter is, there's only one Cindy Sheehan.

And I want to thank you very much for coming on my show today. And I want everybody to be sure to watch what comes after the interview. So, again, Cindy, thank you very much for taking the time to come on today. And I love you very much.

CINDY You're welcome, Jon. I love you. And I just want to say that the Soapbox People's Network is very excited and honored that you do this show for us and we just want to, I and—I say we, but it's just really Dede and I and our future bloggers. We're getting over a hundred thousand hits a month, so we think that's really good for a brand-new website. But we just wish you all the success and we're hoping that we just build this alternative media that is truly principled. Whether it's left-wing or right-wing or whatever, it's just principled. And so I just want to thank you for doing this show and for being on the Soapbox People's Network.

JON Thank you very much, Cindy, and you have a great day.

CINDY Okay, you too, Jon.

JON Bye, bye, Cindy. (Bye)

This show is dedicated to Casey Sheehan.



Chapter/Episode 9 – J. Michael Springmann – October 16, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

J. Michael Springmann (MICHAEL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show is going to focus on how none of the hijackers should have been given visas to enter this country. It's going to focus on how the United States used the Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, the same place many of the hijackers got their visas, to bring "terrorists" or "rebels" to this country to train for the Afghanistan-Russia war in the 1980s.

It's going to focus on how people who should have been held accountable were not and instead were rewarded and promoted, as has been the case too often with regard to 9/11.

Okay, this is Jon, and I'm here with Michael Springmann. How are you doing today, Michael?

MICHAEL Oh, pretty good. Working on finishing touches on my book, Time for Terror and earning a little money for the company by doing some work for clients.

JON Excellent! So, what I'm going to do is I'm going to read your bio.

J. Michael Springmann was a civil servant at the Commerce Department's International Trade Administration, as well as a diplomat in the State Department's Foreign Service, with postings to Germany, India, Saudi Arabia, and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research in Washington D.C. The published author of several articles on national security themes, he is now an attorney in private practice in the Washington, D.C. area. In addition to a J.D. from American University in Washington, D.C., he holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in International Affairs from Georgetown University and Catholic University, both in the Nation's Capital.

Magazines which have published his articles include *Covert Action Quarterly*, *Unclassified*, (the journal of the Association of National Security Alumni, essentially CIA and FBI veterans plus outsiders with expert knowledge of intelligence and foreign affairs), *Global Research*, *Global Outlook*, *OpEdNews*, *The Public Record*, and *Foreign Policy Journal*. In June 2004, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee granted him its Pro Bono Attorney of the Year award.

Congratulations!

MICHAEL Oh, thank you.

JON All right, so what I'm going to do is I'm just going to get right into the questions. (Sure) And, the very first question is: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

MICHAEL Well, it was a long and sort of stressful day. I had been on my way to an appointment at the Arlington County Courthouse with a potential client and as I was going down Scottsville Road towards the river and towards the bridge that crosses the Potomac, I could see all the smoke somewhere over Alexandria. I had no idea what was going on and finally I got a good look at the smoke and there were huge clouds of white smoke that pretty much obscured the southern skyline, and I wondered if a plane had crashed. And, once I got to the courthouse, the place was surrounded by police and one of them had told me that the Trade Towers in New York were gone. My response to him was, well, this is America's state-sponsored terrorism and it's come home to roost like turkeys.

Following that I said well, I 'm obviously not going to get into the courthouse. I tried reaching my client. I couldn't do it with my cell phone. And had to struggle back into the city trying several different ways because of a tremendous amount of traffic that was going in both directions. I tried it again when I got to the pharmacy to pick up some medicines, and still couldn't get through on the telephones, and the owner of the pharmacy was crying and as he—the set was on, and he was watching the buildings come down again and again and again.

So it was remarkably frustrating and a non-productive day.

JON So, you're saying—I'm sorry, go ahead, continue.

MICHAEL But, basically it was—my thoughts throughout the day was that Americans are finally paying for what they've done to other countries.

JON Wow, so your first thought was what's considered to be blow-back (Yeah) for the 9/11 attacks. That was not my first thought.

MICHAEL Yeah, this was the Americans that destroyed Iraq in 1993, and this is a couple years before they destroyed it again in 2003. But, in the meantime, the Americans were rampaging through the Balkans destroying Yugoslavia, supporting the Israelis in their attack on Palestine and their neighbors, so I decided that this is finally the Americans getting a bit of their own back.

JON So you were obviously someone that was paying closer to attention to what's going on in the world than I was. Because I was—

MICHAEL Well, I try to. I mean, I guess, I've got the degrees; I've been overseas with the State Department; I have a number of friends from various countries; and I have a different idea and outlook on things than a lot of other people do.

JON Well, I'm sure you do.

All right, my next question. Can you please describe your role with the U.S. State Department in the late 1980s?

MICHAEL Sure. Prior to my going to Jeddah in 1986, in September, I tried to get into the Foreign Services a number of times and was always turned down for one reason or another. I got in the State Commerce Exchange Program,

which provided a time at the Washington State Department officers and a time abroad for people in the International Trade Administration. They were Foreign Service Reserve Officers and treated as a diplomat. I'd also gone to New Delhi as a—one of the first people sent abroad to the new Foreign commercial service. I was commercial attaché there for a couple of years.

But in the late 80s I was in Jeddah or on the way to Jeddah and I was going to go out as the officer in charge of the visa section. Consulates typically have any kind of a political section, a commercial section and a Consular section, and an administrative section. And what happens is the commercial section was taken away from state and given to the commerce department. But, by and large, politically the economic officer is a consort for the President and kings, people who do consulate work tend to be seen as social workers and the administrative section gets the spoken toilet. (Laughs)

JON Okay.

MICHAEL And in Jeddah, I was running the visa section and I had heard some strange stories about the place before I got out there, and it was things like the American Ambassador was in town for consultations at the department, and I was told by the desk that I could go and have a quick meet and greet session. I said sure. I went in about five minutes saying I'm part of the new official family, happy to go to Jeddah, etc. And, the next thing I knew he spent 45 minutes bending my ear on all the problems that the Jeddah Consulate was creating for the embassy in Riyadh. The women who were wives of rich Saudis were going to the states with an entourage of hairdressers and seamstresses and things like this. And some were getting visas and their visas were getting turned down.

He kept on and on about this and I couldn't quite figure out what he was telling me. I knew he was telling me something, but for the life of me I couldn't figure it out. And later on I heard from Ellen Goff at the administrative office of the Bureau of South Asia, that yeah, she'd heard about problems in Jeddah with visas, but she didn't know what they were, really. Because I'd been told by an experienced consulate officer that the first sign of trouble in the consulate section is that things are not what they seem, and there's some really strange stuff going on. Oh, boy. Then I got to Jeddah. I was welcomed with open arms, and they treat you like royalty almost and they offered and said that your predecessor had created such problems that we're glad you're here. This woman is going to give me tenure, she's going to make me collect a million dollars.

So, after a bit it wasn't Mike, will you please take a look at this visa application. We want to make sure this guy gets a visa to go to the states. It was: "Why did you turn that visa down? We want this guy to go to the states. We want him to get a visa. What's going on?" And, basically, the law and the regulations state that the visa applicant is an intended immigrant unless and until he can prove otherwise. And the consular office is to refuse this, etc. unless he is certain of the guy that's going to be there, and he's going to go to America, look at the Grand Canyon, visit his relatives, or sign a contract and then come back to his country of origin or place of application.

And this went on for a year and a half and it got nastier and nastier, and I was repeatedly threatened. I was told I would be out of the Foreign Services if I didn't do what was wanted. And the driving force behind this, for the most part, was Jay Freres. He was the Consul General. And I couldn't quite figure out how the Consul General got involved in this because what I was doing was way below his pay grade. And it got to the point where at one time there was a guy bringing a pile of visa applications over with passports and he said you can issue the visas now or you can do it after I call Jay Freres. And I complained to Justice Stephens—Justice is his given name—who's head of Consulate section. I complained to Stephanie Smith in Riyadh who was the Council for Consular affairs, and she told me this is a very bad situation. You need to go back to Washington and talk with your Consulate Affairs and meantime you're NBC.

JON Let's—I'm sorry, let's back up one second. So, basically, your role at the Consular's office was to issue visas for individuals who wanted to go to the United States.

MICHAEL That's right.

JON And, while you were there, you found many applicants should have been turned down. You were turning them down and people above you were telling you to let the visas go as opposed to being turned down. Correct?

MICHAEL Yeah. Exactly. For example, I'll give you Paul Arvid Tveit. He's listed in namebase.org as an official of the Central Intelligence Agency. He was in the commercial section in the Jeddah office, and I had turned down two guys, I think, from Pakistan who were going to the American Automotive Parts Trade Show in Chicago. And when I asked these people what trade

show they were going to, they didn't know. They were just going with a commerce department trade mission. And I said well where is this being held? And they said well, oh, it's going to be in Detroit. And that was the wrong city. Every year the show is held in Chicago. I knew that from working at the commerce department and being in their automotive parts and accessories section. I turned them down. And, within an hour Tveit was on the phone with me arguing about how they had to have visas because the commerce department wanted them. I said look, if they can't name the trade show and don't know what city it's being held in, I'm not going to give them a visa. And I cited the Section 214(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and the State Department's own regulations.

And they called Justice Stephens and got my refusal reversed and these guys got their visas.

JON So, who and when did you notify people of what was going on in Jeddah? Like who did you complain to in other words?

MICHAEL I complained to Justice Stephens and he told me to shut-up and issue the visas. If Freres wanted the visas, Freres should get it and don't ask questions. (Okay--) And I complained to Stephanie Smith and Riyadh who turns out according to Namebase also works for the CIA. And it went like this for about a year and a half. I used that in Washington on my way to my next assignment in Stuttgart, I called the U. S. Consular Affairs and they could care less.

JON Right. So, what happened as the end result of all of this.

MICHAEL Well, I eventually got tossed out of the Foreign Service. They refused to give me tenure, like tenure at a University, and I was out on the street. I complained to the Inspector General's office at State. I complained to the what was then the Government Accounting Office and now it's called the Government Accountability Office. I eventually complained to the Inspector General's State Department. All I got out of it was that I had a personality conflict with affairs. There's no real issue there.

JON So, you weren't, or were you given whistleblower status? Or protection?

MICHAEL No, no, I talked to a couple of attorneys, one woman never got back to me. She wouldn't talk to me about my situation. And another firm Neal, Shaw Mullenholz and Seeger, the people who got me into the State Department

when they refused to let me in because I had bad feet. They told me well, you're just going to have to argue to the Judge that you know how to manage the State Department better than the State Department does. Well, I got no help from anybody.

JON Did you try suing them or anything? To get your job back?

MICHAEL Well, what I did was I complained after that to the FBI and to the Justice Department and, basically, I was ignored. Then I filed a Freedom of Information request to find out what was going on and to figure out why I wasn't—I didn't have a job anymore. And State gave me useless information, things like pay stubs and travel orders and things like this which I already had.

And I got to the point where I said well I'll file a Freedom of Information Act. I'll do it on my own since I can't afford a lawyer. I had basically nothing coming in except measly unemployment insurance. That wasn't a whole lot of money and it was taxable besides, thanks to Ronald Reagan. So, I got nowhere with a lawsuit. It was eventually appealed as it affected national security. And to this day, I don't have any idea why. Trying to know why I was fired from how it's affected the national security.

JON Well, that's interesting.

MICHAEL After that, a year or two later, I was researching the articles that were unclassified and had been given Joe Trento's name. He is a journalist that does national security things in the Washington area. He's trying to be public—the public education—can't think of it at the moment.

I was talking to Joe and about what I was researching and then he was kind of abrupt with me and talked and then asked me who I was and what I was doing. And I mentioned I'd been to Jeddah and handled the visas, and he says, well, you know Osama bin Laden? I said, well, no, but I went to a bin Laden wedding and I don't remember the guy's name, but it wasn't Osama bin Laden getting married that night.

So, I went over to his office and he told me that essentially what had happened was the CIA and the State Department were working together saying junior Consular officers issue visas in Jeddah, and if they weren't smart enough to ask what was going on, they would get tenure and have a career in the Foreign Service. If they asked questions like I did, and they

weren't with the program, they would be booted out. And Joe told me that what they were doing was recruiting people for the war in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union. And the guys they were recruiting were being sent to Washington, or other parts of the United States, for training. I found out later a lot of this was done in Virginia at one of the CIA facilities. And also at Seal another military facility in North Carolina.

And I was amazed at this and talked to a couple other people, one of them was with Voice of America and another guy connected with George Washington University, and they told me yeah, that's pretty much it. These guys were being recruited and the Saudis wanted them back into the kingdom, once they had gotten out of Afghanistan and the war with the Soviets was over. They didn't want them home, using what they had learned in Afghanistan to affect regime change in their own country.

JON Well—in an Associated Press article from July 2002, entitled "Did U.S. train Arabs to help Afghans oust Soviets?" It says the following, "The State Department had no comment on Springmann's allegations except to say final authority over visa decisions rests with the consular officer in charge, not with Springmann, a junior officer." What is your response to that? That essentially is your argument, isn't it? That the people above you (Yeah) were essentially telling you what to do?

MICHAEL Yeah, the issue was—well, the article came about because George Getta had read the covert action quote on the article and that article got a great play in Canada. I'd been interviewed by the Canadian Broadcasting Company in the National Press Building. And this fellow was going viral and Getta had me in to meet with him, and a woman who he said was from Saudi Arabia and he went through the points of what I have just told you. And the article seemed to die. I don't know many places it was printed, except I saw the one in the *Deseret News* and, oh, some fellow from the *Larouche Executive Intelligence Review* sent me a copy from some place in the Middle East.

But, by and large, the way things go with visas and visa referrals and visa refusals and so forth, is that if a Consular officer, and I was in charge of the visa section, refuses a visa, the only way the refusal can be overwritten was by a senior Foreign Services officer in the Consular section. Plus, having more information that was not available to the denying officer saying that he actually did the interview. You have to write a written report. This is written up in Volume 9, Foreign Affairs Manual, Section 41.121. (Okay--)

So, I would refuse and then Freres and company would say reverse your refusal or else. And I had finally got to the point where I was like no changes on the visa form saying this is refused per order of Jay P. Freres. I issued the visa.

JON Right. Okay, well, with regard to the CIA sending recruits through Jeddah to the United States to train, there is information that supports that, and apparently in 1980—and this information is from HistoryCommons.org—it says:

Some fighters opposing the Soviets in Afghanistan begin training in the U.S. According to journalist John Cooley (an ABC Correspondent), the training is done by Navy Seals and Green Beret officers who have taken draconian secrecy oaths. Key Pakistani officers are trained, as well as some senior Afghan Mujahideen. Much of the training takes place in Camp Peary, near Williamsburg, Virginia, which is said to be the CIA's main location for training spies and assets. Other training takes place at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Harvey Point, North Carolina, and Fort A. P. Hill, Virginia. Subjects are trained in how to detect explosives, surveillance, how to recruit new agents, how to run paramilitary operations, and more. They are taught to use many different weapons as well, including remote-controlled mines and bombs, and sophisticated timers and explosives.

Now, this is not the last time that the United States has brought, whatever you want to call them, rebels, terrorists (Mm-hmm), to the United States to train (Mm-hmm), in 2012 Seymour Hersh from *The New Yorker* reported that the U. S. Joint Special Operations Command, the JSOC, trained operatives from the Mujahideen-e Khalq or MEK at a secret site in Nevada beginning in 2005.

Now, according to Hersh, MEK members were trained in intercepting communications, cryptography, weaponry and small tactics at the Nevada site and they were supposed to be used in Iran, I believe.

Now, what's interesting about that story is the MEK was considered to be a terrorist organization—

MICHAEL Oh, yeah.

JON And, you know there was a—

MICHAEL A number of these people that—organizations the Americans have condemned publicly—they work with privately under cover.

JON Exactly, and the MEK is considered to be—or was considered to be—a terrorist organization and they were on the State Department's terrorism list, and there was a big campaign to get them off of that list, and a lot of people who took part in that were people like Rudy Giuliani who was supposedly America's Mayor from 9/11 (Mm-hmmm, yeah), and arguing on behalf of the terrorist group, and eventually Hillary Clinton made sure that they were taken off of the State Department's terrorism list.

So, Joe Trento told you, essentially, why you were being made to allow visas that you didn't think should go through, correct? It was Joe?

MICHAEL Yeah, mm-hmm.

JON Okay, just so people know, Joe Trento, as he said, is a journalist in D.C. Paul Thompson who is the creator of the Complete 9/11 Timeline swears by Joe Trento. Joe Trento was mentioned in the book *Eleventh Day*, and Michael Springmann is also mentioned in the book *Eleventh Day*. I forget the author. I think it was Robbyn Swan or somebody like that. Some people question what Joe has to say, but you know, he's broken a lot of stories over the years, so just wanted to—

MICHAEL Well, I even told people that don't like Joe Trento that whatever you say about him, he has excellent sources and good contacts.

JON Right. Now—

MICHAEL And he gave me some ink in his book *Prelude to Terror*.

JON He gave you some ink in his book *Prelude to Terror*?

MICHAEL Yeah, it was a couple of pages talking about my situation in Jeddah.

JON Right. Okay, now, you were talking about, or you mentioned the State Department and the CIA working hand-in-hand (Mm-hmm) and I've heard such things before from 9/11 whistleblower Sibel Edmonds and it seems to make sense to me that the CIA would be working with the State

Department. A position at an embassy in another country just make sense for a spy. If you understand what I'm saying, so—

MICHAEL Oh, yeah. They love it because they have diplomatic immunity. They pretend to be consular officers, administrative officers, or political officers, and they've got the diplomatic passport, so the worst the host country could do is treat them as persona-non-grata and send them home. Or put them in a secret prison.

JON I found an article from *Techdirt* from July, 2014, about some of the torture that the CIA was doing and it says:

"...officials at the State Department were well aware of the ongoing CIA torture efforts, but were instructed not to tell their superiors, such that it's likely that the top officials, including Secretary of State Colin Powell, may have been kept in the dark, while others at the State Department knew of the (highly questionable) CIA actions."

So, that's an example of them working together, but—

MICHAEL Oh, yeah. For example, we had out of some 20 Americans there were only three people—myself, Mike Springmann, Lonnie Washington, the only State Department communicator, and Jim Page an Administrative officer. We were the only people I knew for a certainty to have no ties, professional or familial, with any of the American intelligence services. Considerably, there may be a couple more that I was wrong about, but by and large it was basically a CIA operation.

I talked to a former Station Chief, who asked not to be named, and this individual, along with a real Foreign Services officer, Jay Hawley who's now retired, both told me that the average for people who don't work for the State Department but say they do is about one in three at Foreign Service posts.

At Jeddah it was obviously more. There was a retired American ambassador who figured it was about half. And if you looked at this book that was produced in Canada, which I never got my hands on, it's called the *Anti-CIA Club of Diplomats: Spooks in the U.S. Foreign Services*. It's a 1983 Canadian publication. It says the average people who work for the intelligence services at a foreign service post is 60 percent.

JON Wow. Well, that's certainly interesting. And I want to bring—I want to make sure people understand why we're talking about Jeddah. Why it was so important to have you on the show today.

12 of the 19 hijackers got their visas from the U.S. Consular's office in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Now, my next question: We have learned that the United States did not end its relationship with groups like the Mujahideen after the Afghanistan/Russia War and, instead, continued to work with them throughout the 90s. Is it a reasonable assumption to make that since that relationship with the Mujahideen never ended, the situation at the Consulate in Jeddah never ended either?

MICHAEL I would think so. I haven't been back for a while, but from what I originally thought, my complaints, my freedom of information act requests, my freedom of information act lawsuits, might have forced them to dance things down, but from what I've seen so far from what we've done in Iraq, what we've done in the Balkans, in Libya and in Syria, obviously, they've been recruiting and keeping what I call the Arab Afghans going. This was what they were called in Afghanistan because they weren't Afghan but they were Arabs and other nationalities and ethnicities fighting on the same side as the Afghans.

JON Well, my question was, essentially, do you think that situation was still going on at the time of 9/11.

MICHAEL Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Even during the war in Afghanistan, when the Soviets withdrew in when was it? 1990, 1991—the Americans kept recruiting and kept bringing these people in to fight. It went on for another three years to 1995.

JON Okay.

Now, many of the hijackers, in fact, some people say all of the hijackers for a number of reasons should not have been given visas. Are you aware of some of the reasons why?

MICHAEL Well, I've seen some things online that looked to be photocopies of the visa applications. And they, basically, look like a lot of visa applications I saw in

Jeddah, and what I heard about in Germany from the people I knew in the Consular Section. People just don't fill out the application, or they do it sloppily. They leave blanks or they put dated information in the blanks that they're required to fill in. So, one of the things I would do when I was at the visa window, at the time we required personal appearances for everybody except Saudis and if I had a question, I would bring the Saudi in for an interview.

But, by and large, I would go through the application form and I would say well, you got a blank here. Where are you going to stay in the United States? Do you have a hotel? Are you going to visit relatives? You left out a time of arrival, which month is it, for example. Do you have any kind of a specific day? Do you have a month? Give me some more information. By and large, in the space of two minutes they would talk themselves out of a visa. Because they couldn't answer or wouldn't answer a lot of my questions.

JON Right. I have some information about why they should not have been given visas. This is all from—well this part is from HistoryCommons.

Between April 3-7, 2001, three hijackers are given visas to the United States through the US Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. They are Nawaf Alhazmi, Salem Alhazmi, and Khalid Almihdar. It says:

"Almihdhar and Nawaf Alhazmi are already 'al-Qaeda veterans' and battle-hardened killers." "All three men have indicators in their passports marking them as Islamic radicals. These indicators are used to track them by the Saudi authorities, but are apparently not noticed by U.S. officials."

So, these are individuals that actually had a stamp that said they were terrorists, and they still managed to get visas.

And from another report. This is from ABC News:

"The political journal *National Review* obtained the visa applications for 15 of the 19 hijackers — and evidence that all of them should have been denied entry to the country. Almost all of the hijacker's visas were issued in Saudi Arabia, at the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh or the U.S. Consulate in Jeddah. Terrorist ties aside, the applications themselves should have

raised red flags, say experts. The forms are incomplete and often incomprehensible — yet that didn't stop any of the 15 terrorists from whom the visa applications were obtained from coming to the United States."

And then it goes on to say:

"They were handing these things out gift-wrapped with ribbons on top," said Joel Mowbray, contributing editor of the *National Review*. Mowbray, who obtained the visas, said he was shocked by what he saw. "I mean, I really was expecting al Qaeda to have trained their operatives well, to beat the system," he said. "They didn't have to beat the system, the system was rigged in their favor from the get-go."

Now, in response to these revelations, the State Department says:

"The fact is that with 20/20 hindsight, I'm sure one can always find a reason that you might have turned down a visa."

Now, on October 21, 2002, the General Accounting Office, the nonpartisan investigative arm of Congress, releases a report asserting that at least 13 of the 19 9/11 hijackers were never interviewed by U.S. consular officials before being granted visas to enter the U.S. This contradicts previous assurances from the State Department that 12 of the hijackers had been interviewed.

Now, in December 2002, Senators Jon Kyl (R-AZ) and Pat Roberts (R-KS) state in a chapter of the 9/11 Congressional Inquiry that:

"If State Department personnel had merely followed the law and not granted non-immigrant visas to 15 of the 19 hijackers in Saudi Arabia . . . 9/11 would not have happened."

<https://www.techdirt.com/articles/20140730/17360528061/cia-torture-report-reveals-that-state-department-officials-knew-about-torture-were-told-not-to-tell-their-bosses.shtml>

So, that's some of what they said about the visas of these hijackers. Now, 12 of the hijackers, as I said, were issued visas at the consulate in Jeddah, where you worked, and they were issued by a woman named Shayna Steinger. Are you familiar with her?

MICHAEL To an extent, yeah, I had looked her up after we had talked a couple of days ago and found out that her background is a little bit odd. She was commissioned as SFO4 in 1999. And at that time her name was Shayna Steinger Singh—S-I-N-G-H. And I thought this was really odd because generally someone who is brought in at the junior officer on their first tour is like an SFO6 or SFO7. In my case I was a 5 because I had a master's degree and worked for a number of years. In her case, she came directly out of Columbia University to the State Department and I've not been able to find out whether she had a doctorate's degree that might have gotten her in at a 4, but it's an awfully high rank for someone to sit on the visa line for their first tour.

JON Well, just so people know, Shayna Steinger is the woman who issued the 12 visas to the 9/11 hijackers at the Consulate in Jeddah. She gave "incorrect testimony" to the House Committee on Government Reform and also makes "incorrect statements" to the 9/11 Commission. She is not mentioned in the 9/11 Report, at all. And, after 9/11, she was continuously promoted throughout the State Department.

And, before 9/11 this is what she said: She was "never aware of the level of disaffected extremism in Saudi society," she says.

Now, apparently, before she got there they were a lot more strict in issuing visas (Mm-hmm), but she apparently issued visas to a lot of people, and her opposite, the guy who worked with her who I don't remember his name, was the exact opposite. He turned down a lot of people.

So, it's just amazing to me that the woman who issued 12 of the visas, literally, is not even mentioned in the 9/11 Report.

MICHAEL Well, that pretty much indicates she's one of the agency staff there. My predecessor who supposedly made all the problems for the Ambassador in Riyadh is now Ambassador to Oman.

JON Wow.

MICHAEL And, she would do things like call the Internal Revenue Service about people she suspected of living abroad and not paying American taxes.

JON Interesting.

MICHAEL So, the women I met at the State Department, generally were of a hard case of matter. They do things literally. They have no imagination and they're trouble makers. And what I could see, both Greta and this Shayna Steinger Singh were not exactly your typical Consular officer.

JON Wow. It certainly—she was never held accountable. That's something we saw a lot of after 9/11 are that people in Government who should have been held accountable were not (of course) and in many cases, as in her case, they were instead rewarded and promoted.

MICHAEL Yeah, exactly. The same—go ahead.

JON Well—No, you go ahead.

MICHAEL Well, I was going to say as far as the people who got the visas that had the clear indications of being terrorists or whatever, every visa application at the time was sent to Washington to run through their automated look-up system to see if they were ax murders, terrorists, or what have you. And, obviously, which was not done or if it was done they monkeyed with the data in Washington, or maybe the CIA never put these people into the database. I don't know. (Well—) That's a possibility, because they don't seem to talk to one another sometimes.

JON Three of the hijackers obtained their visas through the Visa Express Program. Are you familiar with it? I have a definition of what the Visa Express is. I'll read it real fast. (Sure) This is from Wiki:

"The U.S. introduced the Visa Express program in May 2001. This program allowed Saudi Arabian residents, including non-citizens, to get valid visas through a travel agency using a much less restrictive standard than would have otherwise been required. They did not have to submit a proof of identity, but only had to provide a photograph and fill out a short form. A senior State Department official described the program as "an open-door policy for terrorists." No other country had this system to facilitate easy entry into the country."

So, are you familiar with the Visa Express program? What's your opinion about it? I think it's—

MICHAEL Well, it's a—I'm sorry, go ahead.

JON I just think it's very interesting that, you know, a few months before 9/11 they decide to implement this program (Yeah) that only applies to Saudi Arabia, and makes it easier as they said for terrorists to get into the country.

MICHAEL Yeah, well, when I was there, the Saudi's were seen as good visa prospects and they didn't have to appear personally for a visa interview. So they simply sent a passport over with photographs and a visa application form filled out. And, the Visa Express systems sounds very much like what I was told by Celerino Castillo, the drug enforcement agency officer who operated in Latin America, he once told me by phone that typically what the CIA would do in South America would be to send the guys they wanted to get visas to come to the states for trainings or debriefings or whatever, to a legitimate travel agent and they would be bundled up with a bunch of other applicants for visas who were simple ordinary travelers and would be shipped over to the American Foreign Service post. And because they came from a legitimate travel agency, in a bundle, they wouldn't get scrutiny that maybe an individual would get if you had kind of a sketchy background on paper. So, yeah—(Right). That's a good way of getting people through if you want.

JON Well, the 9/11 Report says and this is how it addresses the Visa Express program. It says:

"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."

Now that's all it says. It doesn't say anything about how this program was a bad thing.

Now, one thing I want to bring up is an individual by the name of Mary Ryan.

MICHAEL She was the Secretary for Consular Affairs, right?

JON She was the head of the State Department's Consular Service, correct. (Mm-hmm) and that was—she was the one essentially responsible for letting most of the hijackers into the U.S. – Oh, I'm sorry, it says:

"Mary Ryan, the head of the State Department's consular service that was responsible for letting most of the hijackers into the U.S., is also forced to retire."

Now, we've said before, oftentimes, that nobody was ever held accountable. This is actually one case where somebody was held accountable. She was forced to retire. However, and the reason was:

"It has been pointed out that Ryan deceived Congress by testifying that "there was nothing State could have done to prevent the terrorists from obtaining visas."

However, after she makes this false statement and she has to retire, after all this Ryan and the other authors of the Visa Express program are given "outstanding performance" awards of \$15,000 each. The reporter who wrote most of the stories critical of the Visa Express is briefly detained and pressured by the State Department.

So that's very interesting.

MICHAEL [Laughs] That's really amazing.

JON Yeah, it's very amazing. Are you familiar with the story of Abdullah Noman?

MICHAEL Yeah, he had been a Foreign Service national, a local hire, working in the commercial section across the street from the Consular. And, he apparently, was selling visas and was caught in an FBI sting operation in Nevada.

JON Right. What HistoryCommons says—this is somebody who worked at the Jeddah office, I thought. Correct?

MICHAEL Well, he wasn't in the Consular section. He was in the commercial section.

JON Okay. It says that he took money and gifts to provide fraudulent visas to foreigners. He pleads guilty and is convicted—this is on May 21, 2002—

about 50 to 100 visas were improperly issued by Noman from September 1996, until November of 2001, when he was arrested. (Mm-hmm)
So, there's all kinds of problems with the Consular office in Jeddah.

MICHAEL Well, when I was there I had a guy Martin tell me that the price for a visa at the Consular was \$2500. And I called the regional security officer about this and then I'd been told that I should look at who needs the money and the only person I know who needs the money is Jay Freres whose house burned down while he was away from the Consulate for a couple of months on home leave. And nothing, nothing ever came of it.

JON Right. Now, did you ever try to contact any of the investigations into 9/11 so you could speak to them, or did any of them ever try to contact you?

MICHAEL Well, none of them tried to contact me and I wondered whether it was worthwhile doing it because I eventually decided I wouldn't waste my breath. At Joe Trento's suggestion, I called the FBI after September 11, 2001, and wanted to talk to them about the issues in Jeddah and the visas for terrorists program, and was passed from office to office and their main office on Pennsylvania Avenue, and then they kind of threw me to the Washington field office. And when I got put through there, they said, well, somebody will call you back. Well, it's been, what is it, 13 years? I'm still waiting for them to call me back.

JON Wow, that's a shame. See, somebody like you should have been brought in to testify before the 9/11 Commission.

And now, my last question to you, and before I ask this question, I just want to thank you for your time today. It's an extremely interesting story. It brings about many questions that need to be answered with regard to how these hijackers managed to get these visas and why no one was held accountable, and all kinds of things. (Mm-hmm)

So, I just want to thank you very much for your time today.

MICHAEL Oh, you're quite welcome. I enjoyed the opportunity to talk out once more on this.

JON Yep.

You're currently working on a book. What is the premise of the book and when will it be available?

MICHAEL Well, I'm in my final draft of what I've titled *Time for Terror: The Arab Afghans* and it basically covers a lot of what we talked about tonight. My issues with visas in Jeddah and what I found out later on. And then I move on to the fact that in my opinion and based on my research in talking with people, a couple of interviews, that this group was never disbanded. It was turned into a cadre, maybe not terribly well organized, to destabilize Governments the American Government didn't like, like Yugoslavia, that was destroyed. These people, you had Osama bin Laden there. You had Veterans of the Afghan War there. They worked with the American Government. They worked with NATO to bomb and shoot and kill. And then they were sent to Iraq after the American invasion in 2003, and they were recruited—people were hooked up into death squads with Henry Encher the alleged political officer from Jeddah, as deputy to the Consular for political affairs, Robert Ford, to recruit these people.

Then, the same crowd was sent to Libya with the NATO bombing campaign to destroy the country and then their weapons and the men were shipped into Syria where they'd been hard at work since the last couple of years, and from what I've seen in the papers, they're back in Iraq again, only they've been rebranded as ISIS or ISIL or IS, depending on which day of the week you're talking about.

JON Well, the point is—

MICHAEL And you try to tie all this together.

JON Right. Okay. Now, the point of this is—and I don't know that it's all the same group that they use. I'm sure (mm-hmm), there are different groups that they use. But, you know, Governments, our Government especially loves to use terrorists or rebels or freedom fighters, whatever you want to call them, as a proxy to destabilize Governments and so forth.

And we saw that throughout the 90s. We were told that program ended, but it did not, as you were mentioning in the Balkans and Yugoslavia (Mm-hmm), and, you know, Dr. Nafeez Ahmed, who I've already interviewed, who has written a lot on this subject (Yeah--) and after 9/11—

MICHAEL Yeah, he mentioned me in a couple of his books.

JON He mentioned you in a couple of his books (Yeah, yeah). That's good. And after 9/11 we used, you know, Jundallah in Iran. We used groups, as you mentioned in Libya with the NATO bombing campaign. Well, Bandar, Prince Bandar from Saudi Arabia had an operation to send rebels into Syria in an effort to take out Assad (Mm-hmm) and that was helped by, I believe, it was Kuwait and Qatar, and it had to be done with the U.S. consent. (Yeah) And the U.S. has been operating in Syria covertly for years. And they've been wanting (Yeah, oh yeah) to take out Assad for years.

So, to think they were doing this without U.S. consent would be probably foolish to think. (Yeah) And then, eventually, the U.S. started sending them intelligence, then they started sending them arms, then the U.S. started training rebels in Jordan (Mm-hmm) in order to send in to Syria and then, you know, what happened was all of these rebels in Syria, they worked there, they started to go into Iraq and they actually, they took advantage of the individuals in Iraq who were angry—at least, this is my opinion—they were angry about a decade's worth of sanctions (Mm-hmm). That killed a million people. They were angry about our occupation that killed upwards of 1.25 million, that wounded and displaced millions more.

MICHAEL Yeah, you're well informed.

JON Well, they destroyed the infrastructure, Blackwater was hunting Iraqis for sport (Mm-hmm). They were torturing people in Abu Ghraib. And a lot of people in Iraq—these kinds of things, there's no statute of limitations on the anger that these kinds of things create (mm-hmm, sure), so, essentially, you know, all the rebels that we sent into Syria mix their way into the people in Iraq, now we have this situation called ISIS (Mm-hmm), which is essentially a problem of our making. Ours (Yeah) and our allies' making. (Exactly)

So, that's what your book's about?

MICHAEL Pretty much. It goes back also to the beginnings of all of these in the 40's and 50's where Mohammad Mossadegh and Iran was the first victim of the first CIA coup, and Jacobo Árbenz in Guatemala was the second victim of the second CIA coup. (Right) And I mentioned U.S. involvement in Syria and Egypt in the past in the 50s, 60s, and 70s, and their efforts came to naught, I think in large part, because they weren't really organized. Now that they've got this Arab Afghan legion, as I call it in the book. They've got

something they can work with. They've been well put together. They've been trained. They know how to handle things. And it's—they've done more uproar and more destruction and more devastation and totally collapsed societies and Governments all through the region. To Libya and to Syria and to Iraq. I mean, they're desperate to split Iraq into 3 pieces with the Kurdish north, the Sunni center, and then the Shiite south. So far they haven't been able to do it. It's like 11 years of war. (Right) Will it begin now with the attacks on the country again, I don't know. That's up in the air.

JON Well, the whole situation is extremely F-D up. (Laughter) I try not to curse on this show. But it's all our doing. If anybody thinks that bombing a region for 13 years would not create enemies (Laughs), they're really foolish to think that.

So, it essentially creates a perpetual war which the military industrial complex loves, and so forth.

MICHAEL Yeah, and they need us. We need to have the wars because we can restore order with our war and if we leave, things will get much worse. And I just throw up my hands and when I hear that and that's not possible.

JON (Laughs) I want to bring all the troops home from everywhere (mm-hmm), cut our military budget by 90 percent and make them only for defensive purposes. If somebody wants to invade our country, that's what our military's for, to defend against something like that. (Yeah) They shouldn't be used to make rich people richer, essentially. (Yeah)

What is the name of your book?

MICHAEL Time for Terror: The Arab Afghans.

JON Okay, and when will it be released?

MICHAEL I look to have it out by the end of the year. I've got my final draft. I've got people working at it, and I'll send it off for a final edit and then we'll get it marching. I hoped to have it open for the elections, but I think it going to be the end of the year before it's actually printed.

JON Well, good luck with the release of the book. And, again, thank you for your time today.

MICHAEL Thank you. I enjoyed the opportunity to speak, and it's an honor to be on your show.

JON Well, thanks a lot, Michael, and I hope to speak with you again.

MICHAEL Inshallah.

JON All right, have a good one.

MICHAEL Okay, bye, bye. Thank you.



Chapter/Episode 10 – Paul Church – October 27, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Paul Church (PAUL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show is going to focus on the possible involvement of foreign countries in the 9/11 attacks. It's going to focus on how far the U.S. Government has gone to cover-up the supposed involvement of our allies. If our allies were involved in the murder of 2,976 people, and if elements within our Government helped to cover-up that involvement, then that, in itself, is a crime, and people need to be held accountable for it – period. It also raises many questions about those relationships with regard to 9/11 that need to be answered in a credible fashion.

Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Paul. Hi, Paul, how are you tonight?

PAUL I'm okay. I'm very well, thank you. How are you, Jon?

JON I'm doing well myself. I'm actually in a little bit of pain, nerve pain, but I'm going to bear through it and get through this interview which I'm very much looking forward to.

PAUL Okay, let's do it.

JON I'm going to read your bio.

Paul Church is an independent journalist reporting mainly on geopolitics, warfare and counter-terrorism. He has written for *Asia Times Online*, and collaborated with documentary filmmaker Ray Nowosielski for the latest in a series of articles resulting from Ray's *Who Is Richard Blee?* podcast investigation. That piece was published at *Truthout*.

Paul's work for *Asia Times Online* has been cited in the peer-reviewed Japan Focus. He is currently researching a book on the political exploitation of mass casualty events from the Cold War to the present.

In 2012, he wrote an article for *Asia Times Online* called "Was Saudi Arabia Involved?"

Now, this discussion is going to talk about a few countries, but Paul's specialty is Saudi Arabia, so that will probably be the main focus.

My first question to you, Paul: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

PAUL Well, surreal, I guess is the short answer. In all honesty, I don't think I really—I didn't really feel real on the day. It was I guess, for many people, a bad dream or something. I was working at the time for a company which administered sale orders for materials for large—these were commercial construction projects—so we were in touch with suppliers all over Europe, I think, four or five different countries. And you can probably imagine these are factories or warehouses, the radios are switched on all day. Our friends are always busy, so we pretty much got the blow-by-blow, minute-by-minute account of what was unfolding in America. People would just phone up saying, "Hey, have you heard what's happened now?" And, so it was surreal.

It wasn't really until the next day, I was on a bus at work and someone had left a newspaper on the seat and the cover was a photo of the New York skyline, completely filled with smoke and the headline was

"Apocalypse." (Right) And I was staring at the image, I think, when I realized that something, not just tragic, not just a huge tragedy, but something world changing had happened and things weren't really going to be the same. Because they weren't.

JON No, they were not. When was the first time you questioned what we were told about 9/11? And what exactly did you question?

PAUL To be honest, Jon, for many years I didn't really deeply question anything we were told about 9/11, and like many, I'd seen Michael Moore's documentary *Fahrenheit 9/11*, and so I knew there were some lingering questions about the Bush administration's relationship with the Saudis. And that was coming on as anyone paying attention knew about that. So for many years that seemed, to me, to be a peripheral issue not something central to understanding what happened in 2001, which is a now a thing.

I don't think I really started to look deeply into that connection until about maybe 2007. I stumbled over an article and the article was quoting an interview with a gentleman called Prince Bandar bin Sultan, who we'll talk more about. He was the Saudi Ambassador based in Washington. A very powerful man with some very powerful connections. And he gave an interview to an Arabic news network and in that interview Prince Bandar says that Saudi intelligence had been following the 9/11 hijackers "with precision" and therefore if authorities in the U.S. had, perhaps, engaged more with their Saudi counterparts (laughs) that that attack, perhaps, could have been avoided. (Right)

Now, all of that could have been bluster. It could have just been hyperbole, but it struck me at the time, if just for the sake of argument, we would take Bandar's claim seriously. This failure to properly look into the Saudi connection, investigate Saudi's role after 9/11 would be kind of shocking, because it would seem unlikely, really, that Prince Bandar could somehow fail to mention such a looming threat, national security threat, to his very good friend the President of the United States.

JON Well, if that—

PAUL So—

JON I'm sorry, if that was your first foray into 9/11 and to questioning 9/11, then the first thing you should ask yourself is well, why didn't Bandar share this information with us? Is that pretty much the response you got? Or—

PAUL Yeah, and that was when I started to research that Saudi angle, I guess, and look into it in more depth. Like I say, we don't know if Prince Bandar is telling the truth. It could just have been bluster, hyperbole, whatever you want to call it. But, certainly strange if he did have this information and was following it as closely as he says that he was. Then it would seem odd, wouldn't it, that he hadn't told someone about this, especially given his connections inside the Bush administration. And very good friends with President Bush (Well--) and his wife, Bandar's wife Princess Haifa, once called the Bush family, she said they were like her mother and father. So, we're not talking about—we're talking about deep, personal relationships here.

JON Right, and another question would be well, did he in fact share information with the Bush administration if he had –

PAUL Which, of course, we don't know.

JON We don't know, and it's just speculative.

Now, before we continue, I want to say for the record that I do not want to start anymore wars with any countries. I'm fairly sure Paul agrees with me that individuals and systems needs to held accountable and changed and not entire religions, nationalities, ideologies and so on and so forth. I just wanted to make that clear as we continue.

PAUL I mean, I'd have to agree with that, Jon.

JON Now, the 9/11 report says: "We have found no evidence that the Saudi Government as an institution or senior Saudi officials individually funded the organization." And the organization they were talking about is Al-Qaeda. What is your response to that?

PAUL I think we have to go back quite a long way, and perhaps get some context, and we don't really have time to go into the geo-politics here, and (No, as a--) it's a lot of ground to cover, but (Before you--) Saudi Arabia's role in acting as sort of proxy for U.S. interests in the Middle East goes back a long way. It goes back at least to the Soviet war in Afghanistan. It's no

secret anymore that Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, and other countries, were instrumental in funneling U.S. arms to the so-called, the freedom fighters, as I recall then. Who helped defeat Russia in that war very effectively and structurally so far as it went. The Soviet Union collapsed, largely because of the cost of that war.

But the United States via these client regimes was sponsoring training, providing operational support, to the Mujahideen in Afghanistan using funds supplied by CIA, and it's no secret anymore that those policies to some degree are still debated. And it's got to have enabled and contributed to the rise of al-Qaeda and whatever you view on that topic what seems clear at this point is without that set of alliances, geo-political alliances, Cold War alliances, led by the United States, al-Qaeda would almost certainly never have had, or never developed the capability to pose any serious threat to the west, and Saudi Arabia's continued to play that proxy role up to the present day. Of course, insurgents in Iraq. Rebels in Syria. Sundry and various groups who today seemed to have merged to form the Islamic State, or ISIS.

JON (Laughs) well, there you're getting into another topic, but—

PAUL True, but—

JON Let me just be clear for people, the system that he is referring to that supported the Mujahideen during the Afghanistan/Russia war was the Saudis provided funding, they gave it to the ISI, the CIA worked with both —

PAUL The ISI, by the way, is Pakistani intelligence agency (Right), for those who don't know.

JON The Pakistani intelligence agency is the Pakistani ISI. The Saudi intelligence agency is the GID, and of course, America's is the CIA. But, there's an entry at HistoryCommons.org and it's called "1973 to 2002 Saudi Billions Lay Groundwork for Radical Militancy." So, if you want to really look at the history of how Saudi Arabia, or elements within Saudi Arabia, essentially, helped to create groups like Al-Qaeda, I recommend to go read that entry.

Now, the 9/11 Report said that, as I said, there was no evidence that the Saudi Government or institutions or senior Saudi officials individually

funded the organization or al-Qaeda, there was something in 2010, there was a Wikileaks leak that said that Saudi Arabia was still the chief financiers of Al-Qaeda. And, I think that was something that had to do with Hillary Clinton, actually, where she's the one who said that.

So, there's so much information out there that shows that people in Saudi Arabia helped to fund Al-Qaeda.

Now, from a recent article written by Lawrence Wright (Right). He writes:

"According to Philip Zelikow, what they found does not substantiate the arguments made by the Joint Inquiry and by the 9/11 families in the lawsuit against the Saudis. He characterized the twenty-eight pages as 'an agglomeration of preliminary, unvetted reports' concerning Saudi involvement. 'They were wild accusations that needed to be checked out,' he said."

That was Philip Zelikow, the executive director of the 9/11 Commission. Now, basically, what's going on is there are two different investigations. (Right) There was the Joint Congressional Inquiry, which was the first inquiry into 9/11 and there were 28 redacted pages—actually, they were completely removed from the report because of the Bush administration, and the families have been trying to get those 28 redacted pages released. So, Lawrence Wright wrote an article and Philip Zelikow said what he did. What is your response to him?

PAUL Well, yeah, there are two, I mean, just to clarify with your readers that they are two, maybe there are three investigations of note into 9/11, this and the 9/11 Commission Report, which is the most widely known and it's the one that got most of the press attention. There was also a CIA Inspector General report, which came out, I think, in 2005. We won't go into that today, but most importantly for this discussion is that 2002 Joint Congressional Inquiry, the full title of which is The Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001, which rolls off the tongue nicely.

And this was a major investigation. The co-chair—one of the co-chairs was a gentleman called Bob Graham. Bob Graham has been campaigning for years to have this portion of the report released.

Now, you talk about the 9/11 Commission Report—this was material that was discussed, and you mentioned Philip Zelikow as well. We've got reason to believe that Zelikow, in particular, was hardly an impartial, an objective investigator. Indeed, he was very close friends with the National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, who you would think would be one of the people that he should be investigating.

JON Well, there were many problems with Philip Zelikow, and as we talked—

PAUL He even wrote a book with Condoleezza Rice—

JON Well, he also belonged to an organization called the Aspen Strategy Group (Right), which Prince Bandar actually belonged to. So, talk about a conflict of interest.

Now, with regard to Philip Zelikow, as I said, there were two investigations. You said there were three. There were more than that, actually. (Yeah). There were two investigations, the 9/11 Report was sold to the world as the definitive account of 9/11, and they are the ones who let Saudi Arabia off the hook. So, they say what's in the 28 redacted pages is not correct.

And do you want to tell us some of the things that Philip Zelikow did to hinder investigations into Saudi Arabia's role?

PAUL Sure. There were commissioners who wanted these, shall we say, leads investigated, and they compiled a list of questions for the investigating team of Mike Jacobson and Dana Lesemann, and they compiled a list of interviews that they thought should be done to fully investigate leads that related to two of the 9/11 hijackers. This was Khalid Almihtar and Nawaf Alhazmi and how they may have been linked to elements of the Saudi Government. And that list of interviews was submitted to Zelikow, the executive director of the 9/11 Commission for approval and he didn't want to do the interviews. (Well, he--) And, ultimately, what material did find its way—what treatment did find its way into the 9/11 Report and draft versions of that report, it was Zelikow who removed that material, so—

(Well--) It really doesn't seem credible to suggest that that's an objective treatment of that material, especially in light of what's now a growing movement to have those 28 pages declassified, and especially in light of comments made as well by people who've read it. For example, Congressman Thomas Massie has described the experiences as disturbing,

He said he had to stop every two or three pages to "rearrange my perception of history." It's not fundamental.

So, it seems that people who have actually seen this material disagree with Zelikow and with the 9/11 Commission's treatment of that material.

JON Well, you talked about the interview requests and he, essentially, he stopped half of the interview requests. Dana Lesemann, who you mentioned, was one of the Saudi investigators. She wanted access to the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry (Right) and Zelikow was giving her a hard time with it, so she went through a back channel to get access to those 28 redacted pages, because Zelikow was not giving her access to them. And, as a result, Zelikow fired her.

PAUL Fired her, correct.

JON Now, also—

PAUL For mishandling classified information, I believe. Is that correct?

JON Right, and I believe Dana Lesemann, and the other individual who was a Saudi investigator—I don't remember his name—were actually from the Joint Congressional Inquiry. I think they actually helped to author these (That's correct) 28 redacted pages.

Now, one of the things that Zelikow did with Dietrich Snell was take part in a "late night" editing session to remove from the 9/11 Report anything having to do with Saudi Arabia support for the hijackers. And what they did was move the information to the back of the book in a footnote.

Now, some of the people involved in the Saudi 9/11 plot—or Saudi 9/11 connection—people like Omar al-Bayoumi. They were interviewed by Philip Zelikow and Dietrich Snell. These are two individuals that, you know, I do not trust at all. And, so, any of their reporting on the subject is in doubt, as far as I'm concerned.

PAUL I know, I'd have to agree. It's very clear that the 9/11 Commission was politically compromised. The Commissioners themselves are on record with some doubts about Zelikow's conflicts of interest and wondering even—I know the word "mole" was even used to describe his relationships with the Bush administration and that people felt that he was, I say, a mole on the inside reporting back. There are records of various phone calls that went

back and forth between Zelikow and Karl Rove (Right) that we know about, which is suspect. And it really doesn't seem as though there was any intentions to fully investigate these sorts of leads and connections and relationships. The aim was to suppress and minimize them.

JON Well, let's go through the history a little bit of the Bush administration, you know, doing its best to block, or to keep those 28 pages redacted. During the Joint Congressional Inquiry someone by the name of Abdussattar Shaikh who was the landlord of two of the hijackers, who also happened to be an FBI informant, was not allowed to testify before the Joint Congressional Inquiry. Now, I understand that he did speak with the 9/11 Commission. His memorandum for the record, I think, is available somewhere online.

Now, also the, as I said, the families have been fighting for years to get those 28 redacted pages released. And the reason they want them released is so that they can be used in a court room—in a court of law—against Saudi Arabia.

Now, at the end of—I'm sorry, are you typing?

PAUL I was just looking up—you talked about Abdussattar Shaikh—

JON Okay (laughs)

PAUL --the FBI agent who—I want to spell his name.

JON I'm sorry, I could hear the typing as you were going. That's okay. I forget what I was—

PAUL Yeah, Steven Butler—

JON Yeah, Steven Butler. He said that if he had been given the information from the CIA, which is another topic entirely, he could have done something to prevent the attacks. (Correct)

Now, another thing that Bush did was make it difficult for the 9/11 families to sue Saudi Arabia for their connection to Al-Qaeda and/or 9/11 and that practice lasted all the way through to the Obama administration. This is an interesting story.

When Obama first came into office, one of the first things he did was he actually set up a meeting with 9/11 Family Members, and the topic of the meeting was to discuss closing GITMO. And one of the 9/11 Family Members that was at this meeting, Kristen Breitweiser, who is one of the Jersey Girls, the four widows responsible for the creation of the 9/11 Commission—she asked Obama to his face to release the 28 redacted pages (Right), and he said he would and never got back to her.

PAUL And he's never done it.

JON But after that meeting with the 9/11 Family Members, he used that meeting as a great reminder as to why—he used it for the justification of sending troops into Afghanistan. (Right) He used that meeting.

And then, six months later, I think he had Elena Kagan who was Solicitor General at the time, argue to block the families trying to get to the Supreme Court to get them to hear their case to make a decision because the lower courts were saying you can't sue Saudi Arabia. And Obama's administration sided with the Saudis over the 9/11 Family Members.

PAUL All correct, yeah.

JON And, now, finally, in December of 2013, a lower court decided that the families can sue some of the Saudis. They can't sue specific Saudis, I believe, like the Bin Laden family, if I remember correctly. And, at the time, the *New York Post* actually released an article from Paul Sperry called "Inside the Saudi 9/11 Cover-up."

And I'm going to quote from this article specifically, and people have to understand that this stuff has been known about for years, and has been heavily promoted by people like Paul Thompson, Larisa Alexandrovna, James Dorman, myself and many others over the years.

PAUL Don't forget Bob Graham.

JON And Bob Graham.

PAUL And surely someone in the best position to know.

JON Right, exactly.

PAUL He's been banging on about that issue for—

JON He wrote a book about it—*Intelligence Matters*—and he also wrote a fictional novel to try and tell—

PAUL And significantly, yes, because he, in his own words, is still bound by the strictures of classifications. He's very limited in what he can say. (Right, but--) The fictional book is significant because in that book it's not just individual Saudis. This is something orchestrated from the top. There's a terrorist attack and it's directed from the top from the highest levels of the Saudi Government. You can't help but wonder if maybe he's trying to tell us something.

JON (Laughs) Well, the following from the article will mention an act of war, but in my mind, you can't point fingers at Saudi Arabia without having five fingers pointing back to the U.S. We protected the knowledge of Saudi Arabia being connected to terrorism for years. (It's true) Long before 9/11 and long after 9/11. If you look at what Robert Wright, FBI agent Robert Wright, had to say about what was called Vulgar Betrayal, you'll see that before 9/11 we protected Saudi Arabia. We recently sold them \$63 billion dollars in weapons. I could go on and on.

 So, with that being said, I'd like to read the following from that article.

PAUL Okay. I should really be interviewing you, Jon. (Laughter)

JON I'm sorry, Paul.

PAUL No, you carry on. This is good stuff.

JON I just wanted to get what might be the best information out there about this subject. (Yeah, go ahead) So, I got some quotes.

"The Saudis deny any role in 9/11, but the CIA in one memo reportedly found 'incontrovertible evidence' that Saudi Government officials — not just wealthy Saudi hardliners, but high-level diplomats and intelligence officers employed by the kingdom — helped the hijackers both financially and logistically. The intelligence files cited in the report directly implicate the Saudi embassy in Washington and consulate in

Los Angeles in the attacks, making 9/11 not just an act of terrorism, but an act of war."

And I already commented on that.

"The findings, if confirmed, would back up open-source reporting showing the hijackers had, at a minimum, ties to several Saudi officials and agents while they were preparing for their attacks inside the United States. (Correct) In fact, they get help from Saudi VIPs from coast to coast."

Now, for Los Angeles it says:

"The Saudi consulate official Fahad al-Thumairy allegedly arranged for an advance team to receive two of the Saudi hijackers — Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi — as they arrived at LAX in 2000. One of the advance men, Omar al-Bayoumi, a suspected Saudi intelligence agent, left the LA consulate and met the hijackers at a local restaurant. (Bayoumi left the United States two months before the attacks, while Thumairy was deported back to Saudi Arabia after 9/11)

It says in San Diego:

"Bayoumi and another suspected Saudi agent, Osama Bassnan, set up essentially a forward operating base in San Diego for the hijackers after leaving LA. They were provided rooms, rent and phones, as well as private meetings with an American al Qaeda cleric who would later become notorious as the Anwar al-Awlaki—

Who we just found out I think recently was an informant (For the FBI), for the FBI.

PAUL Well, they kept channels open to them. Despite his terrorist designation.

JON Exactly. He had lunch at the Pentagon, or something to that effect.

PAUL Yeah, this is something—I think Anthony Shaffer mentioned something about that somewhere. Certainly, some strange connections there. Again, it all needs looking into. It doesn't seem tying together.

JON The last part ties into the next question. It says:

"WASHINGTON: Then-Saudi Ambassador Prince Bandar and his wife sent checks totaling some \$130,000 to Bassnan while he was handling the hijackers. Though the Bandars claim the checks were 'welfare' for Bassnan's supposedly ill wife, the money nonetheless made its way into the hijackers' hands.

Other al Qaeda funding was traced back to Bandar and his embassy — so much so that by 2004 Riggs Bank of Washington had dropped the Saudis as a client.

The next year, as a number of embassy employees popped up in terror probes, Riyadh recalled Bandar.

'Our investigations contributed to the ambassador's departure,' an investigator who worked with the Joint Terrorism Task Force in Washington told me, though Bandar says he left for 'personal reasons.' "

So, that's from the *New York Post* and that basically explains most of the connections that we're aware of.

PAUL It does seem that that's the material. (You know, now--) The indications are that is what's covered in the 28 pages. I mean, you mentioned the two suspected Saudi Government operatives, and these were men who were receiving money. Actually, the money went between Bandar's wife, Haifa, it came from her account. And the wife of Osama Bassnan who's believed to be a Saudi Government operative by various people drawing this conclusion—investigators into those events, and she signed the checks over again to the wife of Omar al-Bayoumi who himself was alleged to been covertly working for the Kingdom.

So, these were particularly disturbing connections. The money doesn't just go to the Saudi Embassy or Consulate. It goes right up to Bandar and his wife. (Right) And, of course, they publicly denied that they have any links

to terrorism and there is this cover story about a sick wife that doesn't really hold up. That there was a large payment, one of the first payments, I think, which goes back to 1998, that was supposedly in response to a letter.

That's fine. That's all very well, but that doesn't explain the monthly stipend of \$2,000, \$3,500 every month. And that's a wage. That's not welfare. (Laughs) And—that's a lot of money.

JON

Well, let's talk a little bit more about Bandar, because he's an important figure in this whole story.

As many people know, Bandar was very friendly with the Bush administration, with the Bush family. As he already mentioned, Princess Haifa referred to them as mother and father, the Bush seniors. And he also had connections to George Tenet.

Now, the report that I had just read from the *New York Post* cites a CIA memo, but let's get it on the record that the CIA seemingly protected two of those hijackers, the two that were associated with Saudi Arabia. So they have a lot to answer for themselves. (Right)

Now, George Tenet, this is from James Risen. It says that:

"George Tenet, appointed as CIA director in 1997, develops close personal relationships with top Saudi officials, especially Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambassador to the U.S. Tenet develops a habit of meeting with Bandar at his home near Washington about once a month. But CIA officers handling Saudi issues complain that Tenet doesn't tell them what he discusses with Bandar. Often they are only able to learn about Tenet's deals with the Saudis later and through Saudi contacts, not from their own boss. Tenet also makes one of his closest aides the chief of the CIA station in Saudi Arabia. This aide often communicates directly with Tenet, avoiding the usual chain of command. Apparently as a favor to the Saudis, CIA analysts are discouraged from writing reports raising questions about the Saudi relationship to Islamic extremists."

That's from James Risen.

Now, do you remember when Bush and Cheney testified behind closed doors, not under oath, with each other, with no transcripts allowed?

PAUL And this was raised with Bush, I believe, and he dodged the question, correct?

JON Well, I'm going to read directly from Phil Shenon. (Okay) It's just so much better than us saying it.

"(John) Lehman was struck by the determination of the Bush White House to try to hide any evidence of the relationship between the Saudis and Al-Qaeda." Lehman will say: "They were refusing to declassify anything having to do with Saudi Arabia. Anything having to do with the Saudis, for some reason, it had this very special sensitivity."

Now, as I said, when Bush and Cheney testified, it says:

"Some of the toughest questions are asked by Republican John Lehman, who focuses on money allegedly passed by an acquaintance of the Saudi ambassador's wife to two of the hijackers. Lehman will say that Bush "dodged the questions."

Now (laughs), I don't know what world everybody lives in, but to me, this individual, Bush, should be brought forward to testify publicly and under oath about this and about a number of other things. This is the President of the United States who has a special relationship with somebody who is connected to money of two of the hijackers. That just—

PAUL Oh, yeah, also with long-standing work for the CIA by his own admission. (Yeah) The accounts that some of this money was moving through, you've mentioned Rigg's Bank already. There's a long-standing relationship there with the Central Intelligence Agency, in particular with covert operations, and Bandar himself has admitted this. During the 80's for example, he helped fund the anti-communist Nicaragua and Contra. And this was run out of the White House, and this was part of the Iran/Contra affair as you already know. And also, again, we mentioned earlier, the Afghan rebel's fighting the Soviet Union.

This is all—all of these connections are worrying, because you know, you've got this guy with very close links to the Bush administration, to the

intelligence community, a long-standing role as being a sort of hidden hand, and running black operations and dirty operations in more than one country, and here he is handing money to the wives of many who associate with 2 of the 9/11 hijackers.

JON Mmm-hmm, and as you already mentioned with this whole thing in Syria, it was Bandar who started this operation of sending in—arming, training, funding rebels to send into Syria to help take out Assad. (Correct) And, so there's proof right there that Bandar, as you said, is very well acquainted with how the terrorist system works.

So, one of the things that the Bush administration did was try to bring in Henry Kissinger to be the commissioner (laughs) of the 9/11 Commission. And, can you tell me the story of what happened?

PAUL Yeah, well, it was fairly quickly picked up on and I know that you've, you're—well, I think it would be fair to say, friends with many of the 9/11 families and the Jersey Girls, and essentially campaigned for the 9/11 Commission in the first place and what was quickly noted was that Kissinger himself had some quite unusual business connections. And, I guess you could tell me who it was who actually addressed that directly?

JON Well, basically what happened, the families asked Henry Kissinger to have a meeting and he agreed and they did it in New York City, and I believe, Kristen Breitweiser did some research on Henry Kissinger and during the meeting Lorie Van Auken asked him some very poignant questions: "Do you have any clients by the name of Bin Laden?" And so forth. And he about fell out of his chair, according to them, and the next day resigned as 9/11 Commissioner.

Now, when Bush first came into office, one of the very first things that he did was tell agencies to "back off" of the Saudis and the Bin Ladens. This was pretty much standing policy. (Yeah) Under Clinton it was supposedly slow-go, but under Bush it was apparently no-go, at all. (Mm-hmm)

(Snickers) Could that be seen as help? For what happened?

PAUL Well, Jon, I don't—I think we've had this discussion in the past and I, personally, don't believe it's wise to stray too far into the realms of speculation. What the bottom line is we don't know what the Bush administration knew, what it didn't, and we never will. Unless we have a

fully independent investigation into those events, then we're not going to get to the bottom of that. It's certainly clear that an awful lot of intelligence, more than we knew when any of these investigations were ongoing, that—for example, 9/11 Commissioners were barred from seeing the Presidential daily briefs. (Exactly) Yeah, and we now know because reporters from *The New York Times*, for example, have seen some of those PDBs, the ones we haven't seen and everyone's heard of the most famous one when Bin Laden is determined to strike the U.S. the August 6th PDB, but there are far worse, apparently, that came before that and were also completely ignored. It does all seem worthy of further investigation.

JON Well, one of the things Paul Thompson used to point out is that the two countries who seemingly knew the most about the 9/11 attacks, Saudi Arabia—

PAUL Our closest allies.

JON Yeah, well, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were the two countries that didn't bother to send us any warnings. Now, it wasn't until very recently, you know, within the last couple of years, I think—Anthony Summers wrote an article about Saudi Arabia and it talked about a warning that was sent from Saudi Arabia to the United States, and that was the first time I'd ever heard of a warning from Saudi Arabia to the United States.

PAUL I never heard of that one.

JON Yeah, now I don't know how true that is. And I just heard another time. I forget where, but Turki bin al-Faisal, who was the intelligence director (Right), supposedly sent the Bush White House a warning in the weeks before 9/11, and I forget where I just saw that. It was in a news report. But this is the first I'm hearing of warnings coming from Saudi Arabia.

PAUL Right, and as it's now well documented, the warnings were flooding in from all around the world.

JON Oh, absolutely, and you know—

PAUL From Germany, from Israel, from you know, multiple different countries were sounding the alarm and nobody listened.

JON Well, from what we understand, nobody listened and nobody did anything, except there were people within the Bush administration, the Neocons, who were telling Bush that all of the warnings they were getting about Bin Laden was, in fact, disinformation (Right) and that the real threat was Iraq.

Now, with regard to covering up for Saudi Arabia, that in and of itself is a crime—as far as I'm concerned. I think they would call it obstruction of justice or accessory after the fact. These are real crimes that need to be investigated, that need to be looked into.

PAUL I agree, Jon. And the protection of Saudi Arabia is baffling. I mean, you can look at it as merely preserving diplomatic relations, but the fact remains that, as you said yourself, our closest allies seemed to be the ones who were most deeply involved in funding al-Qaida and funding extremist groups around the world. If we're really having a war on terror, it's these countries we should be reigning in and taking a look at. (Right) How can they be our allies in a war when they're supporting the enemy?

JON Well, the 9/11 Report said that the source of the funding for the attacks was "of little practical significance."

PAUL Hmmmmmm.

[Snearing laughter]

JON You know, any investigation, the first thing you do is follow the money supposedly. I'm not a cop, but that's what I hear.

Now, are you aware of the allegations concerning the Pakistani ISI's, alleged connection to 9/11?

PAUL Yeah, I mean, this focus on a wire transfer, which supposedly was to one of the lead hijackers, Mohamed Atta, correct?

JON Yes.

PAUL Yeah, and I think the 9/11 families did raise this question to the 9/11 Commission and the FBI's counter-terrorist division, a guy called John S. Pistole—I'm not sure how to pronounce that. He's on record saying that the agency traced the origin of funding of 9/11 back to financial accounts in Pakistan, I'm quoting here, high-ranking and well known Al-Qaeda

operatives played a major role in moving money forward eventually into the hands of the hijackers located in the U.S.

So, yeah, those connections are there as well. I've mainly looked at the Saudi Arabia role. That's what's interested me the most. There's a very good article, actually, which people might want to read called the—it's by Paul Thompson, actually. You mentioned him. It's called "The Many Faces of Saeed Sheikh." (Right) And, I think, that's up on HistoryCommons? Is it still there?

JON Yeah, I think it's still there. (Yeah)

I have a quote, from HistoryCommons, about Pakistan, and it's:

"An unnamed senior staff member" on the 9/11 Commission tells the *Los Angeles Times* that, before 9/11, Pakistani officials were 'up to their eyeballs' in collaboration with the Taliban and al-Qaeda. As an example, this source says of bin Laden moving to Afghanistan in 1996, 'He wouldn't go back there without Pakistan's approval and support, and had to comply with their rules and regulations.' From 'day one,' the ISI helped al-Qaeda set up an infrastructure, and jointly operated training camps. The article further notes that what the commission will publicly say on this is just the 'tip of the iceberg' of the material they've been given on the matter. In fact, the commission's final report released a month later will barely mention the [Pakistani] ISI at all."

Now, I am intimately familiar with this subject (laughs). It's something I spent a lot of time—

PAUL That's very clear Jon, yes.

JON It's something I spent a lot of time looking into. And, basically, what happened, the *Times of India* broke a story that said the then head of the ISI, Pakistani Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed ordered Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to wire transfer \$100,000 to Mohamed Atta. That story was corroborated. Everybody always points to the *Times of India* as being the only source on that, but *Agence France-Presse* also verified this report. And a little bit after this reporting happened, apparently Musharraf forced Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed to step down.

Now, there are reports that say that came from U.S. pressure, and there are reports that say it's just something Musharraf felt like doing, essentially (Mmm-hmm), is what it says. But, Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed was greatly responsible for the coup that got Musharraf into power. So I don't think it was an easy decision for Musharraf to get rid of Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed. And, there's information that suggests Mahmud Ahmed and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh took part in a different terrorist attack together. That's on HistoryCommons. There was a report that said Pakistan paid lobbyists to lobby the 9/11 Commission to make—to make the 9/11 Report more favorable of Pakistan—which it was. The 9/11 Report was certainly favorable of Pakistan.

Then, basically, the FBI first reported Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh as being the paymaster of 9/11. There were two reports from CNN talking about FBI sources, and so forth. And then, his name started to go away. He was involved in the murder supposedly of Daniel Pearl and then his name got back into the news. Director Mueller flew to India to talk with investigators. And they told him about Saeed Sheikh's role in 9/11. And, apparently, the FBI did speak with Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and he was afraid for his safety and his family's safety to talk about his connections to the ISI.

Now, there were the families—you said the families put forward a question having to do with the wire transfer? I believe you said that?

PAUL Yes.

JON They—that was one time the 9/11 Commission was given a question concerning this matter.

Another time Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed's name came up for the 9/11 Commission was when Sibel Edmonds testified. If you look at the *Sunday Times* article that was written about Sibel, the one article that was supposed to be four but because of pressure the series was cancelled? They talk about Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed's connections to the nuclear black market. So, if Sibel testified about Mahmud Ahmed and the families put forward a question about Mahmud Ahmed, that's two times the 9/11 Commission was told about Mahmud Ahmed and we don't hear a word about it in the 9/11 Report.

It's amazing to me. I haven't heard from a single individual in Government explain to us why those allegations are incorrect. George Tenet supposedly met with Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed in the months before 9/11. Mahmud Ahmed met with Porter Goss, Bob Graham, Jon Kyl in the weeks before 9/11. He met with them on the day of 9/11. He was in Washington D.C. during the week of 9/11 meeting with different Pentagon officials, White House officials, and so on and so forth. And, Pakistan's involvement, I can tell you, is not in the 28 redacted pages. And I know this because someone—I'm not really friends with anymore—but Jeffrey Hill spoke with Bob Graham and he asked him about the allegations—

PAUL Jeff Hill's the guy who interviews everybody, right? And puts it on the internet and things like that.

JON Yeah, he interviewed Bob Graham, and Bob Graham said that those claims were unsubstantiated. He said that's what he heard. And the 9/11 Commission released an MFR—a memorandum for the record—that said that the Pakistani ISI did not wire transfer \$100,000—or did not wire transfer money—to Mohamed Atta. But before and after, it's incredibly redacted. Just like many of the MFR's that came from the 9/11 Commission.

So, again, we have no explanation as to why these allegations are untrue. And there's more reason to believe that they are true than not. There was a guy, I believe, sadly, was tortured once, and he actually mentioned Omar Sheikh as wire transferring \$100,000 to Mohamed Atta during this time that he was tortured. And I don't remember his name. It's on HistoryCommons.org.

So, there's Saudi involvement—or evidence of Saudi involvement. There's evidence or indications of Pakistani ISI involvement. The two things that were essential during the Afghanistan-Russia War, and that were used throughout the 90s, I think. You know—

PAUL Yeah, it's almost as if—almost as if you could write a whole other report just focusing on the allegations and the connections, financial relationships that we've talked about in this interview—well, mostly you talked about, as it happens. And, that would probably be a fuller account of what happened in the lead up to 9/11—what went wrong and how those events were allowed to take place than the entire rest of the report put together, I think.

And, these seem to be where the investigation should have been looking, and for whatever reasons—political, geo-political, diplomatic—these issues were just buried.

JON Well, I thought of an interesting scenario—

PAUL Relegated to footnotes, you know? Or removed completely.

JON Or removed completely, exactly.

An interesting scenario that I thought of is, imagine the families finally get this into the court rooms against Saudi Arabia. They finally manage to get the 28 redacted pages released and they try to use that as evidence against Saudi Arabia. And then Saudi Arabia, as a counter to that, could bring the 9/11 Report and say, look, the 9/11 Report said that we were cleared. And then can you imagine them bringing in Philip Zelikow, the person responsible for making sure the 9/11 Report didn't mention Saudi involvement?

PAUL Sure, and of course Bandar himself is to capitalize on the 9/11 Report and then issue press statements to the effect that Saudi Arabia, claims against Saudi Arabia had been debunked and that had been vindicated by that report and his treatment of (Exactly) And dismissed these allegations.

JON Exactly. When the 9/11 Report came out, they practically celebrated. Now, are you aware of the questions, some of the questions concerning Israel and 9/11?

PAUL Yeah, vaguely. I mean, this is something that hasn't really interested me. I'm aware that there's been various claims that have surfaced about Israeli art students that were operating in America and the possibility that they might have been part of the spy ring, and it's never really convinced me. We've had a discussion about this before. I think I pointed you to 9/11 Myths, the website.

I'm not convinced that Israel—I'm not certain I've seen myself any credible evidence that Israel was involved in any way. (Right) And, it's suffered really that there's so much out there that points that way on the conspiracy theory websites, shall we say. Israel does enough that's awful, and does enough that's terrible without us having to invent stuff, you know? And, I

think, there's a lot of that going around. Mossad is behind everything. I don't think...

JON Oh, absolutely there's definitely the mentality in the world that Israel is responsible for all of the world's ails, or you know, if you want to go to the extreme, the Jews are responsible for owning the media, owning Hollywood, owning all of Congress—it's ridiculous because there are defense—

PAUL It's crazy, is what it is.

JON There are defense contractors out there. There's oil contractors out there, who all might have a say as to who has the most control in Congress, but—(laughs).

PAUL Yeah—

JON Anyway, I did want to bring up a question that the 9/11 Family Members put forward to the 9/11 Commission about these five Israelis who are arrested on the day of 9/11, and the question that they put forward says:

"Please describe exactly what was recorded on the video of the World Trade Center that was filmed by the Israelis in New Jersey who were later picked up for questioning? Where is the video now?"

And that was their question. And if you read the police reports, or the FBI reports, no video camera was actually recovered. There were only cameras that were recovered. And the photos that they had showed pictures of the burning World Trade Center. It actually showed one of them smiling, I believe.

And, basically, what happened was there were individuals who were documenting the event of 9/11 with their cameras and they worked for a company called Urban Moving Systems. And this woman, Maria, called in because they were apparently celebrating and she thought that it was odd. So, she called it in and later in the day they were arrested (Yeah). And they were held for a couple of months by the United States and then they were eventually let go.

And one of the things that they said was that they were there to "document the event" and a lot of people—you know, and I think I might have done this myself—have taken that statement that they were there to document the event as if Israel knew exactly what was going to happen; knew exactly when it was going to happen; where it was going to happen and they sent these guys to go document the event. But, I think, what it might mean is, like a lot of other people there that day—

PAUL They had camera phones—(laughs)

JON Yeah, you know, they were there to "document the event." And those four or five individuals actually tried to bring a lawsuit against the United States for the way that they were treated, but nothing ever came of that.

Now, also Israel—you mentioned the art students. And, supposedly, Israel sent us a couple of warnings—about four warnings. And some of—

PAUL That's significant that some of the starkest warnings came from Israel.

JON Well, but the thing is, they're denied on each occasion. Israel denies sending the warning or the U.S. denies receiving the warning. And, apparently, one of those warnings was based on information obtained from the Israeli art students indicating that there were spies in this country. But, again, they denied it. So, a lot of those warnings—I think one of them was not denied. But if you look at them, they were either denied by one side or the other.

Now, you mentioned to read 9/11Myths.com with regard to the Israeli art students. There was a report in 2010 on ABC 4 News called "Door-to-Door Spies in Utah County?" And as reported by Brent Hunsaker it says:

"Sales people working neighborhoods in northern Utah County had been asking some odd questions that have nothing to do with making the sale. Folks are reporting that they're asking about the new national security agency's data center that is being built at Camp Williams."

So, that's an indication that the Israeli art thing or the spying thing is still maybe going on in this country.

My question is why is it allowed to continue? Did it—were they around in the vicinity of any of the hijackers? Did they know about any of the

hijackers? Like Saudi Arabia said, they were following them with precision. I think there are some questions about that.

My biggest question about Israel actually has to do with the owner of Urban Moving Systems. The owner of the moving company that those five Israelis worked for that were arrested. He fled to Israel in the days following 9/11 and I think that's very suspect. I think he's somebody who should have been brought in for questioning.

[Pause]

Anyway—

PAUL Quite possibly, yeah.

JON I mean, there are some questions about Israel and 9/11 but in my opinion, I don't think Israel needed to be involved really, because if you think that elements within the Bush administration or other elements within the Government were involved, there's plenty of pro-Israel people in the Government that you really don't need Israel to do anything. [Snickers/laughs]

PAUL Yeah.

JON Do you know what I mean?

PAUL That's certainly true, Jon. I think we all should be with cautious pointing fingers at Israel.

JON Well, but not—

PAUL Because the evidence is really tenuous, and when you mentioned the art students, the timelines don't really work, and there's not really any evidence that they had any contact with the hijackers. It's all—

JON Speculation.

PAUL Inferential dot-connecting. It doesn't really convince me.

JON Right, I know there are a lot of people who take this information and say Israel did 9/11 and it just—as far as I could see, it's not there. There was

actually a court here in America that ruled Iran was responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Did you hear about that?

PAUL Yeah, I heard about that.

JON [Laughs] How ridiculous is that?

PAUL Hmmm—well, it goes to show, actually that if you really want to, you can find evidence to support more or less any fairy that you want.

JON Well, that's essentially—

PAUL It's important to keep that in mind when you're investigating these things.

JON That's essentially something that the U.S. Government did is they made up enemies or people that were involved with 9/11. It was the Taliban who were harboring Al-Qaeda. They were supposedly the enemy and we went in to take them out, and years later the Taliban is almost fully back in power as they almost were. (Yeah) We said Iraq had something to do with 9/11.

PAUL Zelikow, in fact, said that. [Laughter]

JON Yeah, Zelikow tried—in the 9/11 Report he had two individuals come in to testify. Somebody by the name of Abraham Sofer, who was supposedly the first public expert witness to testify and he just put forward pro-war points. And there was another individual by the name of Laurie Milroy who was brought in to testify who is essentially discredited in many people's eyes. And, Lorie Van Auken, one of the Jersey Girls, was furious with Philip Zelikow for bringing her in. She confronted him about this and said this is an investigation. This isn't an opportunity to sell the war. And she said a sly smile went across his face. I really would like Philip Zelikow—I mean, if you want to tug on a thread, Philip Zelikow is the thread that should be tugged on. Arrest the man. Put him on the stand. Let's ask him some questions. Because he was certainly a big participant in the cover-up of 9/11.

PAUL Sure. I have to agree. I do think Zelikow has got a lot to answer for. It's very clear from evidence and public record and opinions of commissioners and 9/11 Commission staffers. You mentioned Shenon's book earlier. There's a lot of information there about the conflicts of interest that Philip Zelikow had. We really didn't get the investigation which was hopeful. It

was very much politically compromised. As you mentioned, Zelikow was using it—or trying to use it—as a platform to propagandize for the Bush administration's war in Iraq. (Right) Of course it was long planned. This is not an objective investigation.

JON Which was a good indication as to who he was working for, essentially.

PAUL Exactly, yeah. Yeah. And these views of Zelikow don't come—it's important to understand that—they don't come from fringe publications or conspiracy theorists or kooks. They come from the people inside the investigation.

JON Right.

Now, there's an entry on—this is the last thing I want to talk about, and—there's an entry on HistoryCommons called "After September 11, 2001, High-Ranking State Department Official allegedly Arranges Release of Four 9/11 Suspects." It says:

"An unnamed high-ranking official at the State Department arranges the release of four foreign operatives that have been taken in for questioning by the FBI on suspicion that they knew about or somehow aided the 9/11 attacks, according to FBI translator Sibel Edmonds. Edmonds will later leave the FBI, becoming a whistleblower, and say she knows this based on telephone conversations she translated. Edmonds will say that the target of an FBI investigation into a nuclear smuggling ring calls the official, indicates names of people who have been taken into custody since 9/11, and says, 'We need to get them out of the US because we can't afford for them to spill the beans.' The official says he will 'take care of it,' and the four suspects on the list are released from interrogation and extradited. [*Sunday Times* (London), 1/6/2008]

The names of the four suspects are not known, but one of the lead 9/11 hijackers, Marwan Alshehhi, and the sister of an FBI investigation connected to nuclear sciences, so this could possibly be a reference to this person (see July 1999). The high-ranking State Department official who is not named in the *Sunday Times* article is said to be Marc Grossman by both Larisa Alexandrovna formerly of *Raw Story* and former CIA

officer Philip Giraldi, writing in the *American Conservative*.
[*Raw Story*, 1/20/2008; *American Conservative*, 1/28/2008]"

So, there's a country that we don't know about that may have had something to do with 9/11. I mean, we have to look in to the allegations. I don't even know what country it is.

PAUL Mmmmm—maybe it's my country [laughs].

JON Maybe. Maybe we're going to be invading you soon.

PAUL No one would expect that, would they?

[Laughter]

JON Well, actually, Musharraf, President Musharraf, wrote that Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh may have been MI6. (Correct) So there you go. We're going to invade your country.

PAUL Ummmmmm—

[Laughs]

JON Is there anything that you would like to promote?

PAUL I don't think so, Jon. What I would like to promote, actually, is a website. It's called 28pages.org I would urge anyone interested in some of the issues we discussed, to visit that web page and follow it on Facebook. They've got a Facebook page, as well. This is the bipartisan effort movement to declassify the 28 pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry that we mentioned earlier on. There's lots of material on there, which you know, if you want to explore the issues in more depth you can take a look. And I think everyone should get on board. It's long overdue. It's been promised by the President that these pages will be made public so that there can be some sort of debate about them and some sort of—

JON Accountability.

PAUL That's the word I'm looking for, yeah. So, I think everyone should definitely support that.

JON Yeah, the guy is a nice guy who runs that site. I forget his name. He's also—28pages.org is available on Facebook. He updates it regularly.

Well, Paul, I want to thank you very much for being on today. I hope you enjoyed the conversation.

PAUL Yeah, well, thank you for having me on, Jon. I think you managed to include in your questions most of the information which [laughs]—I think you covered more material than I have. But, thank you very much.

JON I apologize for that. It's just this is such an important issue. It's something that's been neglected by the "9/11 Truth Movement" a lot. And so, it's something that people need to know about.

So, I want to thank you very much for coming on today, and maybe we'll have you on again sometime.

PAUL Thank you, Jon. Thank you very much.

JON All right, thank you, Paul.

PAUL Take care.

JON Bye, bye.



Chapter/Episode 11 – Thomas Drake – November 12, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Thomas Drake (THOMAS)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show is going to focus on the NSA and 9/11. The 9/11 Commission barely investigated the NSA, even though its mandate was to give a "full and complete accounting" of 9/11. There is so much that we don't know regarding the NSA and 9/11 that we need to know.

Okay, this is Jon, and I'm here with Mr. Thomas Drake. Mr. Drake, how are you doing tonight?

THOMAS Doing all right.

JON Excellent. All right, I'm going to read his bio.

Thomas Drake is a former senior executive with the National Security Agency, a United States Air Force and Navy veteran, CIA intelligence analyst, computer software expert and whistleblower. While at NSA, he

blew the whistle on a multi-billion-dollar programmatic fraud, waste, and abuse; the critical loss and coverup of 9/11 intelligence; Government wrongdoing; and a dragnet electronic mass surveillance and data mining program conducted on a vast scale by the NSA (with the approval of the White House) after 9/11. Mr. Drake argued that this program violated and subverted the Constitution as well as individual sovereignty and privacy, while weakening national security and fundamentally eroding our civil liberties. In April, 2010, he was charged by the U.S. Department of Justice with a 10-felony count Espionage Act indictment facing 35 years in prison and declared an enemy of the state. All 10 original charges were dropped in July, 2011, after Mr. Drake pled to a single misdemeanor count of exceeding the authorized use of a Government computer with no fine or prison time. He is the 2011 recipient of the Ridenhour Truth Telling Prize, and with Jesselyn Radack the co-recipient of the 2011 Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence Award, and the 2012 Hugh M. Hefner 1st Amendment Award.

He was also a visiting professor of strategic leadership and information strategies at the National Defense University with the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Previous to NSA, he was a principal in a couple of dot coms. He has 12 years of industry experience in change leadership, senior management, organizational leadership and development, quality assurance, software and systems engineering (having analyzed over 150 million lines of code), learning strategies, acquisition and program management, operations and technology life-cycle integration as a contractor and consultant with both Government and commercial clients including Fortune 500 and Fortune 50 companies. He was at Booz | Allen | Hamilton as a management, strategy, and technology consultant and software quality engineer from 1991 to 1998.

He served in the military for some 14 years as an active duty U.S. Air Force aircrew member performing cryptologic linguist duties on the RC-135 airborne reconnaissance platform and as a Mission Crew Supervisor on the EC-130H electronic warfare mission during the latter years of the Cold War. He also served in the U.S. Navy as a reserve commissioned all-source intelligence officer assigned to the National Military Joint Intelligence Center at the Pentagon serving on the ELINT, Terrorism, and Middle East/North Africa desks in the 1990s. He also had a short stint as an imagery intelligence analyst at the CIA in the late 80s.

Mr. Drake is the founder and senior leader of Knowpari Systems LLC, a boutique leadership development and executive consulting firm formed in 2008 and focuses on business intelligence, IT-corporate governance, risk management, operations analysis, systems thinking, strategic advising and deep learning through people, process, and technology – expanding capacity, increasing performance, and enhancing social and relational well-being for individuals, teams, and organizations.

His outreach and speaking expertise center on delivering dynamic, interactive and compelling content in the areas of strategic leadership, international relations, contemporary international problems, professional ethics, executive management, business intelligence and decision support systems, resource strategy, complex systems (social and technical), human relations, dynamics of the information and knowledge age, information management, organizational sustainability, executive leadership, 21st Century issues, governance, and decision-making, the Constitution and civil liberties, as well as whistleblowing.

His particular area of expertise is the strategic and global perspective while placing events, people, trends, and movements in the larger context and finding the meaning and the connections and making sense of them such that one can take the practical action necessary to execute the mission and the business in challenging times, under adverse conditions and with constant uncertainty. He has also focused on a key "emergent" strategically competitive best practice of relationship leadership involving dynamically evolving social ecology and social network systems. This highly innovative approach involves real-time learning and feedback creating the very conditions for both individual and organizational well-being and accomplishment while also achieving sustainable results in the marketplace and for social activism and change.

He now writes, speaks, and teaches around the world on whistleblowing, Constitutional rights, civil liberties, secrecy, surveillance, and abusive corporate and Government power. He has dedicated himself to defending life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Well . . . that was a rather extensive bio, but you deserve the full treatment, sir, so I have no problems with that. And after listening to it, I can say that if I had some place of employment, you would most certainly be hired.

THOMAS [Laughs] I'm still challenged to find any work other than where I've been for the past number of years, so—

JON Right, I'm sorry to hear that.

Well, let's get started. (Sure) I'm going to read the first question to you, and that is: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

THOMAS Wow, yeah, I've been asked that a number of times over the last number of years. It was my first day on the job. I had been hired into a special outside hiring program by General Michael B. Hayden, and I was reporting to the number three person at NSA, who at the time was Maureen Baginski, the Director of Signals Intelligence, the largest single organization at NSA. It's the operational side of the agency.

And the agreement was that I would show up, which I did, at oh-dark-thirty and I would meet her at her office and I would shadow her. Her calendar would become my calendar. Or, I should say, my calendar was now hers. And I would wander around with her, go to different meetings for about 30 days or so, just to get a sense and a feel for all of the myriad of responsibilities and challenges she had. I was hired in as a change leader. In fact, my actual title was Senior Change Leader, and that was my function. And I was looking at process; I was looking at management; I was looking at technology.

The reason I was even hired was because about a dozen of us had been brought in under huge pressure from Congress, in particular, the NSA was falling behind the times. It wasn't keeping up. It was becoming less relevant and was having great difficulty meeting the digital age. It's one of the ironic realities of NSA back there in those years, especially post-Cold War. 1) It had an identity crisis; 2) is trying to find a new mission. But, too, the Internet had gone right by it. NSA had pretty much decided Internet was not worth—there's no secrets worth knowing on Internet because it was all open.

So, here I was on the morning of September 11, 2001, and the first meeting that I attended she was speaking to a technical advisory group that had come up from the Senate, the Senate Intelligence Committee and they were wanting to hear from her. She was what some would refer to as a talking head—some use that term pejoratively; others actually with great admiration. She was one of the few at NSA, given that management wasn't

a core competency, neither was a speaking member—NSA listened, they didn't speak, most of the time (Right)—so, she was giving a talk, I would say maybe more of an explanation or attempted explanation in the form of a story as to what all these billions—what do we get for all of these billions that are being spent on this huge program called Trail Blazer. And, its stakeholders—Congress and others—were having great difficulty getting their arms around what would the nation and national security accurately receive from the largesse of all these billions, this is what I remember.

I remember I was sitting in a chair up against the inner wall, it was an inner hallway, and her executive assistant opened up the corner door of the inner office and said some freak accident—one of the World Trade Center towers had been hit, no one really thought much about it. What I remember about the bomber that flew in to the Empire State Building (Right) because of weather and fog back in the 30s. Not long after that, the same executive assistant opens the same door and says that the second World Trade Center tower has been hit by an airplane. And I remember, I stood up and said, "America's under attack." I actually exclaimed that. (Right)

And then the next four months were a blur. It was clearly—pretty much the entire NSA emptied, both contractors and civilians. We did not know at that time, mid to late morning, if there were any other targets. There were suspicions that there might be. We knew that there were other planes in the air that had been hijacked—one in particular. A couple apparently had been aborted. And for precaution's sake, other than those that were assigned to crisis response teams, everybody was asked or directed to go home, including myself. And I remember spending the rest of the day parked in front of the television and, even to this day, just the replay of the towers coming down over and over and over again. (Right)

I drifted off; took a very fitful nap. It was late that evening; very early the next morning, I remember waking up not too long after midnight calling in to work. I had a special number to call and they said: Hey, you need to get in here, Tom. And so, I—

JON This was at midnight?

THOMAS This was a little after midnight. It was probably around one thirty, two o'clock in the morning. And then the next four months—we're talking 18-hour days (Right), as the Government ramped up in its response.

What I didn't know, of course, on that day—it's a day frozen for those of us that were there. It's interesting that it's receding in the history, I meet—there's people I work with now that, they're 20-somethings that only briefly know about a 9/11 or seeing some image on a magazine or on television. They don't actually know (Yeah) or have the experience. I mean, it's 13 years on now and yet, for me, it seems just like yesterday.

JON It's very weird to talk to (yeah) somebody who's in their 20s and, almost 10 years old on the day of (Yep. Yeah) And I actually have spoken with students and I've asked them specifically what they've been taught in school about 9/11. And they say they're basically just told, or taught, about the day-of. There's no context given or anything like that. So, it—you're right, it's very weird.

So, go ahead.

THOMAS Not just weird, but for me, almost 3,000 people were murdered. (Yep) And, during the course of the day, as I was home, before I went back to work very early the next morning, all I could remember was really bad flashbacks. And I'm just going to give you context—speaking of context.

You mentioned in my bio that I used to be Intel officer for the Navy, and I was assigned to the Joint Intelligence Center—it's for national military Joint Intelligence Center at the Pentagon, the head—it reports to the J2. It's the lead military intelligence officer reports up to the joint chiefs of staff and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff. During my time there, from '92 to '97, I was assigned to several desks. And for a period of about 18 months, I was actually on the terrorism desk. That's what it was called. It was in the alert center. And I was there during the period in which they tried to drop the World Trade Center towers the first time with truck bombs. (Right) And we were sending out reports that—and this was where I first got to know about Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda—we were in the loop. There were linguists; we had the translations when the tapes were going around; the fatwahs he was issuing—and it was clear that this guy and his movement, which was clearly transnational, was serious. And they had huge—let's just say, they had a lot they didn't like about the West and even their own culture, in terms of the forms of Government that had taken place, or the intervening decades and centuries.

And they had a huge bone to pick. It was clear from all their talks and, yet, we were sending out these reports and they were essentially going into the circular file. No one really seemed to care.

I remember, after the World Trade Center towers, the attempt to drop them with truck bombs—they were damaged and there were injuries. That we were issuing reports that this is just an opening shot. That they're going to be coming back and they looked at the World Trade Center towers and other Western symbols as something to attack, as something to harm, and recognizing that it would cause a lot of publicity.

And we were issuing these reports (Right), and I still, even to this day—I'm going to relate to you just, this is history just ringing in my ears, but the ringing is not drowning out the truth of what I'm about to share. I remember the J2—he's a general a 2-star general—he comes down to our center. He actually comes down to the center—

JON To the terrorism desk.

THOMAS To the alert center and there's all these different desks and he looks at us, and he looks at me, and he says: "Yeah, I've seen all the reports you're sending out." And he says: "Who cares? Who cares about a raghead spouting about fatwahs in the desert underneath a fig tree. Who cares?"

JON Right, horrible.

THOMAS And I was just flabbergasted, because it was clear that the intelligence complex—remember, this is '93. This is not even a year after, barely a year, after the Soviet Union had collapsed in 1992, they were still struggling with who's the next enemy? What's our identity? Now that the Cold War is over, what does this mean? And it was just dismissed, this asymmetric threat. And although terrorism had been in full flower, so to speak, as hijackings as we know from previous history, they were just dismissing all this—that it was inconsequential in terms of any threats or potential threats.

And, we continued the reports. We said that we were predicting—this was intelligence. Classic intelligence is about indications and warnings and we warned in our reports that this group is serious and that they were going to return and associated movements. We actually said that. And I'm not—I don't take solace in saying this because we failed to convince command

authorities and others to take action. And eight years later—a little over eight years later, guess what?

JON I wonder if one of the reasons why this individual didn't care, whatever—I mean, at the time I think, we were still working with the Mujahideen. And Osama bin Laden—I think in the caucuses and elsewhere.

So, your position at the NSA was a change leader, you said?

THOMAS Yeah, I was hired in as a senior executive, so that's the top tier. It's about 7500 senior execs across the Government. (Right) I was in a management leadership position, and I was hired straight in. I was literally dropped in at a very senior level, reporting to the number 3 person, so—a wide purview and a whole lot of stuff began to happen. It would take quite a while to unfold the full history. It has many, many threads, many, many back-stories, and the historical context is critical to understand it. But I give you the example of where I was in '93 to help at least provide some context for 2001 (Okay—), because it was clearly not considered a real threat. And, although, by the time we get to '98, George Tenet himself as director of the CIA is saying the system is blinking red. He actually said that. I remember seeing the reports in '98. He was ignored, as well. No one was really on this. No one was—there were a few little offices here and there. There's probably about 20 people, max, if you looked on 9/10 to see the number of people that were actually working the counter-terrorism target, or as space as we've said, we would say, it was about 20 people.

JON In the NSA, you're saying.

THOMAS In all of NSA. About 20 people that were even focused on the problem.

JON Now, your story as a whistleblower is very extensive, so rather than ask you individual questions about this or that, I'm just going to let you tell your story. For my own curiosity, I would like to hear about the Espionage Act, and the FBI raids against you, staffer Diane Roark, and NSA Whistleblowers William Binney and Kirk Wiebe.

THOMAS Yeah, that all happened a number of years later, so—(Okay) and primarily for sheer retaliation, reprisal and retribution, but that's part of the deeper story.

What happened after 9/11 is, I mean, I'll just give you the quick thumbnail. I can't give you all in the time we have, because it's an extraordinarily disturbing story, and obviously, I lived it and I was there and have intimate knowledge of what happened and what the response was, both publicly, as well—and then the dirty knowledge of what happened in the deepest of secrecy, and using 9/11 as an excuse.

So, right after 9/11 the workforce—which is the people that did the real work were called the workforce, interestingly enough the NSA. Or some would call them the rank and file, to use Industrial Age language (Right)—took it really hard. It's important to note for your listeners, and I've said this in the past in other venues and other forums, the people that do the real work at NSA knew that NSA and the intelligence community, the whole national defense effort had failed the nation. Because our primary responsibility as an intelligence agency was to provide indications and warning, and we failed the nation. We had not done our duty under the Preamble of the Constitution, which is one of the two primary functions of the Government. One is to provide for the general welfare and the other one is provide for the common defense. We had failed to provide for the common defense; we had not kept people out of harm's way; and not just Americans, but innocent foreign nationals were murdered on 9/11.

The workforce took it really hard. That's a whole story in itself.

JON I've heard about that in parts of the CIA and in the FBI, as well.

THOMAS Yep, and because of my role and other functions, I had brought outreach to others in the rest of Government, particularly the intelligence arena, and it was clear that their own people and other people that do the real work in other agencies related intelligence were taking it really hard, and psychologically it was extraordinarily difficult.

And, so, what do you tell your neighbors? What do you tell your friends? What do you say, right? Here at the Homeland—I don't like that word, but domestic U.S. territory—had actually been attacked and it's an extraordinary loss. And, of course, the images weren't helping, for those of us that were there that know.

So, as we went around—and I was with Maureen Baginski, which is Signals Intelligence Director—we were having these sessions with people in different offices, and attempting to console them, attempting to help

provide explanation, but I remember a phrase that she used, and I know in part she regretted it later—a very conflicted person, by the way, just given her history and the fact that she had been there as a career. Here she is in a very powerful position at NSA saying: "Oh, no, 9/11 is a gift to NSA. We'll get all the money we want and then some." (Oh, geez) And I knew in her saying that, that we were already heading in the wrong direction, that NSA leadership was going in reverse, and knew that Congress would basically open up the pocket books, representing the American taxpayer, of course, and just write really big checks. And that's precisely what started happening. And that's a whole story itself. (Mm-hmm) I have many, many anecdotes, very disturbing anecdotes, about how that played out over the next several years.

So, you have that as an explanation, right? Which is not an explanation. It was simply going to be used as an excuse to recover all the losses from the peace dividend, post-Cold War. (Right)

Right. So, what else is happening? Well, this was obviously not just a minor crisis. This was an historical crisis that had really altered the equation in terms of NSA, and I just, I know that NSA's response as a classic organizational response is: "Oh, we need a lot more bodies on the problem." So, the 20 I mentioned that were focused on counter-terrorism (Mm-hmm) jumped to over 400 within the space of just a couple of months. (Wow) Whole new offices were formed; all new crisis centers; response teams; you name it. That's a whole story in itself.

We were asked, I was asked to lead an effort, enterprise level, to put anything we had into the fight. This came out—this was a directive from Tenet. Any across the intelligence "community"—and I put community in quotes—put anything you have in the fight. It doesn't matter what it is. If it's in the labs—prototype, test-bed—just put it out there. I ran across a number of solutions. Some that were near complete; some that were finished; some that were ready for operational employment; others that were still being worked on as prototypes. But NSA, again management level, became incredibly resistant to employing any of this, because anything that could be used to help pursue the real threat—obviously, there were threats that needed to be pursued in light of what had happened; that was crystal clear—would make them look bad.

So, they have this whole weird psychology going on that because we had failed, don't do anything that would actually make us look like we failed.

Go inside the institution. And institutional prerogative began to quickly return within the space of just a month or two. We had efforts to stand up as I was in charge of putting together a centralized web server, a distributive web server, where it was a centralized location where people could just type in a web address and then make it one of their favorites, so when they came in for their shift, for the day, they would get the very latest news to inform them regarding what was going on, what was happening, updates they needed to know about. All this is ongoing.

Then there's this whole other parallel thing going on in NSA, and I'm just going to summarize it because, again, I could talk for hours on this. (Mm-hmm) But, I found out very disturbing information, both directly and indirectly, that equipment that was normally outward-facing. Equipment that would normally be used for traditional foreign intelligence was now being turned on U.S. networks directly. (Right) I heard about a program called Stellar Wind. It was just being whispered by people. There was an effort that I was involved with—again, I'm jumping around here, but I'm just—to give you a sense of this. Where I and a colleague of mine that worked directly with me, we were actually assisting the FBI to facilitate the affidavit process for the secret court—the foreign intelligence surveillance court where the problem caused affidavit ratio was brought before the court so they could issue a warrant to go after a U.S. person, resident, legal alien, or a U.S. corporation if they're suspected of engaging in harm against the United States or the national security.

They were—we were suddenly taken off that effort. I remember confronting my supervisor, Maureen Baginski, who said that they'd gone with a different solution. I confronted the lead attorney at NSA after I just said: "What are we doing to my supervisor. We have to have a warrant. It's a prime directive of NSA. You cannot spy on an American—surveil an American electronically without a warrant." Although there were conditions for hot pursuit in the equivalent of war time, but you still have to go back for a warrant. (Right)

I confronted the lead attorney the first week of October regarding what NSA was doing. And it was an extraordinarily chilling conversation. He said: "You don't understand, Mr. Drake. The White House has approved the program." As soon as he said The White House, the hairs went up on the back of my neck because I'm remembering what Nixon said back in the 70s. You know, "If the President says it's okay, then it's legal."

JON Well, Dick Cheney started to say that after a few years.

THOMAS Well, five days—I remember five days after 9/11—I mean, I'm there. All this is like a blur. I can pick out all the distinctive ends. Five days after 9/11. In fact, I just listened to his—for the first time in a number of years, I actually watched the tape again on broadcast television where he says: "We're going to go to the dark side." (Right) Sources and methods. And I knew that that was very troubling and knowing Cheney's history, that this would be a golden opportunity to do other things. Because already getting very early wind, even as early as five days after, that other authorities were being authorized for NSA. Of course, General Hayden was making frequent trips down to the White House situation room and other locations.

What I didn't know when I confronted the lead attorney and he said: "No, NSA is the executive agent—they always called it "the program"—it's all legal. All the lawyers have looked at it."

All legal, right? White House has approved it. Don't ask any more questions. Although I pursued that with him for a bit, he simply would not—he shut me down. And clearly, I recognized when I put the phone down that I was now staring into the abyss. I was staring into the very abyss that Frank Church warned the nation about in 1975. (Right) That under the excuse, and under the failure, a systemic failure to protect the nation, they were going to use 9/11 as an excuse—and I will use really, really strong language now—but in the deepest of secrecy, in fact, it was being protected as an extraordinarily deep state secret, the United States Government was willfully, as an act of commission—not omission—violate the Fourth Amendment and subvert the Constitution—on an extraordinarily mass scale. (Wow--)

And I recognized the paranoia and the fear. I recognize that in compensating for the failure, right, and others have had other interpretations, but remember, I'm speaking as someone who was there, who confronted the senior leadership on this, okay, and became aware of some really, really dirty knowledge about this, about all that took place in those early days, weeks, and months after 9/11, that was rapidly expanded that the United States was now being turned in to the equivalent of a foreign nation, for dragnet, blanket, electronic surveillance on a scale that not only we had never seen before, but on a scale that no other nation in the world had ever seen before. And, in terms of sheer scope and scale, and with direct cooperation of a number of leading Telcos, Internet service

providers, and later on, Internet providers, data brokers, financial institutions, etc. (Right)

What do you do? My moment of truth was that first week in October. Because if I had remained silent, I would be an accessory to a crime. If I remained silent, then I would be denying that I was eyewitness to the subversion of the Constitution. And, remember, what was so important about the Constitution? (Laughs) It was supposed to make us different. It was the grand experiment. And, although it had many faults and foibles, it was an extraordinary document based on the uneven progress of liberty and freedom over the millennia. But I was certainly not going to stand by and simply rape the oath that I had taken four times in my Government career—twice in the military, once at CIA, and the fourth time as an NSA senior executive—to support and defend the Constitution.

And what I was confronted by was I am now having to defend the Constitution against my own Government. (Right)

And, I decided I would do my best, with all I had, knowing that the odds were long and the chances were slim that I would defend the Constitution against my own Government from within. And I did that until I couldn't do it anymore. And I say that with some emotion because I failed, I actually failed on behalf of America and Americans, I failed to do—I did, I failed, and I've had to accept that because it was clear. Who was going—the order was given—and I have to say it this way—the order was given by the White House in league with General Hayden, and others, to affect turning the extraordinary, the incredible power of NSA on to the United States. And, obviously, it could not do that without the cooperation by hook or by crook, some cases coerced with certain companies. It also involved other parts of Government, which some people don't fully appreciate, including the FBI.

So, here I am and, of course, I grew up in the 70s—context for you. I grew up in the 70s a very young teenager. I was there. I remember the Pentagon Papers and Watergate and a President resigning his office. I remember Daniel Ellsberg talking about what was at stake (Right)—the bright and shining light of Vietnam. I remember seniors burning their draft cards in 1971, in the back parking lot when I was a freshman in high school. Here I am, and I remember the Frank Church Committee Hearing and the Rockefeller Commission and all those reports. You go back and read those. It's just like wow—and a lot of that was—then two intel committees were

formed—standing committees to provide oversight of a secret side of Government because it had gotten out of hand—the intervening decades. Then this Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which is a compromise in itself, right? Again, the Government had unchained itself from the Constitution.

That's what had happened after 9/11. No one knew it, except for very, very few, especially in those first few years. And I went through every channel that existed. I was a witness before, a material witness, a whistleblower, before two 9/11 Congressional investigations. I gave them everything I knew—and the worst part of it, for me, was discovering, as I found out right after 9/11—I even confronted Maureen Baginski with a report that had been finished by NSA, finished report, many, many months before 9/11 basically breaking out the full scope of Al-Qaeda associated movements. And it was never shared with the rest of the intelligence agencies, nor was it ever given to the national command authority to take action. That was just one report amongst many of them.

JON What did that report state, specifically?

THOMAS It exposed the full network. It showed how the network was operating; how it metastasized; who was associated with it. It was the best of NSA. This is the kicker. The very best that Americans would expect, that those in secret had a special obligation to their own citizenry to protect the nation, and here was the finest, the finest that I worked with—and I'd been in the system for a long time. Remember, I listened in on East Germany and Warsaw Pact countries back during the latter years of the Cold War and did electronic warfare. Yeah, I—and yet here I was, my own country, and I was taking on activities that not only did I object to, but were in violation of the law, but the law no longer seemed to matter.

The phrase that I kept hearing in those weeks and months after 9/11: "You don't understand, Tom"—and it was all summarized by the lead attorney. The lead attorney said: "You don't understand. We just need the data. We live in extraordinary times and exigent conditions apply." Exigent. It's a really interesting word in the English language. Exigent. Meaning, all means necessary to confront the threat. Yeah, all means necessary meant that the Constitution was in the way.

And I can tell you right here. I can tell your listeners right here, none of this was necessary. We never had to go to the dark side like Cheney said. The

very best of American ingenuity and innovation had already solved this problem years earlier, knew—how do you make sense of and find meaning and large amounts of data, already solved that problem. It didn't take billions to do it. It had been solved for \$3 million dollars, \$3.2 million on a program called Thin Thread that was rejected by NSA out of hand.

And, by the way, during this period Congress actually passed legislation, signed into law by President Bush in early 2002, directing NSA to employ Thin Thread to the 18 most critical counter-terrorism sites across the world. They never did so. They actually defied the law. No penalties.

JON The Thin Thread program was a \$3.2 million program versus the other—

THOMAS A \$4B plus—

JON Four billion plus—

THOMAS It solved that problem, which was the program, referred to as the corporate solution, that was launched with great fanfare by Hayden back in the Spring of 2000, about a year after he got there, after he commissioned some studies. And it was a \$4B plus program before 9/11, okay? And nothing was going to stand in its way. So this little pip squeak of a program for \$3.2 million, that had basically solved—met all the core requirements of Trailblazer, didn't stand a chance. Not only did it solve the core challenges that Trailblazer was supposed to solve, it also provided superior intelligence, and as I found out much to my horror, the program itself is capable of finding data that was not connected—I mean you could take it and bring unassociated—we call it unassociated data—unassociated information, electronically or whatever form you could get it electronically and make connections on a level and a scale that had just not ever been done before.

All of this was rejected because it made the corporate solution look bad; it was such a small program; it didn't cost much money. I mean this was just one of a number of programs that were soundly rejected, or pushed aside by NSA. And, of course, what is happening after 9/11? Congress is coming to NSA effectively saying: "How big a check do you want us to write? And what number do you want to put on the left?"

JON Which goes back to what that individual said on the day of 9/11.

THOMAS Yeah, we're going to get all the money we want and then some. I remember a little over a year after 9/11 there was a gala celebration, the 50th Anniversary of NSA's creation. And here's context for your listeners. People had this idea that somehow NSA was brought in to existence by Congress or a Congressional legislation. It was not. It was literally created by the stroke of a secret pen held by President Truman in 1952, as a military intelligence agency. It was not part of the National Security Act of 1947, which actually created the CIA and brought the Department of Defense into existence and the Air Force. It was a wholly, secret military quote-unquote "foreign intelligence agency." All right? (Right)

People need to know that because what happened after 9/11, when I say that the Government unchained itself from the very Constitution it was bound to uphold, support, and defend is that it was increasingly militarizing all this under the what became known as the Unitary Execution Theory (Yuck) that in Article 2, that the Commander-in-Chief power of the President trumped everything (Right) and unilateral power—of course, we never declared war. The last time we declared war, actually, was in 19—well, you go back to '41, early '42 was the last time Congress actually declared war. We've never declared war since World War II, formally. All that power is reserved to the Congress. And even under the War Powers Act there's supposed to be, you know, these notifications. (Mm-hmm)

The AUMF, Authorization to Use Military Force was a justifying document for a whole host of things. But, ultimately, in secret it was Article 2. It was the Commander-in-Chief, you know, the head of the military and this is what I find extraordinarily chilling is that much of what took place in secret—again, going to the dark side as Cheney said in no uncertain terms—was all done under the Article 2 Commander-in-Chief powers. And that meant that everything else stood aside. That meant that everything else took a back seat and whatever orders were given—I have to say it this way—whatever orders were issued or given by the Commander in Chief through his various executive branch minions and leaders you would obey, and if you chose not to obey, then guess what? You were disobeying a direct order. And if you disobeyed a direct order, then you would be severely punished.

Now, of course, as a civilian—I'm still having been a former officer in the Navy, Commission, I was well aware of orders. But under Article 2 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, you're only obligated to follow lawful orders. It cannot be un-Constitutional. It cannot violate [AUDIOBAD]

statute. Cannot violate Uniformed Code of Military Justice, and you actually have an obligation to question any order that may or may not be lawful. Even if it is, you still have the right to question it. (Right) But here you weren't to question any of this, because the decision has already been made.

So, you can imagine the space that I and a few others are in. What do you do when you're now confronting—The reality that under the very definition of high crimes and misdemeanors, although this is "post-9/11," the White House is engaged in subversion, okay? (Right) But it doesn't matter, because the threat to the homeland is so severe and because almost 3,000 people were murdered, we can get away with anything. Whatever we need to do, we're going to do it. And that's precisely what happened.

And so, I knew in October, that first week in October—that was before the Patriot Act, before any of this other stuff, right? I knew that the decision—it was made in the deepest of secrecy that had enormous downstream consequences. It would all eventually come out in some manner. But I also knew that I had an obligation to support and defend the Constitution, because if I didn't, I'd be breaking my oath, and that oath took primacy over everything else. (Right)

So, I went to two 9/11 Congressional investigations. I gave them everything I knew about—well, we can get into that. I think you're probably going to ask me some questions about that. What NSA actually did know, but chose to cover up.

JON Well—

THOMAS To keep from a number of investigators, including the 9/11 Commission.

JON Well, with regard to the two investigations. There was the Joint Congressional Inquiry and another one.

You're aware of the story of the NSA leaks made supposedly by Republican Richard Shelby (even though he denies it) during the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11?

THOMAS Yes, I am.

JON What do you have to say about that? Anything?

THOMAS Well [laughs], they're pretty close to the truth, he was sort of taken out back and told to shut-up, okay? (Right) You know, it's interesting—I'll just parenthetically insert this. There's a speech and debate clause, which is an extraordinary part of the Constitution, whereas Mike Gravel did with the Pentagon Papers, which I remember him reading them in, right, to the Congressional record, all 4,000 pages worth. (Mm-hmm) A Senator can go into the well, and actually under the speech and debate clause and without censure or sanction say just about, short of asking for insurrection, right, can say anything. And no one did, okay? (Right)

Now he, you could argue, without doing the well thing, right, did release certain information that was considered kind of sensitive (Right), all right? And did get in part censored in the intelligence establishment because he was clearly saying things about fault and blame, and that was the last thing that they wanted to do. There was this agreement—by the way, I say this unspoken (in terms of unwritten agreement, but certainly spoken in secret), this unwritten agreement that we are not going to accept any failure and we'll protect our institutional equities.

JON Wow—well, the leaks, just so people know, there were two communications intercepted a day or two before 9/11. One of them was: "Tomorrow is zero hour." Another one I think is: "The match begins tomorrow." Or something to that effect. (Right)

Richard Shelby leaked it to the media and the thing that happened is that Dick Cheney threatened to pull the plug on all of the cooperation, or the little bit of cooperation the White House was giving the Joint Congressional Inquiry.

Now, it's interesting, Bob Graham has said:

"Looking back at it, I think we were clearly set up by Dick Cheney and the White House. They wanted to shut us down. And they wanted to shut down a legitimate Congressional inquiry that might raise questions in part about whether their own people had aggressively pursued al-Qaeda in the days prior to the September 11 attacks. The vice President attempted to manipulate the situation, and he attempted to manipulate us.... But if his goal was to get us to back off, he was unsuccessful."

THOMAS Yeah, but it says—it certainly was—it sent a chilly message. I mean, it really put them on notice. If anybody was going to say anything, even if it was not actually classified—remember, the whole thing about that if it's knowingly compromising—and there's no indication—I mean, the fact is those messages do exist, but that was right at the very end. I mean, there'd been many, many warnings prior to that that were all—well, I'd have to get to a whole other story, but—

JON Right, well, that's—I'm going to get—

THOMAS That is true. They were not translated until the day after 9/11.

JON Okay, now, you said—

THOMAS It was too late.

JON You spoke to the Joint Congressional Inquiry and before we get into the 9/11 Commission, I wrote a little statement down to put this into context. Just so everybody knows with regard to 9/11 and the NSA, the 9/11 Commission barely looked at them. The following is from HistoryCommons.org and I think it's from Phil Shenon's book *The Commission*.

"[For executive director Philip] Zelikow and other staff on the commission, it was just more interesting—sexier—to concentrate on the CIA."

In late 2003, the NSA will allow the 9/11 Commission access to its archives on Al-Qaeda. "[P]erversely, the more eager [NSA director] General Hayden was to cooperate, the less interested [9/11 Commission executive director Philip] Zelikow and others at the commission seemed to be in what was buried in the NSA files."

Now, towards the end of the 9/11 Commission, "Zelikow would later admit he too was worried that important classified information had never been reviewed at the NSA and elsewhere in the Government before the 9/11 Commission shut its doors, that critical evidence about bin Laden's terrorist

network sat buried in Government files, unread to this day. By July 2004, it was just too late to keep digging."

Now, I think it's interesting, since he and others seem to be the main reason the 9/11 Commission stayed away from the NSA. Some of the information that they did come across tried to tie Iran to Al-Qaeda and 9/11.

You know, so, now let's get to the next question, which is a really good one.

THOMAS Sure.

JON You once said, "I can't say fully, because it's classified, but I showed that NSA knew a great deal about the 9/11 threats and Al-Qaeda, electronically tracking various people and organizations for years—since its role is to collect intelligence. The problem is, it wasn't sharing all of the data. If it had, other parts of Government could have acted on it, and more than likely, NSA could have stopped, I say stopped 9/11."

Now, did you speak to the 9/11 Commission, and did you make them aware of this information that could have stopped 9/11?

THOMAS I never spoke to the 9/11 Commission. I was never asked to speak. It's one of the interesting mysteries. I think I know why. I did speak extensively with the Joint Inquiry, which was a much broader examination by both House and Senate Intelligence Committees. It was triggered in part by an earlier investigation. It was the Saxby Chambliss Subcommittee on Homeland Security in the [AUDIOBAD] who had an earlier investigation, which really was the basis for the Joint Inquiry. The Joint Inquiry was the one, much more public, and I gave them extraordinary amounts of internal information, both written as well as oral testimony, regarding what NSA knew prior to 9/11, as well as what we discovered after 9/11, including information—an effort, when I was the executive program manager for Thin Thread, where we had an opportunity with some monies that had been actually approved at NSA to point Thin Thread at the largest set of databases, the intelligence databases, that existed, we're talking about multiple, hundreds of terabytes of data and then some. And we discovered information that had never even been found that was true indications of warning, both pre- and post- 9/11.

That entire effort was shut down. There's a whole story behind that, by the way. It was completely shut down and I remember our program manager

coming to me where he was ordered to take all of the program information for Thin Thread and give it to this other organization effectively. You know the end of Raiders of the Lost Ark (laughs) where you see the box going down and then turning left (Right, I remember) That's what happened at Thin Thread. It was put in to the NSA Indiana Jones digital warehouse.

JON Well, now, with regard to Thin Thread, just so everybody understands, one of the crucial differences between this \$3.2 million program (Yeah) and the \$4 billion program was that it would have protected civil liberties. Am I correct?

THOMAS It was built in. It was all probable cause. It was all based on targeting. It was not—and this has been a myth, that somehow the NSA didn't want it because it was a mass surveillance program, which is the great irony. It's sort of a reverse projection. It's like blame—project on to the very program that actually protected civil liberties and U.S. persons. In fact, it was all about real targeting, targeting real threats. It was not about just sucking it all in. NSA, after 9/11, just simply said: "We need the data. I don't care where we get it from. We just need it." They became obsessed with collecting the data, and that's one thing NSA is really good at is collecting data. Making sense of it? That's a different story.

JON Well, now—

THOMAS So, this program built, by design—I can speak very directly on this because not only did I analyze the code, the core code to Thin Thread, but I also analyzed (because I was a systems software engineer), at the time analyzed the engineering design documents. And the design and—it was built in the code—was to protect U.S. persons. It was never thought, in our wildest imaginations, that this program would be stripped of its protections and turned on the United States. (Right) That was just the last thing that we even considered.

JON Now it concerns me that the 9/11 Commission did not really look at the NSA, and one of the reasons, obviously, is because the 9/11 Commission was mandated to give a quote "full and complete accounting" of the 9/11 attacks. And they were sold to the world as the definitive account of 9/11 and they weren't. They simply were not. (No) And so, this is reason one million two thousand, whatever (Yep) as to why the 9/11 Commission was a complete farce and why there needs to be a complete investigation with accountability and everything like that.

THOMAS Well, I'll give you an indication as to what they are indeed. I can speak directly to my own situation. I can't speak to others. I'm well aware of other efforts. I'm well aware of programs like Able Danger, a whole other effort on the Army side that was looking at this, but another one that got shut down as well and got into all kinds of quote unquote "hot water." I can tell you this: To this day, the only record that exists that I had any connection to the Joint Inquiry investigation on 9/11 was the fact that I was interviewed (Right). All attempts to date, we're talking now 12 years later, okay? Over 12 years ago when all this—over a period of several months—but over 12 years ago, no one can find any record, any notes, or any material evidence that I gave investigators from the Joint Inquiry.

JON Well that's awfully convenient.

THOMAS All inquiries to date, all attempts to find it, end up in boxed canyons. That should tell you something.

At NSA, I can tell you because I was in executive session a number of times—I remember one with General Hayden, during the 9/11 Commission, right? So the 9/11 Commission is this quote unquote "independent commission" that's going to be the be all and end all. (Right) There was clearly agreements because of what had been—and I know this from my own material evidence—that we aren't going to go in certain areas. We're going to avoid. And it was clear Hayden had direct access to the White House, okay? And it was clear—I remember him chortling, he was chortling during executive session. As you might recall, during that period where the FBI and CIA were taking a whole lot of heat from the 9/11 Commission in public hearings. (Right) And I remember him saying in executive session how nice it was to hide behind their coattails while the FBI and CIA took the heat and NSA got to remain in the shadows. (What?) He knew NSA was culpable. He knew NSA was exposed. But he was a political general and he had all kinds of top cover. And, so, they just conveniently chose not to REALLY investigate NSA. And, so, I find it disingenuous—I'll be polite—on the part of the 9/11 Commissioners and the executive director when they opine about: "We didn't get a whole lot of cooperation from NSA." That's because that was part of the agreement. (Right) Okay?

And that's another one of the deep secrets because it was—see, NSA, if there's any one issue—there was a systemic failure in terms of 9/11 and

there's historical context; there's the systemic context in terms of the intelligence and the way intelligence, the establishment and the institutions—the need to know, even though we don't know that if I give you information, I'm giving away my power, what are you going to do with it? You know, all that crap, right?

But here, here we have—NSA had prima facia evidence, right? Electronic evidence. Extraordinary. And then finding out later, as I did directly, right, through the analysis that was done. People coming to me with additional information, as well as the analysis that Thin Thread did. Finding out that there was more than just passing information about Al-Qaeda associate of movements, and yet, NSA directed at the highest levels to insure that none of that information would ever get close to an investigator. They actually said that, which meant they were actually obstructing an official Congressional investigation.

JON Well—

THOMAS And then obstructed the 9/11 Commission.

JON Then I'm going to skip ahead to a question. Was anybody at the NSA held accountable for 9/11 for their supposed "failures" and if there, was there—and James Bamford actually answered this, he said there was not one. But was there an NSA Inspector General report on the NSA's "failures?" And can you tell me the name of the NSA IG at the time of 9/11 when all the investigations were going on?

THOMAS Joel Brenner was actually—he came in in early 2002, late winter, early spring of 2002. He was the Inspector General at NSA during the Joint Inquiry.

JON Okay, now, was anyone in NSA held accountable?

THOMAS No.

JON Nobody was. Do you know—this is something that happened throughout the Government—so, I'll just ask you. Were people that should have been held accountable rewarded and/or promoted?

THOMAS That's an understatement.

JON Within the NSA?

THOMAS NSA, my gosh! I just look at the group pads of all the people that I—remember, all these seminal players that I either worked for or were hired by or got to know during my time there, were all promoted, richly rewarded and the revolving door, they're cashing in big time. (Wow) Or have already cashed in big time or continue to cash in big time.

Look, screwing up, failing the nation—I remember, the Navy supposedly, right, when I was—especially if you're at sea, the commander is supposed to take the hit. It was on your watch, right? It happened on your watch. (Right) You're supposed to take responsibility for it.

Hayden has never taken responsibility for ANY of the failures that fall at the feet of NSA. He just refuses to do so. It's like he pathologically refuses to accept any responsibility or any accountability for 9/11. And I know why. Because he chose in his mind that he would put his stamp, his secret stamp on history. And his secret stamp on history is that NSA—let me just give you a quote. I mean, I think it's illustrative for your listeners just to give you a forward response that he gave to Diane Roark, which is actually accounted for in the seminal article about my case still to this day, written by Jane Mayer in a *New Yorker* article called "The Secret Sharer: with a question, me, as enemy of the state question mark. In there is an account of Diane Roark confronting Michael Hayden, General Hayden, in the summer—get this! During the period which I was a material witness for the Joint Inquiry—confronts Hayden in the summer of 2002. And at the end of the conversation, after they're going back and forth, she's basically looking at him and saying: "Why? Why did you do this? Which was just violate the Fourth Amendment. And he didn't—his answer is extraordinarily chilling! Four-word answer—We had the power. (Right, well--) We had the power."

JON That's one of the things you spoke about. One of the things Dick Cheney was very interested in doing was expanding executive power, which he feels dwindled over the years. And on the day of 9/11 one of the very first things he does is he calls his attorney, David Addington, and brings him back to the White House to discuss exactly how far—how much power that the Unitarian executive, as you mentioned, could have.

THOMAS Nine-Eleven was his convenient cover. Nine-Eleven was—I mean, I can only imagine in his mind, it was, that Cheney grin. I can only imagine because, look, he—I mean, this is where people have to understand history

—Cheney goes way back. Cheney is well-knew in Government. (Absolutely) Cheney—if there was any one person who understood how Government works, it was Cheney—from the inside out. And he knew the intelligence really, really well. Remember, he had been the Secretary of Defense back during the Persian Gulf War.

JON Chief of Staff to Ford.

THOMAS Well, Chief of Staff to Ford—and this is the critical history. He always thought Nixon got a raw deal and he has actually said this. People forget what—he's flagged himself for years, right, as to where his inclinations lie. He said—a long time ago, way before 9/11—said that if you ever got in a position of power, came back into the Government, that he would restore the imperial presidency. He would restore the presidency, because he always thought Nixon got a raw deal. That the office of the President had been besmirched, had been tarnished, and that he would restore its glory. Well, guess what? He was given the National security portfolio hook-line-and-sinker or lock-stock-and-barrel (Right, laughs), by Bush himself. Bush is a total neophyte in terms of National security. And so, that was also engineered. The fact that Cheney was even his vice-President was engineered. (Right) Because he was actually the head of the selection committee and figured the only person that was qualified was himself, which I find that quite revealing.

JON I do remember that.

THOMAS So, here he is, now an opportunity to very quickly acquire, restore the glory of the office of the President, and bring back all those powers that were quote unquote—that were contained and constrained the executive, as a result—we keep forgetting all those scandals and the fact that the Government had in secret violated the rights of Americans on a routine basis for many, many years, if not decades. (Right) Actually, going back to the end of World War II. (Absolutely) And people forget that history. They forget about FBI's COINTELPRO. They forget about CIA's Operation CHAOS. They forget about NSA's MINARET and SHAMROCK. They forget about all those programs.

JON You just brought up COINTELPRO and one of the first things John Ashcroft did after 9/11, and you mentioned the Church hearings where COINTELPRO was exposed, he reinstated COINTELPRO.

THOMAS Yes.

JON Now, one of the things—we spoke of warnings. I don't know if you remember, but after 9/11 we were told, repeatedly, that there were absolutely no warnings. That nobody had any idea that anything like this was going to happen. Now, one of the questions I have for you: There was, or is, I don't know if it's still around, a system at the NSA known as Echelon. It has been described as "a global system for the interception of private and commercial communications." There are allegations concerning the usage of Echelon for corporate espionage among other things. With regard to 9/11, and this is from HistoryCommons.org, it says that in June 2001, "German intelligence warns the CIA, Britain's intelligence agency, and Israel's Mossad that Middle Eastern militants are planning to hijack commercial aircraft to use as weapons to attack "American and Israeli symbols, which stand out." A later article quotes unnamed German intelligence sources who state the information was coming from Echelon surveillance technology, and that British intelligence had access to the same warnings." Do you know if the allegations regarding that warning is true? And also, were you aware that in 2001, the European Parliament released a report on Echelon?

THOMAS I am very aware. Read the full report from the European Parliament. It all got—because of 9/11 no one ever really picked up on it at that point. Echelon was—look, I mean, I was in the system, as we're talking about, the latter years of the Cold War, Echelon was an extraordinary intelligence sharing system between what we called the five eyes. So we had the United States, Great Britain/United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. And I know that system real well. I'm well aware of sort of the dark side of the system where it was used for other purposes because information is power, right? So it wasn't just for intelligence. You got to use it for other things.

That system was re-ignited—I'll put it that way—mildly, after 9/11. (Right) And because of the advances in technology it was one of the mechanisms that existed between those five countries for intelligence sharing on an extraordinary scale.

I cannot speak directly in terms of personal knowledge of the warnings, although I was aware of warnings that had been provided. But, let me tell you this, the warnings—just because another country—see, here's the thing. If another country gives a warning, and this is sort of the arrogance and

hubris of power—well, it's not our warning, it's your warning. So, it tends—it doesn't have the same equivalent, resonance, because it's coming from somewhere else.

JON Well—

THOMAS And—And, you have to remember the system. These were warnings, it's true. You have the Bojinka plot going back to '95. Remember, all this stuff that took place between—even though the original attempt to drop the World Trade Center towers from '93 all the way up to 2001. You had the Cole bombing. You had the Khobar towers. You had all these other terrorist instances, but you also had other threats and warnings. All of this—and you had Tenet saying the system was blinking red three years before 9/11. None of that made a difference.

Here's why. The system was designed as a Cold War system. A symmetric system. It was not designed for asymmetric. It was not designed for having large amounts of information. It wasn't designed for that. So, you have an irony here. The Echelon system, which came out of the Cold War, was collecting massive amounts of information, you had beyond Echelon you had all the other systems. All this stuff is just piling up and people are trying to make sense of it.

So something gives a warning in the middle of all this—what does it mean? Right? It's just some warning—some unspecified threat. There might be some militants or some radicalized element. Remember what I said the General said back in 1993? Who cares? (Right) Right? This was largely dismissed except for a very small cadre of analysts recognizing the growing threat separate from the historical roots for all this, right? And their attempted redress for grievances, which is turning into mass casualties attacks of a spectacular nature and they kept ramping it up.

It was well-known. I will flat-out tell you that using airplanes—who have the history of hijacking, for cripes sake (Right)—so, using airplanes as weapons, right, was not—and this is where Condi Rice is just covering up for herself—no one could have imagined, right? No one could imagine. That's not true. Not just wasn't it no one could have—people did imagine it and there was actual, active plots to bring down airliners. (Right) So, you can imagine—and I pause, because of what I ended up finding out shortly after 9/11 and then what I discovered from others at NSA, then found in NSA's own databases regarding the core threat here. It was

asymmetric, that's the problem. It wasn't—NSA really didn't have the full capability or capacity to bring together asymmetric, unassociated bits of information, and make sense of them in context. And so it was a fragmented picture. It was always fragmented. It was never enough. It never rose to the threshold of it—even though Tenet said the light was blinking red—it never rose to a level that said, you know what? This is a real threat. We have to align the institution to deal with it. And that did not happen.

JON Well, there are—do you remember the August 6th Presidential Daily Briefing, which was called Bin Laden determined to strike in the U.S. (Yeah) That got a lot of attention during the 9/11 Commission, but we found out from Kurt Eichenwald that the PDBs that came before it made the August 6th PDB pale in comparison (Yes) as compared to—with the information that was within them.

Now, isn't this—I guess the information that the—is within the PDB partly comes from the NSA, does it not?

THOMAS More than just partly.

JON [Laughs]

THOMAS It's fair to say, having been part of a process when I was at the CIA, when I was an imagery analyst down what was NPIC—National Photographic Interpretation Center—and then later at the Pentagon, but especially when I was at the CIA where there's a whole process for how information gets into the President's or the Presidential Daily Briefing—the PDB. I've known many number of people that actually worked directly on it. It's for the senior analyst from the respective intelligence agency. As we moved in to, you know, the Information Age, Analog Digital Age, right, with Internet, more and more of the intelligence that was in the President's Daily Brief was a higher percentage of it. The good stuff was coming from Signals Intelligence (SIGINT). (Right)

And the reason is because more and more people are communicating electronically, okay? And, so, it would stand to reason by virtue of where intelligence is coming from, both secret as well as from open systems, upwards it's probably—I would hear different figures. NSA used to brag about it internally that 90 percent of the good stuff comes from us, right? And let no one forget it. Like sort of bragging rights with the rest of the

agencies. It's probably fair to say that a good two thirds plus—I can't give you specifics because you'd have to go back and analyze every single one if you want to do it accurately. But, let's just say that a significant majority of the core intelligence, indications and warnings intelligence, was based in part or as primary from Signals Intelligence.

JON Okay, now—

THOMAS And—but, see—here, this is part of the problem. You end up blinding yourself. And I say SIGINT—notice, I used to work at DIA when I was in the Navy. I was assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency at the Pentagon. They're the ones that were actually responsible, as an agency, for the National Military Joint Intelligence Center. So, you get blind to your own INT and you dismiss any other information that may discount it, or may amplify it, or may be from a different source. Because you are quote unquote "the source." So you tend not to include, by virtue of accepting it, you accept it, you only include it when it actually aligns with your own sources and methods.

Remember, the irony here, NSA was a tentacle [AUDIOBAD] formed in 1952. It was never designed to do finished intelligence. And, yet, they took on the prerogative that only we can understand SIGINT because it's really complex stuff. So we will interpret it so you can understand it.

JON Okay, now, with regard to that report from Parliament, I just want to read this little clip I got. (Sure)

"A report issued by the European Parliament last week advises the use of encryption software to protect electronic communications against the Echelon spy network. Against continued U.S. denials, the report concluded that the spy network does exist and that its primary purpose is to intercept private and commercial communications, not military intelligence."

And that is from wsws.org, June 6, 2001.

(Yeah) So, all right. I'm going to get into the next question. (Sure) And I hope I say this correctly.

There was a communications hub in Sana'a Yemen that was used by Al-Qaeda for many years. It was apparently used for the U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, the U.S.S. Cole bombing, and for 9/11. This communications hub was extensively monitored by the NSA. Can you tell us about this hub?

THOMAS Yeah, the hub existed. NSA had been monitoring probably since at least 1996. I gave extraordinary amounts of material evidence to both, but particular the Joint Inquiry, regarding this hub. And the fact, based on other information, that NSA knew precisely what numbers were calling into that hub and when the hub was calling out to other numbers. That included the two hijackers that were living in San Diego.

JON Well, that gets to my next question.

Two of the hijackers living in San Diego made several calls to the communications hub in Yemen. The Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11 says that: "The NSA did not realize the hijackers were in the U.S. at the time the calls were made." On 6/4/2014, Abby Martin had two NSA Whistleblowers on her show "Breaking the Set." They are William Binney and Kirk Wiebe. During this interview, William Binney tells us: "I know specifics . . . like six or seven phone calls from San Diego back to the Yemen facility. And, by the way, BOTH ENDS WERE KNOWN. I MEAN BOTH NUMBERS WERE THERE. THAT'S HOW CALLER ID WORKS (emphasis mine)."

Now, can you tell us if this means that the NSA lied to the Joint Congressional Inquiry and knew the hijackers were in the United States and didn't bother to tell the FBI?

THOMAS NSA lied, yeah. Look, this has come up before. I've yet to actually say this because I've never been asked—accept the Joint Inquiry—I've never been asked after all this, even after in the last number of years, even after the Risen/Lichtblau article from 2005, no one has yet to invite me before a Congressional Committee, because obviously there's been no investigation since. All right?

Anyway, yeah, NSA flat out lied about this. They knew what the numbers were. But, remember, they're numbers. All right? And these numbers are well—the numbers point back to where they come from. It's the way the system works. You cannot be monitoring the hub without knowing what the

other number is, because that's what you're monitoring. Right? Obviously, you know what the number is for the hub and when your number comes in you know what the ID of the number is that's coming in. (Okay) I'll say it that way.

Here is where you get it [AUDIOBAD] I know some people think of conspiracy theories and other things, right? And there are conspiracies, all right? But, here is where people have to understand the culture, right? Part of the problem here is that you have other parts of the Government that were attempting to make these hijackers informants, all right? You get into a really, really weird set of mirrors, where the Government is actually working against itself, and obviously, when it came to the domestic sphere, because of other restrictions, NSA cannot operate there—although, I will tell you, given the nature, rises to a threat sufficient enough, you go to the court; you've got resident legal aliens living in the United States; you go to the secret court, you can do the equivalent of cast iron—as we would call it back in the business—cast iron coverage. You, as NSA, have FBI, go up to the court and say, yes, we're going to monitor this phone call. Or phone numbers. There were more than just a couple.

But they didn't. Okay? They didn't, because you've got this other operation going on, right? You also have the CIA that was "tracking" certain hijackers, certain meetings in Malaysia, lost track, then they're in the United States. You've got the FBI actually doing surveillance, right, on the very hijackers, okay? Because they're in the loop, and yet—then you've got Coleen Rowley, remember? From Minneapolis where now they're getting trained to fly airplanes but to quote unquote "land" not to take off.

JON There was an FBI agent, Michael Maltbie. They were actually turned on to people training at flight schools in Arizona. I think it was Moussaoui. They identified Moussaoui—the flight schools actually called the FBI (Yes!) and Michael Maltbie was warning people left and right that people were training—

THOMAS Yep, in a strange manner.

JON He actually, I think he predicted (Yep) that planes would be used as weapons and so on and so forth.

So, there's a lot of information about the FBI, and with regard to the CIA trying to get those two hijackers as informants, I think, isn't that just a

theory that was posited as to the reasons why the CIA essentially protected those two hijackers?

THOMAS Well, I don't think they protected them. I just think they had Alec Station. I mean they had the Bin Laden unit. I mean, you can talk—I never met him or never spoke to him, Michael Scheuer, although there's others in the loop as well.

Here's the kabuki dance is that they're all kind of running their own ops, right? They're not—remember, I have to say it again for your listening audience—there was a disincentive for any of these agencies to share what they knew with each other. And, so, you have that sort of the classic, you know, who's the famous author with the elephant story where one was on the trunk and one was on the leg and one was on the tail and they're all trying to figure out what it is, right? And if they just shared the information with each other, they would figure out it was an elephant, okay?

JON My problem with that is that if individuals made decisions to withhold information that could have prevented the attacks, then those individuals should have been held accountable, as far as I'm concerned.

THOMAS Yeah, but see, it's an institutional thing, because you're talking about analysts who are concerned enough about what's happening and they go up through channels.

Look, I'll give you the example that I know directly. Right after 9/11, I had an analyst, very agitated, come to me in secret at great risk. They even told me that. They knew that I worked directly for the SIGNALS Intelligence Director. They came to me with the report that I made reference to earlier. Very large report; been many months in the making; it was all done in early 2001, and they were never allowed to share it with anybody else in the community. They come to me—they come to ME—with this report. They actually gave me a copy of it, okay? Both electronic and hard copy. I go to the Signals Intelligence Director with this copy, and the response told me everything: "I wish you had never brought this to my attention." Remember, this is AFTER 9/11. The last thing NSA wanted to do was admit its own failure. They did not want to admit that they actually knew something now that 9/11 had happened and then have to 'fess up about it. (Right) And I know this directly because—again, there's so much more to this story than we're even talking about right now—

I was—when the Saxby-Chambliss subcommittee, 9/11 Inquiry, which was a harbinger for the Joint, they announced in December 2001; they started interviewing witnesses and doing interviews at NSA in early 2002. I was asked by Maureen Baginski to take the lead at NSA, enterprise-level lead, to work a statement for the record, which NSA would come before the Saxby-Chambliss' subcommittee and would—because they were asking all the right questions. The actual questions that the subcommittee was asking were all all right, like: "What had happened? We can't never let this happen again." Now, we had this whole edifice put into place to prevent another—you know, we were supposed to preclude another Pearl Harbor, an electronic Pearl Harbor, right? Would never happen again. Well, it did. In the digital age. So why?

NSA, of course, is in the bullseye on this by virtue of its own capability, its own technology, its own capacity. So, I—I had a team, right? I had a virtual team, plus I had one of the people on my own team. We were burning the midnight oil and then some, over the space of about two weeks to put together the statement for the record. And we went to the ends of NSA to find out everything there was to know about what we could have known, should have known, and did know prior to 9/11 and even after 9/11.

Because it is true that after 9/11, NSA did a comprehensive sweep using its "corporate" technology—I have to qualify this—go back into the databases, right, to find out anything that we might have missed, right? Of course, the things they missed, they buried. That's part of the obstruction. That's a fact. They actually knew things that were discovered by their traditional systems and they chose not to share it because it meant that they knew something, but because they had it, but didn't know it, would have made them look really, really bad, right? So, they chose to simply say: "We're not going to share that with the investigators."

So, I'm on this—I've got this responsibility and I'm overseas on another effort, okay? I get this frantic phone call from my direct report, all right? And—sorry, I'm their direct report. So, I get this frantic phone call and saying: "We've been taken off the effort." And I say: "Why?" Well, you're going to have to ask Mo—Maureen Baginski—when you get back. And so I do. I come back from overseas. I confront her in a leadership meeting, right? And she says: "I'll have to take it offline with you." And, so, I confront her privately in her office, and she says: "It's a data integrity problem."

A data integrity problem. Yes. What an interesting phrase to use as a euphemism to cover up the truth. Because what we discovered—we included the earlier report, another amplifying report, additional information, of course, that had come to light since 9/11. Here it is February, late February of 2002, and they've shut down the effort and they're now in full cover-up mode with an official 9/11 Congressional Investigation. (Wow)

I don't know what else to tell you. I mean, that to me—I had some people, well, I said, I was there. I saw that from my end happen. Other people have attempted to say: "Well, there's got to be—they had this information, knew it, and withheld it on purpose to set it up where 9/11 would happen." No, that was not the case. It just wasn't. There has been no evidence, credible evidence ever brought to me, okay, that there was some kind of conspiracy here, when in fact, it was people in power who didn't want to admit failure. And people in power should have known better. People in power, and their arrogance and hubris were not listening to the people and doing their real work. People that were doing the real work were warning people in power: "You know what? There's a threat here. This threat has existed for a long time and not only was the system blinking red, it was now in your face. You just chose not to admit it."

And, so, then the evidence comes forward to prove it and you simply shut it all down. You cut off your own face in the mirror. Right? Which is the reflection—again, it's this reverse psychology, because you actually are culpable and you refuse to accept any responsibility for it.

JON Well, after—

THOMAS So what you end up doing—and this is what happens. Now, you get to the whistleblower side of me—is you now insure that we're going to make life as difficult as possible for anybody who dares reveal the truth about what NSA actually knew, could have known, or should have known.

Look, I gave the Joint Inquiry—I'm going to use really strong language—I gave the Joint Inquiry the smoking gun evidence, okay? It's smoking gun. You wonder why, after 12 years, no one can find the evidence in the archives? That the only record that exists is I was interviewed but there's nothing, no other accompanying information. You wonder why, even during my own criminal trial—when we attempted to get information, all the evidence I gave at yet another investigation that took place over several

years with the Department of Defense Office Inspector General, when the chief prosecutor comes back and says: "Oh, all that evidence has been destroyed as part of the document destruction policy." When, in fact, they did that on purpose? (Wow) You really have to wonder.

Because they were so hyper about protecting their "reputation."
Institutionally, they had the power and so we're going to blame the messenger. We're going to shoot the messenger and not deal with the message.

JON One of the things that the Bush Administration—they had two choices after 9/11. They could either take responsibility for the failures within the Government, or they could deny everything and cover their asses, and they chose the latter. And that's one of the reasons why there are conspiracy theories out there (Yes), is because of the fact that they covered up everything.

THOMAS That is part of the—that IS the conspiracy. Remember, I will tell you, there are a lot of other indicators, obviously. There was a memo being circulated even during the transition, the Presidential Transition Team—the PTT—late December of 2000, early 2001, before Bush takes the oath for the office with the Chief Justices of the Supreme Court. And there was a memo circulated where NSA was looking for relief in terms of the Fourth Amendment Probable Cause standard, all right? No one really thought much about it then, but that was now being circulated. Clearly, those that were coming into power wanted to have additional powers.

But, I will tell you—this is where I actually accept much of what Richard Clarke has said, right? Where counterterrorism simply was not on their radar. It was not considered—in spite of ALL of the evidence—it was just not a focus. It just wasn't. (Well—)

Even when—remember, just because there's a warning, just because there's an indication of something happening, or there's a planned attack—when it's not specific enough: I don't actually see a tank. I can't see an airplane. Okay? Right? And even though there's the warnings and there was already the interdictions of certain plans, like the Bojinka thing over the Pacific, right? It was a very comprehensive plan that got broken up. Or the Millennium thing, right? All of that, right, was still not sufficient, right? And that's the burden I carry.

But the conspiracy was—this is why it's worse, in part. You talk about the real conspiracy.

One, 9/11 was a trigger to subvert the Constitution. Now, it has to cover up to subvert the Constitution.

Two, cover up the actual evidence that we actually had—in particularly at NSA, but clearly elsewhere as well—FBI, CIA. That could have, if it had been shared properly, the way it was supposed to be shared within the system. The way in which I was trained to share it right up to and including the President of the United States, what's called the critic system where it has to land on his desk in ten minutes, right? The problem was you had all these layers and they just didn't rise to that occasion. It would make us look bad. It was nothing that was—remember, asymmetric. They were not—the institution was not designed to respond to asymmetric indications in warning. And that was a systemic failure.

So, now you face—you hold up a mirror with the smoking gun evidence and what do they do?

JON Destroy it.

THOMAS That's correct. And then they go after the very people who would dare do so. (Right) And that includes me. Okay?

JON Right. Well, I don't know exactly what the Bush Administration knew. I mean, we don't have access to the Presidential Daily Briefings. As far as them not taking the threat of terrorism seriously, the reason was they were preparing for the Iraq war. They were—first of all (Yes!) the Neocons within the Bush Administration were telling Bush that the threat was not Al-Qaeda (That's right), but was instead Saddam Hussein. (That's right). And I remember reading the CIA sent—in one of the Presidential Daily Briefings, I think, the CIA actually said that: "No, this is not disinformation as the Neocons were telling Bush. There is an actual threat out there."

And, there's a lot of questions out there as to what they knew. And, I, unfortunately, can't tell you what they knew because I'm just a regular citizen. I don't have subpoena power, and so on and so forth. Now, the last question I'm going to ask you—

THOMAS Well, I can tell you—is it okay if I just insert here parenthetically?

JON Sure, go ahead.

THOMAS Look, their focus when they came into office was not counter-terrorism. Their focus was actually Iraq. Their focus and the quote unquote the "three countries." Remember the three countries? (The --) The axis of evil? (Yes) Isn't it interesting that that axis of evil is still, in part, the same axis, slightly modified?

JON Well, actually because of the fact that there has never been an investigation into 9/11 that didn't have its own version of compromise and corruption (Yep), they can actually point to any country and say, yeah, they were involved in 9/11 and that's what they've done, essentially. The Taliban in February, 2001, actually offered to hand over Osama bin Laden (Yes). I don't know what happened with that. They blamed the Taliban after 9/11 for harboring Al-Qaeda (Yeah) and now the Taliban is back in power greatly in Afghanistan.

THOMAS Yeah, more opium is being produced now in Afghanistan than ever before (Right). I mean, it's extraordinary. And we're—it's just—this is—you know, I call it end trails of Empire. I mean, it's just, it is extraordinary, and I—see, I served, remember, I was at—see, there's just so much to talk about here (Laughs, I know), because there's so many other threads here.

I mean, just think of someone, special forces in Afghanistan and Tora Bora. What if I shared with you—although books have been written about this from people actually there. Remember, I used to be an analyst. I had wide prevue; lots of connections. That's where I came from—that space. You're in Tora Bora; you have all the intelligence; you've got Osama bin Laden and his close associates all surrounded. And then you're given these mysterious orders coming down from the DOD (to let him go) to pull assets out because guess what? The higher priority is Iraq. We need to prepare for Iraq.

JON Right. Well, they essentially allowed Osama to escape from Tora Bora.

THOMAS Yes, that's correct.

JON Now—

THOMAS Now, you tell me. I mean, people—I can't speak directly to that, because I was not there in the field, but I can tell you people that I have spoken with and others, okay? (Mm-hmm) Who I knew that have spoken, right? Were just besides themselves.

JON Well there were other instances throughout, before 9/11 that it seemed that Osama bin Laden had been protected. Michael Scheuer, I think, even wrote about or talked about how there were ten different instances where he had Bin Laden in his sights and was told to back off.

THOMAS There is a weird thing that when you have—it's convenient to keep someone alive, sort of this weird Old West, dead or alive? (Right) Once they're dead, right? Then they no longer have the same kind of resonance in terms of all the efforts you need. Because once they're dead, then what do you do? Take all—you shut down all the posses? [Laughs]

JON Right, well, obviously, if they had gotten him in November of 2001 (Yeah), then—we didn't have a reason to go to—to have the War on Terror anymore.

THOMAS Precisely. Precisely.

JON That in itself is just criminal. Now—

THOMAS Yeah, well, but see, so imagine those of us seeing all this play out from the inside, how they manipulated the highest levels of our Government—and, of course, you had genuflecting media, right, parroting—basically, stenographers (Right), press is stenographers of the Government—and be imbedded and given special briefings and off-the-record briefings, and anonymous briefings, just, yeah, well—you saw what *The New York Times* did with Iraq, okay?

So, it really—you saw what happened with James Risen and Lichtblau with the warrantless wiretapping program—the domestic. (Right) Where they knew they had had this information for 14 months, even back prior to the 2004 elections. They—for mass security reasons they—*New York Times* editor said: "Nope, we're not going to publish."

JON Right, and then it was the Bush Administration that asked them specifically not to.

THOMAS Yeah, what does that tell you when you've got the Government now manipulating the press because they want a particular outcome? Or the thing with Judy Miller. I mean, Judy Miller, that was all manipulated. Cheney actually saying what's being reported based on what he actually gave them. (Right) Well, that's convenient. Wow.

JON I know.

Now, according to Michael Isikoff and David Corn, some time between 2001-2002, Scooter Libby's office was reading "unvetted transcripts of National Security Agency intercepts." Scooter Libby was the Chief-of-Staff for Vice President Dick Cheney. According to *The New Yorker*, "policy makers are not supposed to have direct access to raw intelligence. The information is supposed to first be scrutinized and vetted by professional analysts in the intelligence community to ensure that the information is sound. This filtering process, which has been in place for some 50 years, is also intended to prevent intelligence from being used to service a particular political agenda."

Do you know if Scooter Libby's office was reading these transcripts before 9/11? It's something they don't make very clear.

THOMAS I can tell you—I can't give you specifics, and I don't actually know the specifics about Scooter Libby directly, okay, because in some ways he was the Chief-of-Staff. He was a functionary, very high-level functionary to do Cheney's bidding. (Right) He's also a convenient cut-out as well because he can be used as cover. And we know that from the Valerie Plame situation. (Right) Where he's the one that quote unquote "will take the fall" for his boss, all right?

Now, the fact remains, even before 9/11, Cheney wanted his own intelligence. He didn't trust—he knew the bureaucracy really well. He wanted a direct pipeline, so that's what he set up. He sent up his own, essentially, covert line to the White House. So, the White House is now on special distro—to say it that way—special distro for the kind of intelligence that he wants. And he was obviously able to get Hayden, who had no problem believing his boss. That's the one thing Hayden was—pleasing his boss was Job #1. (Right)

So, he gave the intelligence, as well as other—and George Tenet, to Tenet—I think Hayden was more political about it. Tenet just wanted to please his boss, period. Remember the slam dunk thing? (Yeah)

Well—(Yeah, okay). There was a pipeline, even before 9/11.

JON [Laughs] Honestly, I want Dick Cheney and George Bush on the stand, under oath, separately taking questions about a lot of things.

THOMAS They've got—they have the equivalent of sovereign immunity. The last thing they're going to do is open up a huge can of worms in terms of—it's going to be, I'm afraid it's going to be left up to the longer arc of history to put all this into its light. I mean, some people said, wake-up decades or centuries from now and look back, whatever the history is of that day and say: "What were we thinking?" (Wow)

See, none of this had to happen, and yet, here you see at the highest levels of Government using what was an extraordinary day of 3,000 people being murdered, failing to protect the country and then using that as an excuse to take us, as we now know, down many, many dark paths—

JON We're still going through.

THOMAS And, then, thinking people—and I think maybe the false hope and the desire for change in electing Obama as President, thinking that he was not Bush, let alone Cheney, and then finding out that he's now institutionalizing —

JON Well, that's just one of the things is that when you give power to the executive office, that office is never going to give up that power.

THOMAS He's admitted as much, quite in his own way—you know he has this way of sort of wrapping himself in his own robes and moral rectitude that somehow he's the President but he knows already what it's like in terms of history. And, so, then he analyzed himself. "Yes, Yes, I said all that, but then I became President and you're not." (Laughs) "I became President and you're not, and because you're not the President, you don't know what I now know. And because I know what I now know, well, things are different." (Well--) He told Jon Stewart on *The Daily Show* some months ago, which I think people never really picked up on this. He was already considering his legacy and that he wanted to have this legal framework in

place. The last time I checked, the only legal framework that he is obligated, under a special oath, okay, to preserve, protect, and defend is the Constitution. (Right) There is no other legal framework.

JON Well, that's—you're very big into the Constitution, obviously, and he's a supposed Constitutional lawyer, to boot. So—[laughs]

THOMAS Let's say he's on—he is—I recognize his Seminole place in at least U.S. history and, obviously, partially World History, what will history ultimately say?

JON That he continued and expanded on (Yes) all of Bush's worst policies.

THOMAS Well, but Bush actually said in his own memoir that all this stuff, like the surveillance stuff, in particular, of course which is closest to me—there's a whole lot of other things, including torture, which we came [AUDIOBAD] state-sponsored program of just egregious proportions. (Right) And that's the CIA masking themselves as committee members, committee staffers, to see what they're reporting on. Yeah, they got stuff to cover up. Hayden lied, it's clear. Absolutely, lied before the Committee about this some years ago.

So, yeah, in terms of history, yeah—if you're presiding over—it's extraordinary power. You're right, you're not going to want to give it up. I saw—I was too close—I have to say, I saw it happen to people. This kind of power is extremely seductive, and when Bush handed Obama all of the state secrets and all that surveillance on a silver platter, Obama looked at it and said: "You know what? I'm going to keep that."

JON Right.

Now, what advice do you have for people who might be considering to blow the whistle on something?

THOMAS Oh, wow—given what I went through? (Laughs) You better first engage with an attorney that's REALLY experienced, a criminal defense attorney, who's really experienced in this space first. And second, also engage the services of a whistleblower support advocacy group, like the Government Accountability Project, where I ultimately went, but of course, after the fact, okay. Because I knew—see, I knew when I was indicted, facing 35 years in prison, that had been hanging over my head all those many years.

Many attempts to get me to plead out—to many years in prison, as it turns out. You've got another, much longer, deeper back-story here.

I knew that it would be challenging enough to deal with main justice, especially with William Welsh as their chief prosecutor, I knew it would be challenging enough dealing with my defense, my criminal defense, and of course, I had run out of money with my private attorney, so I had public defenders. I knew I had to find a way to influence the court of public opinion. I just didn't know at that time how I would do that. I just knew that I needed to. I knew that I couldn't say, because anything I said during the pre-trial criminal proceedings could be used against me. (Right)

So, long story short, I engaged—because Jesselyn Radack who heads up a National Security Human Rights program at the Government Accountability Project wrote this extraordinary Op Ed in the LA Times shortly after I was indicted, and I recognized, finally, someone gets what's at stake here. She had been a whistleblower herself during the early years of the Bush Administration, like I was. But her case went public quite rapidly in the Winter/Spring of 2002.

So, I engaged Radack. She became a representing whistleblower attorney and she defended me in the court of public opinion and became my voice when I had none. So if you're a whistleblower—and there are other organizations as well, depending on the type of whistleblowing you do—there are several channels, as well. But, of course, in my case I was facing prison as a felon.

So it's really important, particularly in light of what's happening under Obama. It's important to know, Bush never actually indicted anybody. The investigation of me did start in 2006, and went on for four years before I was ultimately indicted. But, he himself—and I meant to say this earlier—he in his own memoirs said with respect to surveillance: "Oh, it's just a policy difference. Why should anybody go to prison?" A policy difference. Even made reference to the torture program. (Right)

A policy difference? Well, for Obama, apparently for him we've got to set some examples. We've got to fry some people. Like really do it. And under Holder, Laney Brewer was a supervising official for Welsh. Welsh was given the Espionage Act portfolio and we're going to burn some people and that's—they borrowed some investigations that remained open from Bush, started some of their own.

And here we are, six years now into his administration and—I sort of lost count, eight, nine indictments, either been charged or indicted for espionage, and many, many people that you never even hear about that were threatened.

JON Right, oh, absolutely. Well, that's during the Bush Administration. And it's funny that you mention this, Cindy Sheehan—I don't know if you're familiar with her (Yeah). I guess you are. Okay. She even said that during the Bush Administration she would get arrested and they would let her go. Now, I have personal experience with Cindy Sheehan of being arrested under the Obama Administration and they made an example of us. They actually gave us a stay-away order that said if we went within anywhere within a certain area of the White House that we would face six months in prison. These kinds of things didn't happen under the Bush Administration.

THOMAS No, they didn't. I mean, I keep reminding people of this. Some people, you know, are in denial. Because, like, wait a minute, he was supposed to be different. Then there's sort of this dyspepsia of the political soul, like: "Who did we vote for? Who did we support? Look what's happening. He's actually expanded all of this." (Right) And it's protecting a look backwards to prosecute those. We want to make examples of them because they dared speak truth to another power. But we're definitely not—in all other respects. Not only are we going to look forward, we're going to expand the horizon. (Right) What the heck is that? I mean it's—

JON [Laughs] It's horrible. It's one of the reasons I like to point out the fact that we were lied to about 9/11 is to take away the justification for what's happening.

Anyway—

THOMAS And then you have the whole complex. I mean, this is—I'll leave you—there is this huge elephant. There still is. And most people still don't want to touch it.

Eisenhower warned the nation during his farewell address in 1961, about the military, the rise of the military industrial complex. And people were like what is he really talking about? They kind of dismissed it. Those words really, really do ring in my ear so often nowadays, because you have people like Hayden who cashed in big time with the Chertoff Group. You've got

Alexander who was even more bold about it. You saw what happened. It's been published. He had quote unquote "hired" the chief technology officer from NSA for 20 hours a week while he was still working full time at NSA.

I mean, what does that tell you? I mean, it's just—we're selling out National security, cyber security and all of this is just a way to make all kinds of money for the one percent? I mean, it just—this is what's happened. It's just become a huge growth industry, and people don't want that gravy train to end. They just don't.

JON Well, certain people don't. I certainly do.

THOMAS Well, no, certain people. But the certain people are in incredible positions of power.

JON Oh, you don't have to tell me. I know.

THOMAS And those people that are in power also are insuring that those in the corporate side are protected and more often than not, they're just going back and forth.

See, Mike McConnell is like the exemplar of how this works. I know him because he was the NSA Director from '92 to '96. He was a Navy Admiral. He retires. He goes to Booz Allen where I was working. He was on my promotion committee to management level. The day I first met him, actually, we were standing side-by-side in the men's room. That's how I actually met him, okay? (Laughs) So he gets to Booz, he gets the call, right, making beaucoup bucks, right? Gets the call to become the DNI. He comes back to serve his country one more time. Right? (Right) Then goes right back to Booz Allen. I mean, it's just, you know, it's like—[Laughs]

JON Yep, it's horrible.

THOMAS And all that knowledge, all that information is power and that can be converted into money. The temptations are huge. I still remember a very senior manager in a particular defense company come into my office when I was still at NSA offer me 4x my salary, okay, which at the time was \$130K plus. He says: We'll give you a base salary four times what you make now—he was talking \$600,000, before bonuses. (Wow) Just come work for us. You know we need someone like you.

I said: "You keep talking I'm going to turn you in to the contracting office." (Laughs) And he was all: "I never seen you like this." And he backed out of my office quite quickly. I mean, he was like figuring if you dangled enough money in front of him—well, that's happened. I had colleagues. Colleagues that said: "Tom, it's just—I can form my own company. I can hire about five or six people and million bucks. Boom. Just like that."

JON I respect people very highly who cannot be bought. I associate—I try to associate with as many of them as possible.

Is there any help that you need and if so, how can people help you?

THOMAS Well, help me, wow. It's been extraordinary. I mean, I don't talk about this much. I mean, it's—I went into severe debt. There's a lot—I'm free, but what price do you put on freedom?

JON Well, is there anywhere that anybody can go to donate to help you? Or—

THOMAS There's no specific site to donate. If anybody wants to donate, then I encourage them, and there is a Government Accountability Projects is to donate to their funds and designate it for National Security and Human Rights. That's what I can share with your listeners. Because that organization, they, in terms of—if you're talking about boxing as limited a budget as they have, which is shoestring budget, and as few people as they have, they fight several classes above their weight, okay? (Mm-hmm) And it's probably, right now as you ask me, that's what I would do.

I have sought other work, but no one—it's really interesting to become a whistleblower in this space and give them the publicity, because many people, even people that should know better, it's like, well, we're afraid if we hire you, because you're a whistleblower. It's either stated indirectly or quite directly. I've yet to find any other work besides what I do right now, which pretty much everybody knows that knows me in this space or has heard about me knows I work at an Apple Store. An extraordinary place to work, but it's certainly a lot different than what I used to do.

JON You are probably the only legitimate genius at an Apple Store in the entire company.

THOMAS Well, I'm actually an expert there.

JON [Laughs] Okay.

THOMAS But yeah, I'm still there, okay? Because I have to work. I'm a wage-earner employee. I have bills. I have debt—

JON I understand.

THOMAS But for me, there's a larger context here. For me, what's at risk is our very liberty and our very sovereignty. And the last thing that I'm going to do is remain silent. So that's why I've dedicated the rest of my life defending life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

JON That's why I don't think that you are a failure. Because, you said earlier that you failed, and I think the history is still being written, as to whether or not people like you, people like Coleen Rowley—who, by the way, I want to thank very much for making this interview possible. She is a wonderful human being and a brave individual in her own right.

THOMAS Sure is. No, I know her well. I've spoken in several forms with her. There was a period there not long after 9/11, 2002, 2003, where she was actually acknowledged with a couple of others. It was sort of the year of the whistleblower. And then whistleblowers became persona non-grata. (Right) One other thing I would tell your listeners. You will find this interesting. It should tell you how challenging it is for me and others. I'm actually writing a book about all of this. Recognizing the constraints, I'm under because of where I used to work. I'm writing a book about all of this. With Jesselyn Radack, and it's going on three years now and still cannot find a publisher.

JON Oh, believe me, I wrote a book—I wrote a book in late 2011, and I could not find a publisher, and so I just self-published because I wanted the information out there. It was more important for me to get the information out there than it was to get a publisher and so forth.

THOMAS Well, that's a route that I will consider sort of as a last resort and there are some new leads that have come my way that I'm going to run down over the next few months, but—

JON Well, I want to thank you Mr. Drake (Sure) for doing what you did and for being on my show. It's an honor and a privilege. Again, thank you very much for your time today. I hope people learned something from this.

THOMAS Well, thanks for having me.

JON Thank you very much and you have a good night.

THOMAS Yep. Take care now.

JON Bye, bye.



Chapter/Episode 12 – Philip Shenon – November 14, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Philip Shenon (PHIL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week we're going to further discuss the 9/11 Commission, Philip Zelikow, Saudi Arabia, and a number of other issues and concerns.

Okay, this is Jon, and I'm here with Phil Shenon. How are you doing today, Phil?

PHIL Fine, Jon, thanks for having me.

JON Oh, thanks for being on. I'm going to quickly read your bio.

Philip Shenon, the bestselling author of *The Commission: The Uncensored History of the 9/11 Investigation*, was a reporter for *The New York Times* for more than twenty years. As a Washington correspondent for the *Times*, he covered the Pentagon, the Justice Department, and the State Department. As a foreign correspondent for the paper, he reported from more than sixty countries and several war zones. He lives in Washington D.C.

All right, so, let's get into the questions. What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

PHIL I was home watching television when the second plane went in and, obviously, I thought at that moment a terrorist attack was underway and that I had to get to work. I live several blocks away from *The New York Times* Washington Bureau, so I began the long trek in, and as I was going in much of the city was trying to evacuate. I was going in and lots and lots of people were coming the other directions.

So, I spent most of that day, like every other journalist in Washington, trying to make sense of what we were seeing. And I do recall going to the White House shortly after I arrived at the Bureau just to see what the scene was and, again, it was one of utter panic with people trying to get away from the White House, to get away from downtown Washington on the assumption that another terrorist strike was coming.

JON Can you tell us a little bit about your history with The New York Times and how you came to be their reporter for the 9/11 Commission?

PHIL I began as a copy boy at *The New York Times* right out of college. I went to work for, as a copy boy, a columnist in the Washington Bureau by the name of James Reston who was the former executive editor in a real institution in Washington and he was a fantastic boss. And I've always said it was kind of tragic that my very best boss was the one I had first off at the beginning of my career.

But from there I worked my way up to being a Metro reporter in New York and then back to the Washington Bureau and then to several different posts overseas as a foreign correspondent. After working overseas for several years, I was sent back to the Washington Bureau where I had covered Congress and State Department and the Pentagon. And when the 9/11 Commission was established, the decision was made by my editors in the Washington Bureau that they needed a full-time correspondent. And at that point, I think I was doing sort of general investigative projects and they put me on it. I was actually kind of reluctant to take on the assignment of covering the 9/11 Commission, but it certainly proved to be one of the best assignments I would ever have.

JON Wow, so you were reluctant to do it.

Did you attend every hearing? And what was your opinion of how the 9/11 Commission conducted itself publicly. And when I say that, I'm referring to things like the back and forth banter between commissioners and witnesses. Stuff like that, and not holding people under oath and so on and so forth—originally—the families had to shame them into holding people under oath. What is your opinion of it?

PHIL Well, I think I attended most of the hearings. Actually, I tried to attend all of the important ones. I will say, having covered Congress, that I thought by comparison to the way Congress holds public hearings, the 9/11 Commission didn't do a bad job. And there was this banter that could become very awkward among the commissioners, but it was fairly limited. I had criticism of the way they ran the public hearings, most importantly the hearing at which Condoleezza Rice testified, because she just played them for time and was able—and was really rarely asked a significant question that she gave a significant answer to.

JON Right, yes, Condoleezza Rice seemed to do a lot of evading that day.

PHIL She knew the time was limited and her strategy clearly was when she was asked a question, she would drone on and on and on and on, eating up time so she couldn't be asked the questions that the other commissioners wanted to address to her. Because, obviously, she should have been a principal target of this investigation.

JON Absolutely, she committed perjury, essentially. And should have been held accountable for that. They were talking about—and, by the way, she started saying this when the August 6th PDB was first leaked that the information was historical in nature and so on and forth, but it was present tense information. And, there were a lot of things that she said that could be considered to be a lie.

PHIL Certainly, she was accused of that at the time. And, you know, I think the record shows that in the Summer of 2001, there was a tremendous amount of intelligence information, (Correct) the August 6th PDB was only part of it. But there's a tremendous amount of intelligence suggesting that a terrorist attack on American soil might be imminent. And a lot of that material ended up on her desk, and the question becomes: "What did she do with that information?" And the record shows she did remarkably little with that information.

JON Well, as you say, it was the Summer of Threats and the August 6th PDB got a lot of attention in the 9/11 Commission and, from what we've learned from Kurt Eichenwald, apparently, the PDBs that came before it make the August 6th PDB pale by comparison as far as the Stark warnings and so on and so forth.

PHIL But I think in my book about the 9/11 Commission I give a roster of the titles of all of the intelligence reports that came in that summer, and you're right, the August 6th PDB was only one of several that were red alerts that something terrible was about to happen.

JON Right. Did you talk to either the 9/11 Family Steering Committee or 9/11 CitizensWatch during the time of the 9/11 Commission?

PHIL You know, I get lost at a lot of the names of a lot of the family groups and the other groups that were operating at that time. I certainly think I spoke to most of the major advocates on the part of the families. And I certainly spoke to the Jersey Girls, in particular, on a daily basis.

JON Lorie Van Auken actually told me that the families saw the banter that I spoke of as a waste of time when they could have been asking some of their questions.

And, it's funny, you brought up Condoleezza Rice, but before Condoleezza Rice testified, they sent in Richard Armitage in her stead, and some of the banter I was talking about, they were talking to him about basketball and stuff like that.

PHIL Well, because Armitage didn't have the ability to answer a lot of the questions that he was being asked in her stead. He didn't know the answers. That was a really wasted day. And, of course, what happened is that Richard Clarke testified and that blew up in the White House's face, and Condoleezza Rice's face in particular, and she was then forced to testify.

JON Right, and when Richard Armitage did testify, the Jersey Girls and I think other family members walked out in protest.

PHIL Right, and I think their protest was principally focused on the fact they thought Condoleezza Rice should be sitting there, not Armitage. And Armitage, I think, did the best job he could under ridiculous circumstances.

And, of course, what happened in the end is that the pressure built for Rice herself to testify.

JON Well, I firmly believe that people like Richard Armitage are criminals, but that's my opinion.

At what point did you realize there was a cover-up transpiring?

PHIL Well, I'm not quite sure I know what you mean by cover-up. I mean it was very clear to me from the earliest days that there were some terrible conflict of interest problems that this commission faced. Most importantly the choice of Philip Zelikow as the executive director, since I was startled on the day of his appointment to discover that he was a friend of Condoleezza Rice's. He'd written a book with her. What was this man who was a close friend of Condoleezza Rice's doing leading the day-to-day investigation? An investigation that should have made Condoleezza Rice in many ways a target.

JON Well, the cover-up that I'm referring to, I mean, there are a multitude of cover-ups. I mean, every agency; every alphabet agency, essentially lied. You can look anywhere. You can look at the CIA about the information regarding the two hijackers in San Diego. They lied about that. You could look at the NSA who told the Joint Congressional Inquiry that it couldn't identify where the calls were coming from San Diego to Yemen, when in fact they did know the identities of the phone numbers, of the hijackers. NORAD lied.

PHIL And, clearly, the 9/11 Commission believed that NORAD lied, and they also were very concerned about the truthfulness of George Tenet, the director of Central Intelligence. (Right) I can see where there were a number of discreet cover-ups going on.

JON Right, and with regard to NORAD's cover-up, I think that staffers and members of the 9/11 Commission wanted to refer them to the Justice Department for a criminal investigation, but I think it was Philip Zelikow that actually got them to refer it to the Department of Justice Inspector General instead.

The difference being that the Inspector General can't actually hold anyone accountable. They can only recommend that people be held accountable. Whereas the Justice Department could hold people accountable. And from

what I read, I think it was Frank Rich who said that the Department of Defense, Inspector General, during the time these investigations were taking place was a corrupt individual? He was a Bush puppet of sorts.

PHIL I know—I hadn't been in contact with these people for some time, but I know the staffers believed that at the end of the day, this was a terrible whitewash by the Pentagon of real misconduct, including perjury by—including people well up the ranks at the Pentagon. Certainly, there was a great deal of concern that there had been Generals who had lied under oath to the 9/11 Commission about the events of the morning of the attacks.

JON Right, and this, unfortunately, we saw this all throughout the investigations is that people lied and we don't know the truth about a number of things as a result of that, and no one was held accountable.

PHIL Right. It is a thoroughly remarkable thing that all these years later essentially nobody lost their jobs, nobody was even demoted as a result of what seems to be sort of blistering incompetence, or worse, in the run-up to 9/11 and on the day itself.

JON Well, and not only were they not, but they were in some cases rewarded and promoted throughout Government. And it makes no sense whatsoever. In fact, I think, Thomas Kean at one point said that if it was his job or if he was working in Government, or something to that effect, that there would be people in Government that would no longer be there if he had an opinion on the subject.

PHIL Well, it's fine for him to say that, but of course, he was instrumental in the decision on the 9/11 Commission not to hold individuals accountable.

JON Right, and at the very first public hearing I think he said: We're not here to point fingers. And when I spoke with Lorie Van Auken, 9/11 Family Member Lorie Van Auken on this show, she told me that the families DID expect, you know, if people were to lie under oath that the Commission would have held them accountable. That's what the families were hoping for.

PHIL Sure, and they were—I remember the day of that hearing when Governor Kean announced that there would be no finger-pointing and no personal accountability, and I remember how angry the families were that day.

JON Yeah, it's just horrible.

What are some of the questions you still have about 9/11?

PHIL Oh, I have plenty of them. You know, principally, I think a big disclosure in my book that I've been kind of disappointed nobody's followed up on is, there apparently is a vast record at the NSA, the National Security Agency, of files that document what was known about terrorist threats before 9/11, Al-Qaeda threats before 9/11. And the 9/11 Commission really bungled its handling of the NSA files. It really never got into depth with those files until the very last stages of the investigation. And as best I can tell, those files still have not been gone over all these years later.

JON Well, it's funny that you mention that. My last guest was NSA whistleblower Thomas Drake, and he is the one who testified before the Joint Congressional Inquiry that showed the smoking guns. He provided them with a report that showed the information that the NSA had prior to 9/11 and apparently, all of those records have been destroyed, according to him. The only reference is that he did testify. That's the only information out there.

But, yes, as you said, the 9/11 Commission almost completely ignored the NSA and, I think, it was you that wrote it was sexier to concentrate on the CIA, and stuff to that effect. And it was Philip Zelikow, essentially, that steered the Commission away from the NSA. And then at the end of the 9/11 Commission he made some kind of statement that said: "Yes, it's unfortunate that we might have missed some information. We just ran out of time." And I thought that it was interesting that he, of all people, would say that considering it seemed to be that he was responsible for not going to the NSA.

PHIL Well, I think the responsibility probably belongs in several laps, but he—I was intrigued that he was ready to acknowledge that the commission had made a mistake by not going deeper into the NSA files. I think that was a big concession on his part.

JON So what we found out last week was that the NSA had a ton of information about Al-Qaeda, about the 9/11 attacks apparently. And, who knows? We have no idea what was in those files.

PHIL And, I'll say, in terms of cover-ups, my understanding—and I should have put this in the book—it was that the NSA was actually willing to cooperate. It sort of said to the 9/11 Commission, you can come to the NSA at Fort Mead, Maryland. You can go through all the materials, and that they were surprised that nobody showed up to do it. And it was only one particular member of the 9/11 Commission staff who blew the whistle at the end of the investigation and said: "Listen, most of the raw material in the Government's files about terrorist threats is from the NSA and why haven't we gone through that material?" And it's only after she blew the whistle at the end of the investigation that there was this frantic weekend trip to the NSA to try to get to some of that material, but at that point it was too late and most of that material wasn't reviewed and is not reflected in the 9/11 Commission's final report.

What other questions I have? I, like everybody else, am fascinated to know what's in the famous 28 pages, because I have many questions about Saudi Arabian Government involvement in Al-Qaeda and even possibly in the 9/11 plot, and these 28 pages, apparently, reflect some of the evidence of that, and of course, that's still being denied to the public.

JON Well, we're going to get into that a little bit later.

Now, you once told me that you were surprised that the "9/11 Truth Movement" wasn't using your work to further its cause, and that indicates to me that you had sympathy for us and for what some of us were trying to do. Am I right about that?

PHIL I certainly support the efforts of the truth movement to force the Government to release more of what's in the files. I was surprised after revealing what I revealed about the NSA files—the files that were not reviewed by the 9/11 Commission—I was surprised that the Truth movement didn't jump on the idea of pressuring the Government to release those files, or at least have somebody go back in there and take a look at them. And my book had a lot about this question of the Saudi Government's possible involvement with Al-Qaeda and what the 9/11 Commission knew, and what it wasn't able to report in its final report. And I'm surprised that people didn't jump on what I disclosed about that to argue again for further disclosure.

JON Well, I think you wrote the NSA when they opened their doors to the 9/11 Commission, you said perversely the 9/11 Commission seemed less

interested. The more the NSA was willing, the less interested the 9/11 Commission seemed to be.

PHIL As I understand it, NSA was ready from the get-go to open its files to the 9/11 Commission and it just didn't happen. And, as you mentioned, my book, it was told to me by members of the 9/11 Commission staff that there was this fixation on the CIA as this very, the sexy spy agency they wanted to investigate. And the NSA, which was perceived at that point as a bunch of sort of engineers and geeks and a less interesting place to try to understand. Times have changed and the NSA is considered a much sexier story than it was several years ago.

But that was it. It seems to have been—the idea was that it was just more interesting to investigate the CIA than the NSA, even though the NSA might have had much more valuable information to share with the investigation.

JON Well, one of the interesting things is that some of the information they came across supposedly tied Iran, or—

PHIL No, that's actually what got the 9/11 Commission very interested, right at the tail end of its investigation. This one staffer on the 9/11 Commission was going through some of the NSA documents and noticed the NSA suggested there were ties between Al-Qaeda and Iran, not Iraq, which had been the fixation of the Bush administration and so many others before in that time period. And it was on the basis of that information about a possible Iranian tie to Al-Qaeda that led the staff of the 9/11 Commission to try to get to some of the NSA files before the Commission closed its doors.

JON Well, I think Russ Baker, Gareth Porter, and, well, myself have written about the idea of Iran being connected to 9/11 and it just doesn't seem credible based on the information that we're aware of.

Now, Dietrich Snell, recently there was a lawsuit, and somebody was trying to blame Iran for 9/11. And Dietrich Snell, who was one of the staffers, I think, on the 9/11 Commission was a star witness for this courtroom. And, apparently, at the end the judge ruled that Iran had something to do with 9/11, and it's just ridiculous to me because Dietrich Snell—

PHIL What I recall is that some of the documentation turned up by the 9/11 Commission at the tail end showed that some of the 9/11 hijackers had

transited in and out of Iran and had been involved with Hezbollah and Lebanon which is tied into Iran. That for some reason the Iranian Government had made life easier for some of the hijackers in the months and years leading up to the attack. All I can tell you is that there was nothing to tie Iraq to Al-Qaeda, but there was some evidence that might tie Iran to Al-Qaeda. That's what I was going to say the files apparently showed.

JON Well, but they—from what I remember simply the hijackers passed through Iran—they passed through Germany, as well, so does that tie Germany to the 9/11 attacks? They passed through Saudi Arabia, obviously. That just, it just doesn't seem credible to me. And Iran has denied it on several occasions. In fact, President Ahmadinejad, when he was still in office, wrote a letter to Bush saying, we know we're being lied to about 9/11 and so on and so forth.

PHIL I wouldn't put much stock in President Ahmadinejad's truthfulness, but—

JON I'm just saying—go, ahead.

PHIL All I can tell you is that what the NSA shared with the 9/11 Commission at the tail end—or rather, what the staff of the 9/11 Commission discovered at the tail end of the 9/11 Commission investigation was that there was possibly a link between Iran and Al-Qaeda and it's a shame that they didn't know about that much earlier on during the investigation because they would have the chance to follow-up. There was no time to follow-up.

JON Well, with regard to the "9/11 Truth Movement," I am aware that people started to give you a hard time because you weren't talking about controlled demolition or saying that 9/11 was an inside job. And I want you to know that I have used your work a lot and I want to thank you for the tidbits that you did provide to us.

PHIL Well, I appreciate that and I say I do think—I did disclose a lot about this turmoil within the staff of the 9/11 Commission and Zelikow's role, which is something that also has not been widely followed up on in the wake of my book.

JON Oh, my goodness, I've tried to bring so much attention to Philip Zelikow, because I think that's one thread that if you pulled on it, it could unravel the entire 9/11 cover-up. He was, essentially, in charge of the 9/11 Commission.

(Mm-hmm) He did a number of things and several of them you wrote about. He wrote a complete outline with Ernest May of the final 9/11 Report before the investigation even started, and they decided to keep that outline a secret from the staffers (Mm-hmm).

With regard to Saudi Arabia's role, you wrote about how he blocked half of the investigation requests that—he was making it difficult for individuals to gain access to the 28 redacted pages we were talking about, including—

PHIL He actually fired a staffer over—

JON Exactly, Dana Lesemann, who went through a back channel to gain access to those 28 redacted pages.

By the way, 28 redacted pages that I think she helped to author (that's right) because she was a part of the Joint Congressional Inquiry—she was a part of the Joint Congressional Inquiry.

PHIL Right—No, no, she was one of the two authors of that document, as I understand.

JON Yeah, it was Mike Jacobson and her, I believe (Exactly), and she went through a back channel and then Zelikow fired her. (Mm-hmm)
And you're right about how he and Dietrich Snell took part in a late-night editing session to remove Saudi support for the hijackers from the final 9/11 Report and they relegated it to a footnote in the back of the book.

One thing you wrote about—and I have to ask you about this—in your book you said that Philip Zelikow was sympathetic to the Saudi investigators. And just based on what I just went over, it seems contradictory to me.

PHIL That he was sympathetic—I'm losing you a bit.

Well, I'd say, I don't think—the staffers had on that particular issue as I recall, the staffers, the lower-level staffers, who were doing a lot of the actual digging had just as much anxiety over Dietrich Snell, and it was overseeing that part of the investigation, as they did with Philip Zelikow. (Right) But there was certainly a feeling that they had turned up a lot of very troubling evidence suggesting ties between the Saudi Government and

Al-Qaeda and, even possibly, to the 9/11 attacks. And they were very angry that that material did not go into the final report.

JON Right, and I don't know if you're aware, but the memorandums for the records that had been released, the MFRs from the 9/11 Commission, which are basically overviews of interviews done with witnesses. Prince Bandar's MFR is classified. In three of the MFRs having to do with people that are related to the Saudi side of things have specific statements calling into question the credibility of the witnesses that they're talking to. And yet, the 9/11 Report still absolved the Government of Saudi Arabia.

And with regard to the 28 redacted pages, Saudi Arabia is still pointing to the 9/11 Commission and saying: "Well, look, they cleared us."

PHIL The Saudi's, to their credit, have actually called for the 28 pages to be released.

JON Right. I think it's possible when they called for the release of the 28-redacted pages, I think they pretty much knew that they would not be released. (Right)

Now, with regard to the MFRs that I'm talking about there were—well, three of the individuals that were interviewed, one of them was Osama Bassnan and this is directly from his MFR. It says:

"The interview failed to yield any new information of note. Instead, in the writer's opinion, it established beyond cavil the witness' utter lack of credibility on virtually every material subject."

Fahad al Thumairy, it says:

"Our general impression of Thumairy is that he was deceptive during both interviews."

And the last one is Saud al-Rashid:

"We believe that al-Rasheed was being deceptive. Our impression that he has had enough time to develop a coherent story and is sticking to it (and that he even may have been coached at some point)."

PHIL Well, that's all to the credit of the staff of the 9/11 Commission that they saw these guys as not telling the truth and they wanted to report that.

JON Right, but even still the 9/11 Report absolves Saudi Arabia even though things like that transpired.

Now, are you aware of the efforts underway to get the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11 released?

PHIL Yeah, no, I saw and there was a piece in the New Yorker magazine a couple of weeks ago about it, and I know that there's additional efforts to get them declassified and it's bipartisan, which is intriguing.

JON Right, and unfortunately, there was an event that took place yesterday in New York City and it got no press that I could see. I have a story here. Are you aware of what Obama, the Obama administration has done with regard to Saudi Arabia and 9/11?

PHIL Umm, only in the most general sense.

JON Well, okay, a little story.

When Obama first came into office, one of the first things he did was have a meeting with 9/11 Family Members. And the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the closing of GITMO. And while at that meeting Kristen Breitweiser asked him to release the 28 redacted pages and he said he would and never got back to her. And then I think it was a week later he used that meeting with the families as the justification for sending more troops to Afghanistan. It was a reminder, a great reminder. Something to that effect.

And then, about five months later Elena Kagan on behalf of the Obama administration filed a brief with the Supreme Court asking them not to hear the case, essentially, of the families. So, essentially, they were siding with the Saudis over the 9/11 families. And 9/11 Family Member and Jersey Girl, Kristen Breitweiser, said at the time:

"I find this reprehensible. One would have hoped that the Obama administration would have taken a different stance

than the Bush administration, and you wonder what message this sends to victims of terrorism around the world."

On May 30, 2009, the victims' family members released two press releases. The first one states:

"Today the Obama Administration filed in the Supreme Court a document that expressed the Administration's decision to stand with a group of Saudi princes and against the right of American citizens — 9/11 Family Members — to have our day in court. Let there be no doubt: The filing was political in nature and stands as a betrayal of everyone who lost a loved one or was injured on September 11, 2001."

The second statement says that:

"On the day that President Obama holds his first summit with Saudi Arabian King Abdullah in Riyadh, the 9/11 Families United to Bankrupt Terrorism charged that recent actions by his administration would enable five of the king's closest relatives to escape accountability for their role in financing and materially supporting the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks."

The second press release lists:

"Allegations made in 2002 of the Saudi royal family's sponsorship and support of Al-Qaeda that the families believe have been ignored by the Obama Administration."

So, basically, Obama has continued Bush's stance with regard to protecting Saudi Arabia. Now, at the end of last year, December 2013, there was a lower court that actually gave the families the right to sue some people in Saudi Arabia. I think they absolved like the Bin Laden group and so forth. They can't sue like those people, but they can sue some people in Saudi Arabia, and just recently, I think it was in June, the Supreme Court let that decision stand.

So now, right now, the families are trying to get the 28 redacted pages released so they can bring them into a courtroom. And as we talked about,

you know, the Saudi's are going to point to the 9/11 Report, which absolved them.

PHIL Well, but again, maybe with the release of the 28 pages the world will be a difference place because people will have evidence they don't now have.

JON Well, but I'm saying like just recently, Lawrence Wright wrote an article about the 28 redacted pages, and he cites Philip Zelikow who said—I think he said: Wild accusations and so on, like he gave no credibility to the idea or the notion that the Government of Saudi Arabia may have been involved. And it concerns me for the families' sake if they do bring this into court. The 9/11 Commission, it can't be looked at as credible. In my mind anyway. At least with regard to that—well, with regard to a number of other things—but, especially, with regard to that.

You once told me that you were interested in the possible Pakistani ISI connection to 9/11. Do you still have questions about that?

PHIL Sure, I haven't revisited that issue in a long time, but obviously, Al-Qaeda had its training camps in Afghanistan. People used to reach those training camps through Pakistan and it was always believed as I understood it that elements of the Pakistani intelligence agency were letting them go in and out of Afghanistan, and what ties were there between Pakistan and Al-Qaeda. The fact more recently that Osama bin Laden turned out to be living in Pakistan should give us real reason to wonder what has the Pakistan intelligence agency been up to all these years?

JON The story goes that then head of the ISI Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed ordered Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to wire transfer \$100,000 to Mohamed Atta. And CNN reported on it two times, and then the story seemed to go away, and other people were put in place as the paymasters of 9/11. And, meanwhile, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh sits in jail in prison for the part he supposedly had to play with the murder of Daniel Pearl. And, incidentally, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh recently attempted suicide in his prison cell. And he's somebody I'd love to be able to talk to.

Now, it's interesting to me that after, I think after CNN reported that he was the paymaster of 9/11, there was an indictment made against him in the latter part of 2001, but it had to do with a crime he committed like six years earlier, or something to that effect. It's just interesting to me that it seems

like they were interested in getting him, but they didn't want to tie him to 9/11 it seems.

PHIL I have no expertise on that, I just think the Pakistani ISI seemed to be involved in a whole bunch of unsavory activities going back decades. They played a real double game with the United States, supposedly our allies, but often operating against the United States. Certainly operating against the United States military. And that should be much better explored than it has been.

JON Well, they have also worked with the CIA.

PHIL Oh, I'd say it's a double game.

JON Yeah it's—there's a lot of questions about it. When the FBI talked to Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, he said he didn't want to talk about his ties to the Pakistani ISI for fear of his life or the life of his family (Mm-hmm), and it just—I've never seen anyone in Government come forward and say why these allegations are incorrect, that Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, had nothing to do with 9/11 and here's why. I've never seen that. So I still have—to me, if you look at the reporting on the issue, it seems that there's more reason to think that it did happen than not. And so, it's just very interesting to me.

Now, one of the biggest revelations in your book is that Karl Rove was speaking to the executive director of the 9/11 Commission, Philip Zelikow, during the time of the 9/11 Commission. Can you please tell us about the specifics of this allegation?

PHIL Well, it's complicated, but it was apparently known on the staff. It certainly was known to Philip Zelikow's secretary that Karl Rove called in a number of times during the course of the investigation. And when it became well known on the staff that Karl Rove was calling in people were alarmed. You know, what was the executive director of the 9/11 Commission doing on the phone with the man often referred to as Bush's brain, Bush's chief political guru. What possible reason could those two men have to talk?

And there's this odd situation in which Zelikow apparently calls in his secretary, closes the door, and orders her not to keep a phone log any further of his contacts with the White House. And she is so alarmed by this that she goes to the general counsel of the 9/11 Commission by the name of

Dan Marcus and says what should she do? She'd just been told by Zelikow not to keep a record of his phone calls. And the general counsel, Dan Marcus, tells her to just ignore Zelikow's orders. I know that Dr. Zelikow later went on television to say that this was all a figment of somebody's imagination. There had been no phone logs.

I can tell you that I've seen that phone log. Because it's your definition of the word "log" but there is a—the secretary kept a record of Zelikow's phone calls, including these phone calls from Rove. There was a log to that degree.

And, Zelikow has acknowledged, or went on to acknowledge that he did talk to Rove. And the reason he talked to Rove was because of Zelikow's past work at the University of Virginia where he was an historian and this was all very innocent. I can't tell you the content of the phone calls between Rove and Zelikow, I can just tell you that when the staff of the 9/11 Commission found out that Zelikow was on the phone with Rove, there was a huge sense of shock and alarm.

JON Well, he shouldn't have been talking to him at all. The 9/11 Commission was supposed to be this non-partisan or bi-partisan effort and here we have the executive director of the 9/11 Commission speaking with the White House Chief of Staff and telling people not to record his phone calls. And, as you mentioned on television, he contradicted himself. He said: "Two of the three people that took my calls" and then he says: "the commission had no phone logs." So, he's contradicting himself, essentially. He's playing semantics. There were no official "9/11 Commission phone logs" (Well, I told--) but he had three people taking his messages.

PHIL Well, it seemed crazy the idea that there weren't—so nobody was recording messages when they came in? Of course they were. And I've said, I've seen the pages of the log in which the secretary recorded these phone calls from Rove. And it's not just the secretary who offers this story. The—I say she protested to the general counsel of the commission about this. And I think if you look at the record, neither the secretary nor the general counsel have denied the accuracy of that story in my book.

JON I honestly believe that Philip Zelikow needs to be put on the stand, under oath, to take questions, and if he lies under oath then he should be held accountable. I honestly, I think he's a criminal. I think he belongs in jail.

You might disagree with me, but he was instrumental in making sure that the real truth of 9/11 was never told.

And, you know what? For Karl Rove, I think he was like an architect of the 9/11 Commission, wasn't he? Didn't he select Thomas Kean?

PHIL Yes, well, he was certainly in on the decision to select Kean, and I believe he was in on the decision, initially, to have Henry Kissinger.

JON Right, exactly. I mean, it's just ridiculous.

Now, you once wrote an article entitled "They Knew but Did Nothing" for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. What are some of the indications that you are aware of that they "knew" about the impending attacks?

PHIL Well, that was actually an excerpt of my book, so it offered the chapter of my book in which I reported that in the summer of threats, these intelligence warnings came in daily, almost hourly, warning the White House, warning the National Security Council that there was a dire terrorist threat that summer and that somebody needed to get on top of it to try to pre-empt it and it's clear that the White House did unhappily precious little with that information. So that's what I talk about. That's what they knew. They knew in the sense they had these intelligence reports of an imminent terrorist strike and they did remarkably little with that information.

JON Well, from what I've read, some of the Neocons within the Bush administration, were actually telling Bush that the threats concerning Osama bin Laden were disinformation and the real threat is Iraq.

PHIL Well, yeah, you have to remember in this time period, the Bush White House, they didn't seem terribly interested in the threat of Al-Qaeda. They were much more alarmed by the axis of evil. They were concerned by North Korea, Iran, and most importantly, Iraq.

JON Well, from what I've read, their main focus was Iraq and partly Afghanistan to a certain extent.

Now, my last question—is a difficult question, but it's a hurdle that a lot of people face, so I'm just going to ask you.

Regardless of whether or not you think the evidence is there to support this, do you think it's possible that elements within our Government and other Governments may have been criminally complicit in the attacks? Could people be capable of such a thing?

PHIL I just have not seen any credible evidence of it. I certainly hear that allegation made.

JON Well, that's not what I'm—I'm not asking whether or not you think the evidence is there. I'm just asking do you think that it is possible for elements within our Government to do something like that?

PHIL Well, anything is possible. But it's not my job to report what is possible in this world, because everything is possible. I can only—if I saw credible evidence of it, I would have reported it. It would have been the story of the decade, the story of my lifetime. I just didn't see it.

JON Right, and it's unfortunate—I think information out there exists that suggests such a thing.

PHIL Well, let me ask you a question. What is that information? Give me one clear example of it.

JON One clear example of criminal complicity? Well, Okay, look at Alec Station—Doug Miller, two FBI agents were stationed at Alec Station, which was the CIA's Bin Laden group and one of the FBI agents wanted to send a warning to the FBI that one of the hijackers had a U.S. visa and under orders from Tom Wilshire, somebody blocked the cable that the FBI agent wanted to send, and then hours later sends out a cable to the CIA saying that the FBI has been notified.

It just seems like criminal behavior to me. I'm not—I don't know for sure. One of the things that I do is I admit that I don't know what happened on 9/11, or who was ultimately responsible. It just seems there are instances within the Government that people were trying to do their jobs and they started to be blocked at the highest levels from doing their job. One of the things that—

PHIL But it's your suggestion though that they were being blocked from doing their jobs because somebody wanted the terrorist attack to take place on 9/11.

JON It seems that way to me. I mean—

PHIL I certainly heard the allegation made that people were blocking action before 9/11 because they were trying to protect perhaps some of the hijackers because the hijackers were somehow Government informants?

JON That's one of the theories is that—

PHIL I've heard that theory offered, and I think that was—I think there was a flapover, some comment Richard Clarke made in recent years about that. But, again, inside involvement that 9/11 was an effort by elements of the United States Government to carry out that attack? I certainly would like to believe that wouldn't be the case, and I certainly haven't seen any credible evidence to show it was the case.

JON I ask—I don't think people should undercut the notion though that it might be possible, and that might be why there are so many coverups. And, when I look at the Bush administration they were more than willing—they helped to rewrite EPA reports that put thousands of people in New York in danger, and now thousands of 9/11 first responders are sick and over a thousand have died. They were more than willing to lie us into war, which resulted in thousands of our soldiers being killed and upwards of 1.25 million Iraqis dead.

I mean, it just seems like they would have no problems killing 3,000 people considering what other actions they've done. Maybe I'm wrong. It is possible I'm wrong to think such a thing. I just, I don't know. And I wish I did know. So—I really do.

All right.

PHIL I'm with you in the sense that I do believe that anything is possible. But, I think the business that I'm in requires me to not report everything that is possible, but to report what I can. And I think the evidence that I offered in that book and elsewhere at least gives some evidence to people like you to demand further release of information about what exactly the Government knew and what it was doing before 9/11.

JON Well, and that's another thing, the 9/11 Commission released—Oh, Christ, I think it was 35 percent of the documents that they had and that, you know,

they're still holding so much more. And many of the documents that had been released are greatly redacted.

You know, so, we have the 28 redacted pages of the—

PHIL I don't think that was a decision of the 9/11 Commission though, and I think I've heard—

JON No, it wasn't.

PHIL But I think I've heard recently that Kean and Hamilton have called for the release of more of the documents, including the 28 pages.

JON Yes, in fact, I'm the one that posted the video of them saying that. (Laughs)
No, but I understand—

PHIL That's all a step forward.

JON Right, well, but it's not happening in—

All right, my very last question for you and I understand that you just wrote a book. I've read a review of the book. I haven't read the book yet.

You recently released a book on the JFK assassination. Can you please tell us about this?

PHIL Sure. Well, actually, that book I was taken to that book by my first book. The first book was about the 9/11 Commission. After that book came out, I got a phone call at my desk in the Washington Bureau of *The New York Times* from a prominent American lawyer who had begun his career almost 50 years earlier on the other great blue ribbon commission investigation of our lifetimes, which is the Warren Commission. And he said wouldn't you like to do a similar book about the Warren Commission. And he promised to help me meet all the staffers who were still alive who participated in that investigation.

So, off I went and that was supposed to be sort of an insiders' history of the Warren Commission. It became a much larger book because I kept discovering evidence about the assassination that had not been revealed to the Warren Commission that had been covered up—to some extent shades of 9/11. And the discovery at the end of the research on the Kennedy book

was that the large discovery in my own mind that the two great national tragedies of my lifetime—the Kennedy assassination and 9/11—just did not have to happen. There was more than enough intelligence and Government files before those two awful incidents to have allowed the Government to pre-empt them. But combination of incompetence and laziness prevented that from happening.

JON So, your position is that incompetence or neglect is why Lee Harvey Oswald—you think Lee Harvey Oswald was the shooter? I don't know.

PHIL I think all the most credible evidence points to him as the shooter. But the question is who else knew about—I mean, Oswald was portrayed by the Warren Commission as a total lone wolf, that nobody knew what he was going to do; nobody could have predicted what he was going to do; nobody helped him do what he was going to do—and doing research on my book I think I found evidence to suggest that people did know what Oswald was going to do. That he talked openly about it and that some of those people may have encouraged him to go to Dallas to do what he did.

JON Well, from—unfortunately, I'm not much of a JFK expert as much as I am a 9/11 expert, but I think there was something in the 70s that there was an investigation that found there was more than one shooter. Is that right?

PHIL [Laughs] Jon, we'll be on this for hours if we go down that path.

JON Okay, no—

PHIL No, there was an investigation by Congress, by the House Elect Committee on Assassinations, and they were pretty much going to support the Warren Commission Report until the final stages of that investigation. There was some acoustical evidence produced at the final stages to suggest there was a second gunman in Dealey Plaza, subsequent analysis by lots and lots and lots of very credible scientists showed that that acoustical evidence was wrong. And my understanding is that all the most credible evidence points to one shooter in Dealey Plaza and that was Lee Harvey Oswald.

JON Well, I—

PHIL But that doesn't mean there wasn't a conspiracy though, because if people knew what Oswald was going to do it, and encouraged him to do what he

was going to do, and helped him—promised him help—so he was able to carry it out, you are talking about by legal definition a conspiracy.

JON So, from what I've read, the book basically focuses on the Commission, and it was a lot like the 9/11 Commission and how much a cover-up or white-wash it was.

PHIL Well, the—

JON See, to me, there's an old saying: "It's not the crime that gets you; it's the cover-up." And there are just so many examples of people lying, of people attempting to hide information, or to cover-up information—

PHIL It is even more clear-cut in the case of the Kennedy assassination and the Warren Commission. It's very clear how the—that there were cover-ups, there were lots of lies told under oath, and we're all paying the price for that today, because, you know, all that cover-up resulted in all the conspiracy theories we are now confronted with.

JON Well, I don't know. See, to me, the phrase "conspiracy theory" is just—it's a phrase used by the establishment to silence and/or discredit dissent. Like if—the corporate media over the last 10 years have done its very best to paint people like me—who's an advocate for 9/11 justice, who supports the families seeking 9/11 justice, who supported the 9/11 first responders seeking healthcare—they were painting people like me as no different as a baby killer or dog torturer. If you even say "truther" today or "9/11 Truther" you have people cringe because of the campaign of the corporate media over the years.

And the phrase "conspiracy theory" I think was first brought about because of the JFK assassination.

PHIL Well, I think it goes back much further than that. You know, there were conspiracy theories about Lincoln and—I think that phrase has been around a long time, well before Kennedy. But, it obviously really took flight after the Kennedy assassination.

JON Right. I wish, I hope someday that we have truth. I hope that there is some form of accountability with regard to the 9/11 attacks. I hope that the War on Terror ends. This perpetual war can't continue.

I just can't imagine being a family member, like one of the Jersey Girls who knows everything that we do and has had to watch their names of their loved ones used to do all these horrible things around the world. All the while not knowing exactly what happened, who was responsible and so on and so forth. When you try to put yourself in their shoes, it's just unimaginable. At least to me, it's unimaginable.

PHIL I agree, and that's why I dedicated my first book to the 9/11 families and their quest for the truth because it was clear to me they did not have the full truth at that point.

JON I hope that maybe you start pushing in your articles for the release of things like the 28 redacted pages, or the documents from the 9/11 Commission, in some of your articles in the future.

PHIL And I think if you take a look at the piece in *The New Yorker* a couple of weeks ago, the author actually credits me in my book for making clear why that information should be made public.

JON Right, excellent.

Well, Phil this was a long time coming. We've corresponded for years through email. This is actually the first time we've ever spoken on the phone, that I know of.

Anyway, I want to thank you very much for your time today, and I hope to hear from you again. And good luck with all of your endeavors and, especially, with your new book. And thanks for taking the time today.

PHIL Great, Jon, my pleasure.

JON All right, Phil, have a good day.

PHIL Thanks a lot, Jon. Talk to you later.

JON Bye, bye.



Chapter/Episode 13 – John Albanese – December 14, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

John Albanese (JOHN)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. Today's show is going to focus on the topic of disinformation, misinformation, the infiltration of movements, among a number of other issues. There's even a little debate on how important the topic of 9/11 is in the scheme of things in today's world.

Okay, this is Jon, and I'm here with John Albanese. How are you doing tonight, John?

JOHN I'm fine. How are you doing?

JON I'm doing as best as I can.

All right, so, I'm going go ahead and read your bio.

John Albanese is an independent filmmaker and writer from New York City, and was one of the original members of New York 9/11 Truth. John's film, *Everybody's Gotta Learn Sometime*, received national attention when it

premiered at the Tribeca screening room during the Tribeca Film Festival in 2006.

Okay, that's the end of your bio. Before we begin, I want to make sure that people know that this is a very difficult topic to cover. We are risking making people angry, and unfortunately, it simply can't be avoided. Some people have hated me for years, so it's nothing new for me. It's just a burden I've had to bare. However, we believe this is an important topic that needs to be discussed and addressed, and hopefully, people will learn something from our discussion. That's what this show is all about.

All right, so John, are you ready for your first question?

JOHN Sure, go ahead. You make it sound pretty ominous. [Laughs]

JON [Laughs] What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

JOHN Well, it was a pretty rough day. I live in New York City and my wife and I were both working in Manhattan when it happened, so we witnessed it. And, I actually rushed downtown to get my wife, so we weren't in the financial district, but she was a lot closer to the scene than I was. I was working uptown. So, as people from New York, you can see the World Trade Center from almost anywhere in New York. We were down around Union Square and we saw the buildings collapse and we saw people's reactions. I think it was people's reactions that impacted us the most. People were just hysterical—crying in the streets, walking around not knowing what to do.

So, it was pretty impactful to our lives. Both of us had post-traumatic stress for a long time afterwards from what we had witnessed that day.

JON You had told me, or I had heard you talk about how people were meeting at churches after 9/11 to comfort themselves. Did you go to those churches?

JOHN That's where I actually came across New York 9/11 Truth at that time (Okay--) was a meeting at the Unitarian Church in Manhattan. And, when I—yeah, I was actively seeking it. I started to ask questions pretty early on about the event. I guess my way of dealing with the emotional fallout was to study it. Go online and look at what had happen and read everything I could on the subject, because it was my way of dealing with the emotions.

And, I did come across this group in New York and the questions that they were raising, so I did seek them out so I went to the Unitarian Church, and up on stage was Kyle Hence, who later went on to make the film *Press for Truth*, one of the better treatments on the subject. Les Jamieson, who went on to actually gain control of New York 9/11 Truth, eventually. Nicholas Levis who was also one of the founding members of the New York 9/11 Truth and was very active with writing on the subject and is still an activist, I think, to this day on other issues. And Nico Haupt was up on the stage.

JON All right. Just to clarify, it was Nick Levis that coined the phrase 9/11 Truth, was it not?

JOHN I've heard him say that and I believe him because I know that these were the earliest days of the questioning that started to happen. So, it would not surprise me at all that he had coined the phrase.

JON What was the first thing you questioned about 9/11?

JOHN Well, of course, the question I had was: "How could this have happened in this day and age with the technology that we have and the intelligence apparatus that we have—how could this have happened?"

And, of course, I think the question everyone was asking: "What did they know and when did they know it?"

And the thing that struck me as most peculiar was that within 24 hours they had pictures of all the hijackers on TV; they knew their names; they had photographs of all of them; and they basically declared these are the people who did it.

JON Is that true? Is that true that they did have their photographs within 24 hours? I know they had their names within 24 hours. As far as photographs, are you absolutely sure?

JOHN I'm not absolutely sure—but, I will tell you, if you're asking me what is one of the things that struck me as questioning the event, it was the quickness with which we declared who had done it, and the photographs being on TV. Now, was it 24 hours, was it 48 hours, 72 hours? I'm not exactly sure. I don't think it makes much of a difference.

JON Well, but I thought I had read once from a debunker site that it was two weeks for them to post pictures (No, no) Okay.

JOHN No, not two weeks. It was within days of the events. That I would be willing to stake my reputation on.

JON Well, one of the things that Kristen Breitweiser asked at a meeting—9/11 Family Member Kristen Breitweiser—she asked, and I don't remember, I wish I had the quote in front of me—she was at a meeting with the families and the FBI, and she asked them, basically, how were you able to swoop in within hours to the flight schools that some of these hijackers trained at? And the FBI told her that "we got lucky." So—to give an indication that these people must have been on the radar prior to 9/11.

JOHN Well, we now know from the information that's out there that they were being watched and they were being tracked. That's no longer a mystery. (Right)

But, there were other claims like they found the passport of one of the hijackers in the rubble of the World Trade Center.

Now, I don't know if that's true or not. Again, I don't want to speculate. But, if you're asking me what are the things that triggered my thinking on the subject, these were the things that triggered my thinking. I don't know, actually, to this day what they mean. But it seems very strange to me that given the volume of destruction at the World Trade Center, just the amount of space and the amount of rubble that was in that area burning, actively burning, and being worked on by the first responders and the fire crews, to have found the paper passport of one of the hijackers struck me as—seems suspicious to just be one of those things. Astronomical odds may just have occurred on that day, magically occurred on that day, but it was one of the things that did strike me as—it got my interest up enough that I saw the dilemma and I started to actively seek some of the answers to some of the questions that I had. And I started to see that there was the beginnings of a movement nationwide of people who were pointing at various things that seemed off, whether inaccurate or seemed suspicious—that's really how it all started for me.

JON Have you ever had an experience where you believed what someone was saying and promoted that information only to find out that that information was wrong?

JOHN (Chuckling) I would say the majority of the time.

JON The majority of the time?

JOHN The majority of the time, yeah. Once the years started to pass and this became a phenomenon. 9/11 Truth started to actually gain some traction and became a nationwide phenomenon. When I started looking at the things that people were promoting, I would say there was more garbage out there than there was actual factual, well-researched, vetted information. And that was, of course, the central problem with this whole issue.

JON So, you're saying that you have promoted bad information in the past, is what you're saying.

JOHN Myself? (Yeah) Well, yeah, actually I think that I did get caught up in a couple of—it was kind of like a vacuum cleaner sucking up everything that was available, all of the research that was available and throwing it out there as part of the strategy of just getting these questions recognized and getting the public's attention.

In retrospect, I regret a lot of the information that I believed at the time was—I was told by people that I trusted that this was legitimate information and then of course, hindsight's always 20/20 and then the perspective of time now I look back and not everything that I included in the information that I was sharing was accurate.

JON Well, the reason that I ask, and—did you lose credibility amongst the people you were telling this information to?

JOHN That's a tougher question, because it was such an odd assortment of characters.

It was a very colorful—let's just put it that way. It was a very colorful movement, as you probably know. A lot of the people who were involved were central to the reason why the movement over time lost a lot of its credibility because they—at least I can admit that I wasn't always right. There were a lot of people who were promoting information that were demonstrably wrong and they were not able to even look at facts that would demonstrate that what they're promoting is demonstrably wrong. (Well—)

Something that we talked about offline, there's something called the backfire effect. It's a phenomenon with people who have very strongly held beliefs that if you present facts to these people, the research shows that people will not become swayed to believe what you're saying, but they'll actually become more entrenched. So, the more—

For example, the anti-vaccine community. You can try presenting facts to them. You can show them the scientific research. You can show that the person who started this whole thing with the autism claims has been stripped of his medical license, his research has been totally discredited and has been labeled as completely made up. This will not change their mind. It will, in fact, harden their position. They'll find extraneous reasons to explain all of it away. They'll go out on a limb and say: "Well, it's all a conspiracy and the doctors are all—the pharmaceutical industry is withholding money from researchers," and they'll create a whole scenario where these facts can be dismissed, and that's the backfire effect.

We had backfiring going on in the "9/11 Truth Movement." To the point where the worst possible research became what was in the front.

JON Well, the reason that I asked is—

JOHN The harder we tried to demonstrate to them the foolishness of their ways, the more entrenched they became in their position and the more they doubled down on stupid.

JON Well, the reason that I asked this question is I wanted to tell my own experience with promoting bad information, to show that neither of us are perfect in any way, shape, or form. But, I think, one of the differences is that we'll admit when we're wrong when we're shown to be wrong on something, and we learn from our mistakes and we try not to repeat them. But neither of us are perfect and I just wanted to make that point.

One instance where I can remember—two actually—where I had heard some information and I thought it was credible because people told me that the person promoting it was credible. I think the name was Karl Schwartz and at the time—he was saying that he had footage of a plane that was different than what we were told hit the towers. And everybody at work I was telling about this—this is a long time ago—and when nothing came out, when he had absolutely nothing to show that commercial airliners didn't strike the towers, I lost a lot of credibility among my co-workers

because of it. They started calling me a conspiracy theorist. I think that was the first time where I had that kind of experience.

And another time that I can remember, someone by the name of Stanley Hilton—do you remember him?

JOHN Well, that name no. The first name you mentioned, I do remember him. I knew him personally. But the second name, no.

JON Okay, Stanley Hilton, I think—I think he was portrayed as Chief of Staff for Bob Dole at one time. He was a lawyer. I think he was representing, I think 400 family members at one time who were trying to file a lawsuit, and it fell through, and stuff like that. I think, at one time, Stanley Hilton said that he had actual documentation to show that the Bush administration was responsible for the 9/11 attacks. And I thought well Stanley Hilton, geez, he was the Chief of Staff for Bob Dole. This is somebody who's credible, my God! And again, I think I promoted that information and nothing ever came of it. No documentation was ever presented to anybody that he was describing. It was just—I learned a lot of lessons over the years about promoting information, promoting bad information, and it came to bite me in the ass.

My very first interview was with Opie and Anthony who were rivals of Howard Stern. And I was horrible during that interview. If you go back and listen to it, I mean, I didn't have talking points for it now, like I would today. It was just—we're not perfect. I've made many mistakes, and I just want people to know that. Neither of us are.

So, as we move on, what part has the corporate media played with regard to spreading disinformation?

JOHN As it pertains to 9/11? Or as it pertains to life itself?

JON Well, 9/11—I would love examples of 9/11, if you could, but anything is fine.

JOHN I think that since 9/11, and maybe not necessarily as a direct result of 9/11, but since 9/11, we've seen the technology taking us to a place that is very different from anything we've seen before. The advent of social media like Facebook and Twitter—all of that technology, plus the proliferation of smart phones and the Internet itself, has created a phenomenon where I

believe people can be manipulated in such a way that we've never seen before.

When we talk about COINTELPRO—the techniques that they used for COINTELPRO, compared to today, there's such a difference that the proliferation of the disinformation that's out there now, they found a way to actually get the public to do the dirty work for them. In that, all they need to do is seed the Internet and the social media with these ideas and there seems like there's an endless supply of useful idiots out there who are willing to pick up this information and run with it. So, they're getting free labor from the American public, and really, they have to do very little but sit back and watch it unfold. I think the term is AstroTurfing. It gives the illusion of a grassroots movement, where people pick up on certain ideas and they organize around it, but AstroTurf is not real grassroots. It's really being engineered by corporate interests or political interests or organized religions, or maybe in foreign interests. At this point, it's become very hard to tell where our facts come from.

JON

Well, with regard to the corporate media and the individuals you spoke of who were more than willing to promote certain information, those are the individuals that the corporate media focuses on in order to paint the whole in a certain light.

But, with regard to the corporate media, there was a time when you could openly question 9/11 and be cheered for it. If you watch the third-party debates between David Cobb and Michael Badnarik from 2004, which is available on my YouTube channel, which is Gold9472, they openly questioned 9/11. And the reason they were okay with doing so was because the media did not have the chance yet to have its attack campaign, making anyone who questions 9/11 be the equivalent of a baby-killer or a dog-torturer.

With regard to the "9/11 Truth Movement" and disinformation from the corporate media, they jumped on murderers who just happened to post something about 9/11 on the Internet and saying they're 9/11 Truthers. The 9/11 Truthers are murderers. They're all dangerous and—I saw that happen a number of times. There was a guy called the Pentagon shooter who took a couple of shots at the Pentagon, and I guess he said something about 9/11 online, and at the Treason in American Conference in 2010, *ABC News* came to the event in an attempt to paint everyone there as dangerous. And it was at the time of the Pentagon shooter. And RT, *Russia Today*, also

showed up to do news coverage of the event. But they were there to do real news, to talk about what exactly was going on at the conference. The *ABC News* had an agenda. And there was actually a paper in Philadelphia that wrote an interesting article showing the contrast between the two media outlets.

So, there was the Pentagon shooter. There was the guy who went into the Holocaust Museum and shot and murdered someone and I think Glen Beck said that he was a hero of the "9/11 Truth Movement." (Right) There's so many instances of that. That is disinformation from the corporate media. If you think that somebody who questions 9/11 is a murderer or unpatriotic, then I think that you've been watching a little bit too much television, unfortunately.

JOHN Well, it shouldn't surprise anyone that the media produces propaganda, especially during the time of war. The nation was attacked and the country was mobilizing for and—the country had very little patience and very little tolerance for any sort of dissension in the country, of any form. They basically crucified anyone who even questioned the marching orders of that administration.

And we still see it reverberating to this day with the revelation that the CIA was engaging in illegal activity and torturing people. The very reasons we went to Iraq—the weapons of mass destruction—there was some voices that were ringing the alarm bells, leading up to the invasion of Iraq saying: "Wait a minute, these aluminum tubes, they're not being used for nuclear centrifuges." But it was a time when there was very little tolerance for any voices that strayed from the singular determination that this nation was going to go to war. We had been attacked, and we needed to just unify behind a singular voice—and we see how that worked out for us.

JON Well, that's another—

JOHN When I look at the failure of 9/11 Truth as a movement, I put that failure squarely on the shoulders of the members of 9/11 Truth itself. The media, sure. It should surprise no one that they produce propaganda trying to demonize us in the eyes of the public. But no one demonized us more than ourselves, by putting out garbage, crazy conspiracy theories—this was never meant to be a conspiracy theory movement. It started as an accountability movement. People asking how did this happen? Who's responsible? Who's going to pay for these mistakes?

JON Right, well—

JOHN Why were there collapses and why are the facts that were being given not adding up? Why are there so many discrepancies in the official account? Why are so many pages of the Congressional Report redacted and blacked out? And what was the Saudi relationship to all of this? That's how it began.

But it fell into the same bucket that we're now in right now where we live in a highly paranoid society now where everything is a hoax. Everything is a conspiracy. Every mass shooting, every high-profile crime, every natural event is the product of some conspiracy that Obama is behind, or the anti-gun lobby is behind. And the word "truther" has become the actual opposite of its literal meaning which is—and it's true.

I mean, if you look at what the truthers out there are promoting these days with high-profile crimes like Aurora and Sandy Hook and Virginia State and even Ferguson. It's my understanding that Alex Jones is promoting the idea that the Ferguson shooting was a hoax and that Obama was behind it.

People reach their saturation with this nonsense. Because the Internet enables the worst among us that have the loudest voices. And it—

JON Well, let me say something.

Very early on the "9/11 Truth Movement"—you said this was about supporting the families seeking a 9/11 Commission, and then once that report was released, it was about getting their unanswered questions answered, among other things. It was about asking good questions and demanding answers. Basically, it was about supporting the family members, seeking truth, accountability, and justice. And somewhere along the way, the movement lost its way.

And I want to talk about what you just mentioned. I think one of the reasons that there are people out there who say that everything is a conspiracy theory is because of something that I call the conspiracy theory industry. And you mentioned someone, Alex Jones, who is somebody who I think is in the conspiracy theory industry. He's a businessman. And he is notorious for saying that everything that happens is a false flag attack or some kind of conspiracy, and people—unfortunately, people pick up on that.

That's something else I want to address. What's the difference between disinformation and misinformation? Because there's disinformation, which I think is information that is bad, that is purposefully put out there for whatever reason. And misinformation is when somebody, a good-minded person, somebody good-hearted, trying to make a difference, picks up this information, this bad information, and promotes it thinking that it's good. That's misinformation.

And I, actually, as we spoke earlier, I have some pity for people that do that. And I do my best to try and talk to people like that. Not confrontationally. I mean, you talked about how we were our own worst enemy, the "9/11 Truth Movement." And all of the in-fighting that took place. And a lot of it having to do with these theories that people were putting forward. And we were trying our very best, very, very best to remain as credible as possible.

JOHN

Who's we though? I certainly—I always felt you had integrity in what you did, and there were a select few who had integrity and were approaching it in a way that I can respect. But, I would say the vast majority of it was—I could remember being angry with the media for referring to us as conspiracy theorists, but now in the context of time, they were right. It was conspiracy theorizing or speculation. What if the planes were remote controlled? What if there's a plane—what if it was a fly-over the Pentagon as opposed to an actual strike? What if it was a missile? What if it was this? What if it was that? And that's what most people were clinging to. And I never saw a really solidified movement.

We keep using the term movement. I see there were some right-wing leanings come out of the Alex Jones camp, and the Loose Change camp, and the Libertarian movement that was taking it that direction. Yeah, it was a conspiracy theory movement. And that's where it essentially went wrong. And I think it remains an extremely dangerous situation that we live in currently, because people do not seem to be able to differentiate between facts and fiction.

And people now are enabled—that's the key word here—people are enabled to shop for the truth that they're comfortable with. You don't like Jews? That's fine. You can go on Google and you will find a lot of support out there on certain websites that will tell you the Holocaust didn't happen, and

they will seem, they will appear very scholarly and well-researched, and very convincing if you already have this precondition.

JON

Well, I generally tell people—I generally tell people, don't just listen to what the "9/11 Truth Movement" is saying. Go look at what debunkers are saying. Go look at what other people are saying. And, I often say to people to go to the source as often as you can. If there's a report about something, about 9/11, and there's a name mentioned in the article, maybe you can get in touch with the individual who's mentioned and get their story.

I've done that—there's the story of the Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed from the Pakistani ISI wire-transferring \$100,000—ordering Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to wire transfer \$100,000 to Mohamed Atta—and I took that story as far as humanly possible. I even tried to contact the arresting officer in India who arrested Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to try and talk to him about him. I followed his prison movements to see which prison he was being held in because he was being moved a lot. And I just couldn't take it any further, unfortunately.

But, I mean, that's the level sometimes—if you can do that, if you have the time to do that kind of research, wonderful. But, you have to be very careful with what you promote. You have to—because when none of us, very few of us have letters after our names like Ph.D. or whatever that brings a sense of credibility with what we say. So, when we approach people or when we talk to people, we have to use the best information possible, stuff that really can't be debunked, in order to plant the seeds to get people active for this issue, which is still today a very important issue.

And, one thing I want to talk about is human nature. When the Government refuses to answer our questions, when those who should be able to answer our questions refuse to do so, it's human nature to speculate as to the reasons why. But you have to be able to differentiate what is speculation and what are facts.

JOHN

How do we—but the problem, the brick wall that I've hit with this is that having observed 9/11 Truth, what I found was that what was created there was a false dichotomy between junk science and then this other classification, which may or may not be the truth, and this false dichotomy was—it created an environment that people were so repulsed by the garbage theories that they ran into the arms of the only other alternative. They ran into the arms of the activists that were promoting something that

seemed credible because they had a choice between the two. It's kind of like the way Fox and MSNBC works. People were repulsed by Fox News so they run into the arms of CNN. How do you know CNN is telling you the truth? You don't. But it seems more credible to watch sensibilities when you compare it against the strawman of Fox News.

And the problem that I have is, at this stage, how do we know anything is the truth anymore? How do we know any of the research that we've promoted that seems credible, like this is the good stuff, this is the stuff that we tell people?

Well, I'm not a professional journalist. I certainly have no connections in politics or the military industrial complex or in Pakistan. How do I know that the information that I'm promoting wasn't seeded, just for me to pick up and run with, by some other entities—some foreign entity, some political entity, military industrial complex—

JON You're absolutely right, but unfortunately, if you can't prove that, then you have to say that okay, there might be some credibility to this particular story. Or, for instance, that story, the wire transfer story. The *Times of India* that reported it, and *Agency France Presse* also corroborated the story. You look at the FBI, apparently, made statements saying he was a pay master, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, by CNN in late 2001. You have Indian investigators telling Robert Mueller in early 2002 about Saeed Sheikh's role in 9/11. You have somebody who was tortured, unfortunately, and actually mentioned that Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh wire transferred \$100,000 to Mohammed Atta.

When you look at all of this information, it starts to—you can see that there's more reason to think that it might be true than not, so—but you still can't, unfortunately, prove it. And—

JOHN Right, but that's also the hallmark of disinformation. The hallmark of disinformation is planting not just one seed, but planting a row of seeds that cause people with cognitive dissonance and disenchantment with their lives and with society and the political system that is inherently dishonest, and all the rest of it, it causes them to connect the dots. These seeds could be planted very cleverly to make it appear like a web of evidence. I mean, that was the crux of the play *Twelve Angry Men*. You have 12 people sitting in a room. They had facts on the table, a lot of facts, and they all pointed in the same direction that this person was guilty of murder. One

problem: he wasn't. Facts are a funny thing. You can have individual facts, even if the individual facts are correct, you could assemble facts in such a way that it paints a picture that is just completely wrong. And—

JON Oh, absolutely, you can do that.

JOHN And, when you add disinformation to the mix that is being crafted by people who have political interests, foreign interests, military agendas, or whatever it might be, it becomes almost impossible to sift through it and have—I mean, you may think you have a handle on reality, but what I'm becoming increasingly convinced of is that we live in a bubble. We live in a very tightly controlled environment where people are enabled to shop for the facts that they want. The Tea Party has their set of facts and we have our set of facts, and I'm a little uncomfortable that we might just be the Tea Party of the Left.

JON No, you know what—there are two sides or three sides, however many sides, to the story. And what I have done over the years is, as I said, is I looked at both and I see that one doesn't address certain issues, disregard things, just omits information. I have to think well maybe that this side, this point of view, is probably correct as compared to that point of view. But, one of the things that we—that there's absolutely no doubt of, is the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. About a great many things.

JOHN Well, I can expand on that though. We are lied to about everything.

JON No, I understand that.

JOHN And what if that's just the new policy for controlling people? And keeping this plutocracy going and keeping the ruling elite in control, and the national security agency, and all the rest of them—maybe that's just policy. We don't get the full story on anything. The dialogue in this country is very carefully constructed and controlled. We're told what we can talk about. For some reason, the decision was made what we can talk about what this country did with interrogations, and enhanced interrogations techniques, and torture—that's going to be allowed this week, and next week we'll talk about Bill Cosby.

JON Well, actually, they don't really talk—they talked about the senate report, but they don't talk about how that it still might be going on. Who knows what JSOC is doing? And the force-feeding in GITMO is considered to be

torture by the UN, I think. And so, it's still going on and they also—they didn't cover some of the more heinous things that I heard with regard to torture. I mean, I heard Seymour Hersh talked about how kids, little kids, boys, were being sodomized in front of their mothers and that there was this ungodly shrieking. The Pentagon has these videos that show these things.

JOHN But how do we know that—but is Seymour Hersh telling you the story that you want to hear?

JON No, but the thing about Seymour Hersh is you have to look at his history as far as getting things right. And, a lot of times Seymour Hersh has gotten it right. So, when somebody like that—

JOHN Well, yeah, and that's another whole mark of disinformation. It's mixing lies with the truth and Carl Bernstein did a whole story in the 70s and, keep in mind that's 40 years ago, regarding the influence of the Central Intelligence Agency in the media, the mainstream media. The major networks, the major press releases at the time—print was king at the time, you know, print journalism was king. And the influence of the Central Intelligence Agency within the print media and his findings was that, it's saturated with intelligence assets who mold and manipulate and control and influence the direction in which the message that is given to the American public is pointed. And, that was 40 years ago.

JON No, but I—I hear what you're saying, but you know, what's the alternative? That we listen to absolutely no one at all?

JOHN Well, this is—the fact that the—

JON To me, in the corporate media—

JOHN It's a dilemma. Unless we face up to the reality of the dilemma that we're faced with, which is we're living in an age of almost an airtight sort of information gag order associated with our ability to penetrate, the inner workings of our own Government and the policy makers and the policies that are being crafted. That is the modern-day dilemma.

And, we're in such flux at this point with so many people running in so many different directions, it seems so engineered, at least to my sensibilities. It's not just the Tea Party that's Astro Turfed. I think there's Astro Turfing going on on the Left. There's Astro Turfing going on in the

Center. Everything that the American public believes that they're doing is being controlled and manipulated. (Well—)

There are some organic things that go on. I think the movement against police brutality—I don't think that's engineered. I think that's an organic sort of movement. I think Occupy Wall Street started as an organic movement because of the injustices, the social injustices inherent in our financial systems.

JON Let me stop you for a second about Occupy. It was funny to me watching how the corporate media dealt with Occupy. It was like watching a rerun of the "9/11 Truth Movement." First, they were ignoring them, completely. And then when they couldn't ignore them anymore, they started to misrepresent them, or misrepresent their message. What are these people about? They started to make their arguments for them. And then there were people holding up signs saying Zionists Control Wall Street, or something to that effect. So then the media jumped on those little, the few, very few people saying things like that and then portrayed the Occupy movement as being anti-Semitic. And it all happened within a 2-month timeframe. (Right) And it was just fascinating to me to watch.

JOHN Yeah, they've got it down to a science.

JON Right, and—

JOHN Besides, I don't think there's any meaningful organizing that's allowed to take place in this country anymore.

JON Well, I can tell you—

JOHN --can't organize without infiltration, without disruption, without smear campaigns. Again, the COINTELPRO programs in the 1960s were child's play compared to the tools that they have available to them.

JON Well, okay, let me read a quote that I got from my book. For those who don't know, I wrote a book. It was called: *9/11 Truther: The Fight for Peace, Justice, and Accountability*. Cindy Sheehan wrote the Foreword to that book. I'm actually proud of that book.

So, anyway, this is a quote:

"I have absolutely no proof whatsoever that anyone is an agent. I will say that the United States Government, or elements within it, have participated in a massive cover-up regarding 9/11 and it isn't inconceivable, at least not to me, that they would put people on the Internet to start crap or post nonsense in an effort to discredit specific individuals or this cause, in general. It's also not inconceivable, at least not to me, that organizations friendly to a particular politician or entity in the United States Government would spend money to put people on the Internet to start crap or post nonsense in an effort to discredit people or this cause. We often see pro-Republican and pro-Democrat posters from different organizations post on sites. It's not a stretch to think that some of those people might have the goal of starting trouble."

It's one thing I've learned over the years, it is not hard to start trouble on the Internet. There are so many instigators out there. The language that the "9/11 Truth Movement" used—for instance, LIHOP and MIHOP.

For those who don't know, LIHOP is "let it happen on purpose" and MIHOP "made it happen on purpose"—and it was a division, essentially, within the "9/11 Truth Movement"—you either believed they let it happen or they made it happen. And there was a false distinction. It's no different to me than the false Left/Right paradigm that is unfortunately, engulfed in this country. And, the language that the people used, I don't know, it's just what they would call you if you believed—if you brought up something about the hijackers. Any information pertaining to the hijackers, you were called a LIHOPPER because, obviously, there were no hijackers, according to some people.

So, it was a great cause of division within the "9/11 Truth Movement." Another thing that took place was something called Snitch Jacketing, which I think was a COINTELPRO tactic, which is if you disagree with someone, you call them a shill or you call them an agent in order to build this persona for this individual to make them—this individual be almost like an agent to some people so they don't trust them.

A lot of the problems of the "9/11 Truth Movement"—there were people that came on 9/11Blogger.com and they were promoting Holocaust Denial, or whatever you want to call it, Holocaust Revision—Holocaust Denial, whatever—the Holocaust happened. [Laughs] Okay? There's so much

evidence to show that it happened, it's a ridiculous thing. I don't even understand why you would try to say that this didn't happen. I understand people in the Middle East, perhaps, trying to say it didn't happen because of what happened with Israel becoming a Jewish State and so forth. But, I don't understand why people would want to argue that the Holocaust didn't happen.

But, anyway, they showed up on 9/11 Blogger, and trying to convince people that we were lied to about 9/11, or that elements within our Government had earned the title suspect for the crime of 9/11—it's hard enough all by itself. We don't need other crap being brought into the fold. And, as the conspiracy theory industry, it's not just people like Alex Jones who have a radio station, it's people who come and table at different events who bring videos about all kinds of things like chemtrails, and the Illuminati, and the Reptiles who control everything, and stuff like that.

That's how it got introduced into the movement. It wasn't just 9/11 anymore. We started to hear about all these other kinds of things.

JOHN

What has happened is essentially, there's a toxic environment now that revolves around any sort of independent efforts to look for accountability on any level. We can't even agree that climate change is happening, okay? And we have these things called thermometers. And we can't even agree that the temperatures are rising. We don't even listen to our own scientists that this Government funds—NASA—who are telling us exactly what they think is happening. We won't even listen to our own funded scientists. We're at a stage in this country where it's all bread and circuses. Where it's all diversions. It's all—it's all a clown act at this point. Where I once believed that the Internet was the salvation of grassroots political movement—now we can really organize! We can reach people all across the nation. We can have an honest dialogue and we could organize.

What we failed to take into consideration is that it is the most powerful tool that any Government could ever hope to have over influencing the mindset of the public and gathering information on us.

What if somebody told you 15 years ago, the Government wants you to go to the Post Office and register all of your political beliefs. We'll give you an index card. You need to list everybody you've ever been affiliated with. We want to know what all your political beliefs are. We want to know everything about you politically. You'd say go fuck yourself! I'm not going

to go register this shit. People do it now willingly. They sign on to Facebook. They sign on to Twitter. They aggregate their friends online so that everyone can see and they espouse their opinions publicly.

The Government has a tremendous amount of power over the psyche of the American public now. Because not only do they have a captive audience in this virtual space, they can influence it. They can enter into the space themselves. They can seed it with disinformation. They can create disruptions in areas where they don't want to see organizing take place, and they create organizing in places where they shouldn't be taking place. Like the Tea Party.

JON The Tea Party was actually hijacked. The Tea Party was hijacked. You know the original Tea Party in the United States of America was a 9/11 Truth effort that took place on December 16, 2006, where people across the country threw their copies of the 9/11 Report into the closest water source, and they retrieved them, most people retrieved them so as not to pollute the water. But the following year we were planning on doing it again and then it was announced that there was this Money Bomb for Ron Paul to run for President. And, so the people who wanted to promote the Money Bomb, they took, essentially, they took the Tea Party theme and made it into a Ron Paul Run for President. I don't know if you remember that?

JOHN Sure, of course I do.

JON You do remember? Okay, good.

JOHN Well, I do. I don't know that I—it's a little bit of a stretch to say that it was a "9/11 Truth" effort that got hijacked and turned into the Tea Party. But, the seeds were there. That strain of activism was there. Does anyone doubt that corporate interests are deeply entrenched in a lot of the individual organizing that you see taking place?

It's with that book—what's that title of that book? *What's Wrong with Kansas*. It's gotten to the point where people are actually voting and organizing against their own interests. We're talking about existential threats to our survival. We're talking about the environment is clearly turning against us. Even the Pentagon is treating it as an existential threat. And people are so malleable in their thinking, and the media has become so all-encompassing that we're essentially living in a bubble. Not unlike what the Germans were experiencing in the 1930's. A completely air-tight

propaganda machine that controls what we see, what we think, what allowable dialogue exists. And the one tool we thought we had for organizing—the Internet and social media—is actually our worst enemy. And is creating a toxic environment that is very, very dangerous to this country. And—

JON Well, I don't know that I would—I'm sorry, go ahead.

JOHN No, go ahead.

JON All right. I just don't know—see, I realize that posting 9/11 information on Facebook is not the best way to reach people. I have so many things to say. I would love it if a million people could hear what I have to say, but unfortunately, I don't know how to do that. I don't. I've tried for years.

JOHN But the NSA does know how to do it.

JON Well—

JOHN You get imbalance here. You get the imbalance. None of us have the ability to produce the volume of information that organized political groups can produce to influence the American public's perspective. I mean there was a time in this country where it was okay to question the Kennedy assassination. We actually had a Congressional investigation that found that it was the result of a "probable" conspiracy.

JON [Laughs] You know, I just had Phil Shenon on who wrote a book about the Warren Commission and he says that there were studies done after that Congressional Inquiry that shows that they were wrong. But he does think that the Warren Commission was corrupt just like the 9/11 Commission, and so on and so forth.

Now, with—let's try to talk about the "9/11 Truth Movement" a little bit more. What are some of the theories that were put forward over the years. Well, first off, actually, let me talk about as I said earlier, the theme of the "9/11 Truth Movement" was to support the family members seeking truth, accountability, and justice. And there were so many times that the 9/11 or the September 11th Advocates would release a press statement calling into question this or that and the corporate media completely ignored it. These were the people who would get so much media attention prior to the release of the 9/11 Report and then after the 9/11 Report was released and the

narrative was set in stone, the Jersey Girls or the September 11th Advocates became persona non-grata.

And there were times it seemed like I was the only one promoting the different statements put forward by them. When Lorie Van Auken and Mindy Kleinberg wrote their report showing how poorly the 9/11 Commission answered their questions, I felt like I was the only one promoting it. I actually took some flak for promoting that report because it "didn't go far enough."

And that's a lot of the—it seems that the theories became more important than getting accountability. You know what I mean? Like everybody was so concerned about their theory being correct. (Right)

Can you name some of the theories that were put out over the years that really were a detriment?

JOHN Well, the theory that Israel was behind the attacks. I think that was, you know, it served two purposes. First of all, it was not true. And, second of all, it created the perspective that the "9/11 Truth Movement" at its heart was anti-Semitic. And, I think the Wiesenthal Institute—if that's the correct name—actually put out something naming 9/11 Truth as an organized hate group as anti-Semitic at its base. They really, basically, lumped us all in together, so it was effective.

JON Well, but there were questions about Israel and 9/11 concerning the Israeli Art—

JOHN There's questions about everything. There's questions about everything.

JON Well, let me, let me—

JOHN We don't have many answers. But there's questions about everything.

JON Yes.

JOHN That doesn't mean—there's questions about—that's what the anti-vaccine people say, you know, it's like: "Well, we're just asking questions." No, you're asking loaded questions. You're asking when did you stop beating your wife? That's what you're asking. (Well, no--) And are the questions right—yeah, certainly, Israel is closely related to the U.S. We have a

somewhat shared intelligence apparatus that works in concert with each other. All of this is on display and if you look closely at the events of 9/11, Israel is in the mix.

JON Well, when you look at—when you ask the question: "Why did Dominick Suter flee the United States within days of 9/11?" I think that's a valid question. He was the owner of Urban Moving Systems who, those five Israelis were arrested. They happen to work for that company. Why did he flee the United States? I have questions about that. I think that's a valid question. But it doesn't prove that Israel was behind 9/11. (Right) It doesn't do that at all. (Right) But it's a legitimate question I think.

JOHN It's a legitimate question and I don't think that we have the access—

JON No, we don't and that's something I want to get into.

JOHN --to that information. And again we've got questions and we've got facts. And even the facts, as I said earlier, can be a very funny thing to deal with—like *Twelve Angry Men*—you can lay the facts on the table and they could all point in a certain direction and it still could be the wrong conclusion that you come to. As you're going to ask the two questions, like: Well, this guy seems suspicious in his behavior. He left the country. Well, certainly, there's something going on there that we don't understand and it's really more telling about the people who will connect those dots than it is about the facts themselves. It's more telling that one person will look at that set of questions and say: "Israel did it." And it's not a coincidence that it's the same people who say the Holocaust didn't happen. Gee, what is the common theme running through these ideas?

JON Well, the idea that Israel did it, or that Mossad was involved, I think those ideas actually originated in the Middle East. In fact, Danny Pearl who worked for *The Wall Street Journal*, he interviewed somebody, I don't remember his name, and he very early on said that Israel did this. So, that is being put out there early on. And then there were people who were saying there were no Jews killed in the Towers—that's just (Right) horrible information. Yes, Jews were killed in the Towers. I think Muslims were killed in the Towers. There were so many different kinds of people that were killed in the Towers.

When they say, when people say that Jews did 9/11, that's just as insulting as saying that the Muslims did 9/11, in my opinion. That's another problem

that the "9/11 Truth Movement" faced, unfortunately, which was bigotry. There were people—because I'm Jewish; I was born Jewish; I had a Bar Mitzvah; my last name is Gold—because of that fact, there were so many narratives that were created about me—being some kind of agent for Larry Silverstein because I had questions about the idea of controlled demolition. There were people who actually spread a rumor that I was paying people not to talk about Israel and 9/11. It's so absolutely ridiculous.

I was the very first person on 9/11 Blogger to post about the Israeli art students. And we had this whole introduction explaining that questioning Israel does not mean you hate Jews. And I was a Jew. I was the one promoting that information. So, it was just—and then they would say that I was a self-hating Jew, or something to that effect. I promoted so much information over the years about Israel, as far as Gaza is concerned, as far as being involved in the wiretapping of this country. It's just unbelievable that people call me a Zionist mole. (Right) That kind of stuff. And I got a lot of that shit over the years. I'm sorry to be cursing, but—

One thing I wanted to talk about, you said we didn't have access. Now, is it our job as citizens to do an investigation? Or, is it our job as citizens to demand that a real investigation transpires and that all questions are answered? Or, is it a little bit of both?

JOHN Well, it goes back to what I said earlier, which is we have a dilemma on our hands in that we live in an era where information is very controlled and it's in a digital format, which means it can be changed, it can be erased, it can be transmitted at the speed of light, basically, around the world. A lie—Mark Twain said, he is said to have said, no one has any proof he said it, which is ironic. But, he said: "A lie could get half-way around the world before the truth can get out of bed and get its boots on." (Laughs) And that was the 1800s. (Right) Okay? That was the 1800s. We're living in the 21st century now, and a lie can go around the world multiple times while the truth gets smothered in its sleep.

JON Well, I want to talk about that for a second because there is a theory that was put out very early on. In October 2001, I think it was the Voltaire Network, which Thierry—French reporter, I think it's Thierry Meyssan—is that his name? They put out an article suggesting that Flight 77 did not hit the Pentagon. And then, I think, Thierry Meyssan wrote a book about it—I think it was translated into 29 different languages and put out throughout the world and that's how that theory, I think, got started. And when you

look at that theory, the idea that Flight 77 or an American Airlines jet did not strike the Pentagon, there's debris with the American Airlines logo at the Pentagon. People say: "Well, they planted that." Okay, well, do you have proof of that? I mean, it's just, people who say it's planted, discredit themselves in my opinion when they say things like that.

They identified the DNA of the passengers and the crew. Apparently, there was a book called *Firefight*. It was a book by the responders. They talked about how there were seats from the plane with bodies still strapped to them. I've read people who tried to counter this by saying the book was propaganda and stuff like that. But, you gotta have proof that these people are lying. You can't just say that something is planted or that somebody is lying because it doesn't coincide with what you think happened.

Another thing with the Pentagon is the witnesses. How many witnesses saw a commercial airliner or plane strike the Pentagon that morning? There were a multitude of witnesses. It's an absurd theory.

I wish people would ask the question how is it possible the most defended airspace in the world was left completely undefended 34 minutes after the second tower was hit, when everybody in the world knew America was under attack. And, yet, the most defended airspace in the world was left completely undefended and a commercial airliner managed to hit the Pentagon. Why does nobody make that question the priority?

Instead, now we have these theories about how not only did Flight 77 not hit the Pentagon, but now we hear that Flight 77 flew over the Pentagon and dropped a bomb. Or we hear it was a missile and not Flight 77. Or we hear that it was a global hawk. Now we're hearing that there were explosives planted at the Pentagon from people—in not only the buildings but now in the Pentagon.

JOHN Jon, we live in an era where facts don't really matter anymore. I don't know how else, you know—

JON People tell me that all the time and I just—I can't—

JOHN Facts don't—you don't understand why other people don't embrace this issue. When you look around you and the American public is running in circles looking for Obama's birth certificate—

JON Oh, God, do you remember—

JOHN Or not taking their vaccines because it will cause autism. Or, claiming that the Sandy Hook shooting, which tomorrow is the anniversary, didn't even happen. They were all—

JON Yeah, that was horrible. Within hours of the Sandy Hook shooting, there were people saying that it was a false flag—there were people saying that it was the Mossad. I think it was Gordon Duff and Jim Fetzer who gave a lot of problems to the "9/11 Truth Movement." Just to—

JOHN I think we live in an era where people have disaster exhaustion. Okay, you think of all the things that happened after 9/11. Some of them were political. Some of them were just natural events. The terrible tsunami that hit the Indian Ocean killing 300,000 people. And then there was Iraq. And then there was the nuclear meltdown in Japan and the earthquake that happened there.

It seems like there's this constant unfolding of terrible events. The financial collapse.

You ask me why people don't care about 9/11 when people are losing their jobs, and losing their 401(k) plans, and everyone's working menial labor.

JON Okay, let's talk about why it's in—

JOHN And our Government is doing nothing, and we don't live in a country where people are dedicated to causes anymore. And the causes they are dedicated to are often based on rubbish. Based on—

JON Well, let's talk about—let's talk about why—

JOHN People are told what to believe and they believe it.

JON Okay, let's talk about why getting justice, truth, and accountability for 9/11 is still an important issue. Aside from the fact that 2,976 people were brutally murdered that day and nobody's been held accountable. Nobody in Government's been held accountable—

JOHN How many people—Jon, how many people died in Iraq?

JON No, I understand that but the reason that they were able to go into Iraq was because of 9/11. Let's look at what happened yesterday.

JOHN And the reason why 9/11 happened is because—

JON We don't know.

JOHN We don't know, but we can—but what we do know is that we don't know what we don't know. And that there's been a long string of injustices. You know, the overthrow of Governments in South America and Pinochet, and the Gulf of Tonkin affair, and Vietnam, and Iraq—

JON I understand that, but I wanted to draw the line—go ahead.

JOHN You want to draw the line, but some people are saying we need to draw the line with the environment. Some people are saying we need to draw the line with UFOs (Laughter). Some people are saying we need to draw the line with all of this police violence. The police violence is a terrible thing. Some people are all up in arms over Bill Cosby. There's no centralized light at the end of the tunnel.

JON Just yesterday, I mean, Okay, I wrote a list yesterday of things that 9/11 was used as for the justification of going in to Afghanistan; going into Iraq; drone bombing countries like Somalia, Pakistan, Yemen; torture; GITMO; the NDAA; the Patriot Act. John Brennan, oh my God, he gave a talk in response to the torture report and the first thing he said was—he started his sentence with: It was 8:46 a.m.—he was using 9/11 to justify the torture that took place after 9/11 (Okay--) and it's so many things that 9/11 is used for—

JOHN Do you feel like it's the one...

Well, yes, but some people can make the argument that since the assassination of John Kennedy, the Military Industrial Complex has consolidated its stranglehold over politics and world domination and empire, because that's what that was all about—this is what some people would say—that assassination was all about the Military Industrial Complex and America exerting hegemony over the entire world, as well as its own political system.

So, you could say if we are exposed to this lie, all the other dominoes would fall. All these other bad things that happened as a result of the Military Industrial Complex, all started with John F. Kennedy's assassination. So, let's all divert our energy to proving that. Let's just say we need truth and justice for the Kennedy assassination.

JON The problem with that for me is that I know very many—I know a lot of 9/11 Family Members—and I know a lot of their stories, and I know their descriptions of the pain they went through—I could never possibly understand what it was like. And for 9/11, for me, it happened and I was just like everybody else in the country. I wanted revenge. I wanted to bomb the shit out of the Middle East. I wanted to carpet-bomb the Middle East. And I have since learned that that was wrong, but I'm just saying, I was just like everybody else and, I learned over time that that was wrong and—I don't know. I felt like for 9/11 we were lied to—to me the best analogy I could come up with is I felt like a rape victim. I felt like these people raped me with fear and all of this stuff, all of these lies, that's the best analogy I can come up with. And, I'm sure a lot of people felt that way about 9/11. And I can't imagine being a 9/11 Family Member, knowing what we know about 9/11, and having had lost someone on top of that. It's just unimaginable to me, and they deserve better than what they got in the 9/11 Congressional Inquiry, in the 9/11 Commission—

JOHN There's a lot of people who deserves a lot more—

JON But, again, 9/11 is used as justification—

JOHN I can't imagine—

JON —for so many things. If we take away their 9/11 playing card, then it takes away the justification for all the horrible things they've done in the name of that day. That's a very simple argument. We're living in the post-9/11 world where we preemptively attack countries, we take away our civil liberties—

JOHN Okay, what would take that away—let's get down to the nuts and bolts of this—what would take away that playing card? Were we not attacked on 9/11?

JON By exposing the fact that we were lied to about 9/11.

JOHN Okay, they lied to us. What does that get us? Because they—

JON They have also earned—in my opinion, I look at 9/11 as a crime and not an act of war...

JOHN [AUDIOBAD]

JON ... for that crime and I believe elements within our Government and other Governments have more than earned the title of suspect for the crime of 9/11. I can't prove it beyond a shadow of doubt, but there is certainly information out there that suggests it. So, I think it would be irresponsible for us as citizens to ignore that information, especially considering what that day has been used for.

JOHN Jon, Jon, Jon—irresponsible is our middle name. I mean, this country is irresponsible on a scale that historians a millennium from now are going to talk about us in ways that we can't imagine.

Okay, we're destroying the planet itself. There's actually, literally, an existential threat to every living being on this planet as a result of our aggressive, unbending need for resources and the burnings of fossil fuels, and just a system that is unsustainable that enslaves much of the world in its paradigm and is destroying the environment in the process.

And that's the threat that we're faced with right now. And you could ask: "Why aren't Americans mobilizing on that issue?" Because Americans don't care. I mean, that's really the bottom line here. They've had more than ample time to digest the facts, not just about the environment—about the injustices in the financial system. So many people were so hurt by what happened in 2008. No criminal investigations. Nobody went to jail for it. No accountability. No truth. We had a few weeks of Occupy Wall Street—it all evaporated overnight. Half of the Americans out there wanted the police to crack their heads open. That's how sick we are as a culture.

Voting against our own interests.

JON Again, that goes back to the corporate media to a great extent, because they create the—

JOHN Well, sure, I know why it's happening, but do I hold out hope that any one of these triggers is going change the course of history? Because I think that's what you're looking for here. You're looking for some Rosetta Stone,

some flaming sword in the darkness. (Laughs) You're looking for a smoking gun that's going to make Americans say, "this is the one"—this is the one where we all throw the bums out of Washington and take back this country and we put an end to all the injustices. The social justices that are the drone bombings in the Middle East and invasions of foreign lands and the Military Industrial Complex—I don't know. I don't know that 9/11 has...

JON It's not—you don't think 9/11 what?

JOHN I don't know that 9/11, at this stage, like the Kennedy assassination, like more pressing current issues like the environment—I mean, California's under water right now. There's super typhoons—

JON No, I understand all of that.

JOHN There are super typhoons sweeping around this globe right now. The levels of carbon dioxide in the air are unprecedented.

JON I'm really not asking people to make 9/11 THE issue for them. What I'm asking of people—people like Chris Hedges, people like Glenn Greenwald, people who don't talk about the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. I'm trying to get a majority of people to at least acknowledge the fact that we were lied to about that day. I want there to be—I want it to be common knowledge among every American. I want them to say it—when people talk about the War on Terror, when people talk about the things that are going on in the Middle East, I want them to talk about the fact that we were lied to about the day that justifies all of these actions.

That's what I'm asking for. And you could also incorporate the other issues that you're talking about. I post every day about all kinds of issues, but my main focus has been 9/11. My friend Eric said that when I started doing 9/11, I was like a pit bull that bit down and refused to let go, and he was very much right. I still—I have breakfast with Bob McIlvane every week and we talk about 9/11. And I hear him talk about how his son died and how he thinks that he died from explosions in the building, and stuff like that. It breaks my heart.

JOHN Sure, and I—my heart's broken over the number of children that are going without food right now (Right) as a result of a system that is so heartless that would let people die today as opposed to 14 years ago. And, the problem is that you're giving people more credit than they deserve.

JON I don't think so. I think people—

JOHN You know, I think—

JON I think people are morally good.

JOHN There's a political pundit on HBO, Bill Maher whose taken—I don't always agree with everything he says, but he says some good things once in a while—and he took a lot of flak for saying that Americans are stupid. You know, they went all over the media, whatever, he's calling Americans stupid. Fox News had a field day with it. The fact of the matter is when you look at the statistics of what people believe in this country, when you say something—I simply want a majority of people to acknowledge the truth of 9/11—there's a huge proportion of people in this country that don't even believe in evolution. They don't believe in evolution. They don't believe in climate change. They think Obama doesn't have a birth certificate. He was born in Kenya—

JON And they're wrong and they need to—

JOHN [AUDIOBAD]

JON And they need to be shown why they're wrong. If they don't believe it, people have a right to believe whatever the hell they want.

JOHN But if that's your angle—you see, I don't see that as an angle for change. I don't see trying to get all the village idiots together to see my point of view on things.

JON Oh, okay, see I don't think—

JOHN Not in this environment. Not in this world. Not with the media with the power that it has over the Internet or the power that it has over television. I don't see gaining traction for the truth any time soon.

JON Well, see, I don't think—I don't look at people as stupid. I'm, or I was, with regard to 9/11, I was just as stupid as everyone else after 9/11 about 9/11 and today I'm somebody who knows more than most people about 9/11.

JOHN But not everyone is—

JON Hold on, hold on, I'm not smarter than anyone else—

JOHN Jon, Jon, you are smarter. You are smarter than the average American, I think. I think that you have a sense of introspective—you have an introspective quality that lets you look at things and you feel these things very deeply. That's another problem here, you expect people to feel things. (Laughs) And Americans—you expect people to feel the things that you're feeling and I don't know that the empathy is out there. You know, we're great with platitudes, we're great at "We will never forget" and then a day later we forget. "Those first responders are heroes" and then we let them die of cancer without medical help. And we say "We will always thank our veterans, we love them" and then we don't give them healthcare and no one cares and then put them on a waiting list until they die. Okay?

 People love jingoism. They love platitudes. They love this bullshit patriotism where you put a magnet on your car and you say never forget and a day later it's forgotten. And people care about fast food, and they care about their TV shows, and they care about their jobs. And everything to survive.

JON Then what are the solutions?

JOHN People aren't interested or even, you know, believing that everyone possesses the empathy that you have—

JON Well, I just want to say that this discussion was going to be, mostly on disinformation, how it affects movements, and it's turned into what it is now, and I just—what are the solutions to these issues? How do we resolve these issues? And that's what I was hoping to do today was to give people good advice as to how to approach the 9/11 issue or any other issue. How would—what's a good way, if you want to talk to somebody about 9/11, if you want to convince somebody that we were lied to about 9/11, what is the best way for someone to do that? In your opinion. If you thought—if you think it's important anymore.

JOHN Well, it's important. It's important up there with many other things that are important that are just as heartbreaking and just as unjust and involved—mass casualties, and families being ripped apart, and all sorts of things. What will break America from its reverie? And awaken the American public so that we could have some real change?

I think we need real political change in this country. I think we need something akin to a social revolution where we really shake out the Government and where we really move people into positions of power where they could start opening these files on the Kennedy assassin, on climate change, on 9/11, on Iraq, on torture, and really start to hold people accountable in a criminal way. Holding people accountable.

But that will take a social revolution to get people convinced that this is an existential threat to our survival here. If we don't get control of this Frankenstein monster that we've created—which is the Military Industrial Complex, but even worse, the corporate International, the International corporations that are literally a threat to every man, woman, and child on this planet right now. Unless we get a handle on that—change the political system enough that we can actually shake it out and get people into positions of power to get AT the truth.

It's not a matter of getting the support of the masses. People know things are fucked up. It's just there's a sense of hopelessness out there. That nothing we're going to do is going to change anything. Even something as tragic as the shooting at Sandy Hook, we can't even get sensible laws on the books for background checks for guns. We can't even do the simple things anymore.

JON So, you're saying—

JOHN Things like 9/11? And climate change? I don't think it's a matter of approaching people. It's a matter of organizing people for real change, which is a social revolution. Of course, I'm not talking about a violent revolution. I'm talking about a real political revolution to unseat those who are in power and create a new system in its place that's going to put accountability as the first order of business. (Oh, I agree--) Kind of what happened in South Africa. They, on a very small scale but they came in and they said we're going to open all the books and we're going to declare everything that went wrong and we're going to give people a clear line of sight into the truth—

JON Well, didn't they have a Truth and Reconciliation Committee where essentially people were telling the truth and they were let off the hook, to some extent? See, I don't want people let off the hook. I want people held accountable for their actions. So, this is—

JOHN Well, I might not exactly follow the South Africa model, but you get the gist of what I'm saying. It's a matter of we need a change in power in the power structure, and...

JON But we can't use the election process to—

JOHN I don't think convincing individual citizens of any fact, one way or the other, in this environment, I could convince them this about controlled demolition, or that it's about planes, or stuff that I think is credible, I don't think that's going to affect any real change in the world I live in. I—

JON No, I definitely think that bottle-necking the message of the "9/11 Truth Movement" with controlled demolition has been a disaster.

JOHN Well, I agree. I think it was one of the most effective ways to shut it down.

JON Well, I never questioned how those buildings came down until I was introduced to the "9/11 Truth Movement." And when I first heard the theory, I thought it sounded bat-shit crazy, and my thoughts were, if it was crazy to me, someone who was already fighting for 9/11 justice, who's already on board, I can't imagine how crazy it must sound to people we were trying to educate.

And, Michael Ruppert, who killed himself this year, very early on he had a movie called The Truth and Lies About 9/11 and there was something that he said in that movie that made a lot of sense to me.

"There is a procedure that you follow when you are presenting evidence. There is a way that you structure evidence to avoid speculation . . . So some of the things we are not going to talk about tonight are speculations about the attacks on September 11th. We are not going to talk about were there explosives in the buildings, were the planes piloted by remote control ... Now there is another way to take on the Government. There is another way to take on the lunacy of the mass media. And that is by using their own statements and their own evidence against them to prove that they are lying."

And, I guess in some ways you can apply this to what NIST has said. You know, but, Ruppert was very influential to a lot of people in the beginning,

and in the beginning, a lot of the people shied away from controlled demolition. If you just look at the 9/11 Omission Hearings, the 9/11 Congressional Briefing, there was no talk of controlled demolition.

And there were people in the "9/11 Truth Movement" who were trying to make the argument of controlled demolition THE argument (Right) but there was also the corporate media who painted us as people who think the buildings were brought down by controlled demolition and that a missile hit the Pentagon. And that there were also debunkers who in the very beginning only talked about controlled demolition.

So, there were many fronts trying to make it THE issue, and from a PR standpoint, as I said bottlenecking our message into the theory of "Controlled Demolition" has been a disaster in my opinion. I've had 12 shows that have talked about a multitude of issues concerning the 9/11 attacks, and I think I have proven beyond the shadow of doubt that we were lied to about 9/11, and I haven't even mentioned the buildings.

I don't think that you should have to be a scientist, an engineer, or a physicist to understand that we were lied to about 9/11, and that there is a need for real truth, justice and accountability. And having said all of that, there are Family Members who question NIST's report, and admittedly, I have some questions about it myself. Apparently, there are some things they refuse to release, and I am all about transparency regarding 9/11. So, if the question of how those buildings came down is important to the families, or at least to some of them, then it's important to me. The 9/11 Families did, after all, submit a question to the 9/11 Commission about WTC7. But I don't think that it should be the core message of this cause. I think supporting the 9/11 Family Members, trying to put an end to these wars and everything that is being done in the name of that day by keeping it simple. We were lied to—the 9/11 Commission was a complete farce. And that's so easy to prove. There are just simple lies to show that you don't need all these theories to get your point across.

Anyway, that's what I have to say about controlled demolition. But what else were we talking about? [Laughs]

JOHN

Well, in many respects what happens with 9/11 Truth and controlled demolition was a model for what came after, again, we live in an era where facts and actual science takes a back seat to pseudo science. Somebody made the point that 97 percent of scientists who have published papers on

the issue of climate change are in support of the idea that it's man-made, we're the cause, and the effect is climate change, temperatures rising. But when you see it depicted on TV, they'll have one person defending climate change and another person against it. Really, you should have 97 people sitting at the podium and one person. It's not a fair argument. And when you elevate junk science like climate change is caused by sun spots, a minority position in the extreme, when you elevate junk science and junk facts to the same platform—well, you say it's just in the interest of debate. Are we allowed to have free and open debate? Well then you open up everything to debate. The world is flat. Evolution didn't happen, which by the way is still being debated in some textbooks in the south.

JON That brings up another issue. That brings up another issue, and as I said earlier, human nature, when they're not answering your questions is to speculate as to the reasons why. Everybody has theories. The difference is putting theories forward publicly. I've had so many email exchanges with people talking about different theories about what I think might have happened on 9/11 and talking about information, but I didn't take those theories and go out and say this is what happened. I just talked about it amongst people.

But there are some people who put everything out there on the table. It didn't matter what it was. The space beams brought down the towers. That the planes that we saw hit the buildings were in fact CGI. That there were mini-nukes. That the phone calls were fake. Can you imagine the family members who heard from their loved ones that day being told that the phone calls they got were fake, that they weren't actually their loved one. It just—

JOHN Well, can you imagine losing a child in Sandy Hook and having someone call you and say your child never existed, it was a conspiracy to take our guns away.

JON Or that people were actors? You know—

JOHN That's the ongoing theory that this is, the entire event was staged and everyone was actors and the parents were actors and the kids didn't exist, and the school itself was not a real school. It was a closed building. And the pictures we saw were only a couple of actors and actresses and children actors—but, again, you understand that when you open the debate up to

every arbitrary insane theory, you make it impossible to have any real accountability because—

JON Well, what I learned over the years is to stop being—for years we were called, we were known as the credibility police. We would come in, you'd put this theory forward and we would explain the reasons why it doesn't make any sense. And, we got a lot of flak for that. And the only reason that we were doing it was because we were trying to maintain the credibility of the cause.

JOHN And it's beyond 9/11. The whole idea of a Truth Movement at a time when John Dean described that administration as worse than Nixon. And he said it was the most secretive administration he in his lifetime could remember. And he worked for Nixon. (Right) Most secretive administration that he had ever seen. And the idea that that could coexist with a Truth Movement that is calling for accountability, again, on a whole slew of issues associated with the reasoning and justification for going in to Iraq, what our relationships were with some of the main actors in all of this in Al-Qaeda and who Osama bin Laden was and this is something that I don't think our Government is interested in encouraging.

JON Our Government is definitely not interested in encouraging—

JOHN Right, so I think the solution has been that they've created an environment—and I think it is engineered. There's a story in the news recently that China has employed as many as 300,000 trolls—they don't use that word, but—people who go onto the Internet and go on forums and disrupt and spread this information and just basically do the Government's bidding in terms of propaganda. And China's doing it and we know that there was a story a while ago that Israel was involved in seeding the American Internet with people who were pro-Israeli, pro-war perspectives in the lead-up to Iraq.

And Snowden released documents showing that, you know, in the UK—

JON There's an article from Glenn Greenwald called "How Covert Agents Infiltrate the Internet to Manipulate, Deceive, and Destroy Reputations." And that's available—

JOHN Exactly. So the idea that the largest Military Industrial Complex in the world with the biggest budget, bigger than all the other countries combined,

the United States of America is letting the Internet be a free and open space for everyone to have open space is kind of like laughable to think they're not involved in shaping political perspectives and opinions. And if you look at the current environment on the Internet, what's going on it's just completely crazy. No theory is too insane to gain traction and to become like prevalent perspective on any subject.

JON That's why I ask—this is the message I'm trying to convey in this interview is for people to be careful. To trust themselves over everyone else. Don't believe everything you hear. Don't believe everything you see. Be very careful with how you approach the 9/11 issue or any other issue. Try to put forward the best information possible.

I used to think that the 2,976 people that were murdered on 9/11, they can no longer speak for themselves, so we have to speak for them. For their justice and their accountability. I try to put things in terms that people understand that it's important, why it's important. One thing that we did years ago is we did a declaration of how people should act or coincide with others with regard—or promoting information. It had to do with how to promote information; what's good information. It was called The 2008 Declaration. It's available at TruthMove.org. We spent a lot of time on that (I know, yeah) It was you, me, Julian. I think Donna Marsh O'Conner was involved. Nick Levis was involved. We spent—we were experienced people who had gone through all the bullshit of the "9/11 Truth Movement" and we tried to take that experience and put it into a reasonable suggestive format for people. On how to deal with this issue. And we were attacked for that. We were attacked—

JOHN Well, yeah—but that's, you can't wake a man who's feigning sleep. You know, you can't expect the cooperation of people who are intentionally, by design, intending to undermine your efforts. The idea that you can craft language that is so reasonable that it will sway the hearts and minds of your enemies is—where we made our fatal mistake, we should have gone to war with these people. We should have fought them as hard as we could fight them and have a zero-tolerance level for any of them. We should have created—

JON But again that falls on—

JOHN While we still had the numbers, we should have created a parallel movement that said we are active—a declarative—we are actively being

disrupted and infiltrated and we have a zero-tolerance at this stage of the game for the Tent Theory, which is come one, come all, bring whatever crazies, assorted nuts with you, anti-Jews, anti-Semitic types, no planers, no plane at Pentagon, and control demolition, and all the rest of it, and we should have just held the line in a unified way. But there was no appetite for that.

I can remember endless conference calls with the supposed leadership of 9/11 Truth and being basically put down for even suggesting that we should fight back. We didn't want to lower ourselves to their level. We didn't want to make accusations because that was what they were doing and we weren't going to do the same thing. And, instead, what we ended up with weak sauce 9/11 Truth. What we ended up with was watered down, crazy—

JON Well, what happened was people left. Good people who were trying to make a difference they moved on because they were tired of the bullshit. And, as I was saying, we were the credibility police for a while trying to save the credibility of this cause, and I found that it's so fucking time-consuming that it's better to just be active and just try to do positive things.

And that's one thing I want to convey to people about who to trust—who you think you can trust is—look at the fruits of their labor, okay? Look at their track record over the years. Have they been consistent? Have they admitted to mistakes? Cindy Sheehan is one of the most consistent people there is out there. With when Obama came into office, she was grilling him right away about stopping the Iraq wars. She was grilling him about sending more troops into Afghanistan. I mean, we were all doing it. I was doing it. But she's just been consistent. And so, she may have made some mistakes over the years, but consistently she's been a great activist. So I trust Cindy. And unfortunately, the amount of people that I trust is very small. I wish I could trust everybody, but I can't.

JOHN If we're looking for a solution, if we want success, we have to start by looking in the mirror and we have to start by asking ourselves why isn't this working? We've been—you've been doing this for years. And the American public doesn't seem interested in the topic. It hasn't gained traction. We also have to ask ourselves why the American public also isn't interested in many of the other facts that are out there that are even more substantial in terms of the financial collapse and climate change. We have scientists, well-funded scientists that are telling us something. And the American public

just doesn't seem to be able to organize itself. Organize its thinking on it. The American public isn't interested in activism.

That's the central question here. Unless we get over the hurdle of finding a way to, first of all, reach our audience and then get them motivated—because there's a lack of motivation out there and I don't think it's just because they haven't gotten the truth because controlled demolition poisoned their thinking on one issue or another. I think it's because there's a psychological problem here. [Laughs] The patient is anesthetized and we haven't found a way to wake it up. And, unless we confront that problem face on, none of these issues—9/11, climate change, Iraq, Kennedy assassination—you could just go on and on, everyone has their pet topic that they think is the most important topic. But, the overriding message here, the American public here as a whole, as a body politic is not interested in legislating change or creating change in the streets. It's hopeful that people are protesting against police violence, but unfortunately, police violence, as serious as it may be, is the least of our problems.

JON Well, actually, it's one of the biggest problems we have because when you try to protest and you're hit over the head with a baton—we supposedly have the right to protest and address our Government with the redress of grievances and all that wonderful stuff that's in the Constitution, so when, when they refuse to allow you to do that, that is a problem. So, it's a problem.

JOHN No, it's a problem. It's a problem. I'm not trying to minimize the problem. When I say it's the least of our problems, you know I think—

JON And one thing I want to talk about—

JOHN If I had to pick one problem, I think it's the unsustainability of capitalism and our inability to dethrone those who are in corporate positions of power with non-renewable sources of energy that we're dependent upon and the resource wars—because that's what these wars are about. They're wars for resources—the mindset that American Imperialism and American Empire is going to secure its future through its actions that it's taken over the last decade.

That's the biggest threat to the world, and I don't limit it to what's a threat to American public. The police in America—big problem. The threat to the planet—bigger problem.

JON Yeah, absolutely. But, again, I'm not—I'm trying to take away the 9/11 playing card. I'm not asking people to make 9/11 THE issue for them like it has been for me, but I at least want them to acknowledge the truth. And the truth is: We were lied to about a great many things concerning the 9/11 attacks, and—

JOHN How would that—but how would that unfold? How would you get the Government to surrender to that issue?

JON The Government? I don't want the Government to surrender to that issue. I want the people to acknowledge that issue.

JOHN Okay, so let's say everybody acknowledges it, so then what happens. Everyone acknowledges it.

JON Then maybe they can't use 9/11 like they just did. John Brennan wouldn't be able to do what he just did. And, maybe—maybe—

JOHN What's the mechanism for stopping them?

JON What is the mechanism for what?

JOHN For stopping them. For example: Ninety percent of the American public wants background checks for guns, but we still don't have it. It doesn't—

JON You stop paying your taxes; you stop supporting the corporations by buying their goods. There's a number of things that you can do that is considered to be a revolution. And a revolution isn't a bad thing. It's just a radical change. And I can't think of anything this country needs more than a radical change.

JOHN All right, then we should be activists for radical change. (Laughs) I don't know—getting what people believe—you see, they're two different things. What people believe—they believe 9/11, we were lied to on 9/11. Or they don't believe it. I don't see how either mindset leads to change.

JON Well, if you believe that we were lied to about 9/11—let's look at this—

JOHN Not paying taxes might change things, you could get them to not pay their taxes for a whole bunch of other reasons too.

JON Let's look at this logically.

JOHN Go ahead.

JON If you get people to acknowledge the fact that we were lied to about 9/11, then they're going to start thinking that, you know what? There was no reason for any of these wars that are going on. There was no reason to take away our civil liberties like they have. There was no reason to expand executive power. There's no reason to be able to assassinate Americans. They lied to—these are all things 9/11 is used as justification for. If you tell people, or people are convinced we were lied to, then maybe they'll start thinking about those other issues that are going on that are just horrible that we're taking part in across the pond, on the other side of the planet. And within in this country.

I just—I can't see how you don't acknowledge we were lied to and then start to move on to those other things. I just don't see how you don't do it.

JOHN But the thing is there are still huge numbers of people who have profound insights into what's going on. We're in a very precarious situation that our system is corrupt; that there is an existential threat to the planet; that there are a lot of social injustices going on in the financial system as well as mass casualties—hundreds of thousands dead, based on wars we were misled and lied to about. People do have—

JON Including 9/11—go ahead. [Laughs]

JOHN Including 9/11—people are aware of these things, but it doesn't change—

JON I don't know that they are.

JOHN It doesn't change the power structure. I don't think it's as easy as just getting people to acknowledge a specific issue.

JON No, but they should acknowledge—

JOHN I think how do we organize in this country? How do we organize to get people to make them do the things that need to be done to get true accountability to open the Kennedy files, open 9/11—

JON You show them why it's important. I mean, we're doing so many things around the world right now—

JOHN There was a six-part documentary on HBO showing people the effects of climate change that like we'll all be under water; that like millions of people will be displaced; that wars could break out all over the world; that we could lose our food supply. Make people aware of the stakes. We're constantly bombarded with inconvenient truths and horrible realities.

JON Well, I drew the line at 9/11 and when I think about what John Brennan did yesterday and I think about being a 9/11 Family Member, knowing what we know, watching him do that? It's just inconceivable to me. I don't—it's unimaginable to me to be in their shoes and they deserve better.

 Anyway, John, we've been going on for two hours now, is there anything you want to end on?

JOHN Well, I hope that nothing I said offends you. I think what you're doing is a noble cause. I think anybody who cares as much about an issue as much as you care about this issue, is fighting a noble fight. And I think that at the heart of it, you've put a lot of time into research on this, and I think that you focused on things that are very credible as opposed to a lot of disinformation and misinformation that's out there. And I think it's important that people like you exist. I think—I'm hoping for a spiritual awakening at some point. Maybe when things get bad enough and that 9/11 will be a very important cornerstone in people understanding some of the ugly realities that may exist in this world.

JON Well, we came together after 9/11 like never before. Since Pearl Harbor. And, I was hoping, praying—I don't pray, I don't believe in God—but I was hoping that people could come together for 9/11 again, but this time for the right reasons. To demand accountability. To demand truth. To demand real justice. And—

JOHN Well, I hope that that happens too, Jon. I do. I hope that that happens and, you know, I'm glad that people like you exist. I'm glad that there are people who are dedicated to the cause of truth, on a whole per ponderous of issues. There's a lot of things that really scare me about the world. A lot of things that break my heart about the world. I put myself at considerable risk taking on this cause and early on there were a lot of threats to my safety, there was a lot of accusations and personalized attacks that you're aware of. And it's

because I felt something. And I continue to feel something, it's just that I have a wider range of feelings now for a lot of things that are going on.

JON So do I.

JOHN And I hope there is a spiritual awakening and I'm glad that people like you exist because when the time comes that people are ready to rise from their slumber, it's important that you're still there and that you're still ready to give them what they need in terms of the facts and give them access to this issue.

JON Well, I hope I am still there.

JOHN I'm glad that the issue didn't totally go away. It was buried, under a mountain of disinformation to the point where I don't even know what the truth is anymore. I really don't know.

JON Well, we never knew what the truth was. I became a better activist, or advocate, for 9/11 justice when I admitted that I don't know what happened that day or who was ultimately responsible. There was a time when I used to think I knew exactly what happened, and I looked at certain information and said, well, that's not right. So, maybe I'm not right about this, or—whatever. Honestly, I don't know what happened that day.

And one of the things you mentioned earlier, or one of the questions I asked you earlier is, do we as citizens, is it our job to do an investigation? And we are limited, we can't subpoena people to come under oath. We can't arrest people when they lie under oath. We can't subpoena for certain documents. We're limited. We're very limited.

Yes, we should look at the issue to get an understanding about why we were lied to, about what some of the lies are, but again, we're limited. And one of the things I talked about from Michael Ruppert, he said using their words against them is a very important tool. And I spoke with Erik Larson in one of my interviews talking about looking at the documentation from the 9/11 Commission and comparing it to what's in the report, and a lot of times you'll see that it's different. So, if you find out documentation like that in the 9/11 Commission, it's very important, because it contradicts, it shows that they're lying.

Anyway, so that's an important tool, using their words against them.

I want to thank you, very much for your time today. This was an experiment to see if we could do this without attacking people and so on and so forth, and I don't think we did attack anybody. If we did, I apologize, whatever.

JOHN We may have attacked some people's belief systems.

JON Well—anyway.

JOHN It's hard now-a-days not to do that. You know, on any issue.

JON I thought that this was a very important topic that needed to be talked about because it caused so many problems for the "9/11 Truth Movement" and other movements and other causes and people need to know what happened so they can try to avoid it in the future for any issue.

So, anyway, thanks John for your time today. I recommend people go watch your movie—Everybody's Got to Learn Sometime. It's an old movie. I don't know how accurate everything is in it anymore. I think it was pretty accurate, if I remember correctly.

JOHN Well, if it—again, the devil is in the details, isn't it?

JON Yep, yes it is.

JOHN I mean that's the challenge and if we don't have access, if we don't have access to facts that can be verified, which I don't know as American citizens—you asked the question: Should we be investigating? The answer, sadly, is no. Because I don't think we have the access—

JON No, but we should definitely get an understanding, about what we're fighting for.

JOHN We should do the best that we can to understand the issue—

JON Yeah—

JOHN All of the issues, of course. And, when it comes to the issue of science, that's one area that still remains strong. It's easy to have a conspiracy among politicians. It's hard to have a conspiracy that involves all the

scientists in the world. Science kind of stand on its own. So, you know, we do have some tools available to us and we should use them.

JON Well, all righty, thank you very much, John, for your time today.

JOHN All right.

JON And, I hope your family is well and all that stuff.

JOHN All right, good luck. Thanks a lot. Bye, bye.

JON All right, thanks John.



Chapter/Episode 14 – Robbie Martin – December 18, 2014

Jon Gold (JON)

Robbie Martin (ROBBIE)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This show is going to focus on torture as it relates to the 9/11 Report. If the 9/11 Report was based on tortured testimony and it sure seems that it was, then that discredits the 9/11 Report because information obtained through torture is simply not reliable. Torture is not a left/right issue. It's a right and wrong issue. And torture is simply wrong.

Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Robbie Martin. How are you doing today, Robbie?

ROBBIE Great, Jon.

JON Excellent. Okay, I'm going to read your bio.

Robbie Martin is a journalist for *Media Roots*, creator of the film "American Anthrax," and co-host of *Media Roots Radio* with Abby Martin. He has appeared on Tyrel Ventura's *Buzzsaw TV*, KPFA, *Breaking the Set* on *Russia Today*, *Deadline Live*, *The Corbett Report*, and has been interviewed

by La Figaro, the BBC, *Neural Magazine*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He is the founder of RecordLabelRecords.org and is a musician under the alias of Fluorescent Grey.

Okay, before we begin, I want to say that I don't actually know any experts on the subject of torture and the 9/11 Report. If you've been following the shows, I've been trying to have the experts on about a certain area to get the best information. So, I asked someone that I knew would give intelligent answers to the questions that I have to ask to be my guest. And that someone was Robbie.

So, thank you, Robbie, for being on today to talk about this extremely important issue, and no pressure man. [Laughs]

ROBBIE Thank you so much for having me on, Jon, and I by no means—I haven't spent my life's work studying torture and the torture program, but I feel pretty confident that I've written enough about it and read enough about it to be able to have a good discussion with you and, yeah, hopefully inform your listeners to sort of the inner workings of it. Because a lot of the details get glossed over because it's just—it's torture. It's such a sensationalized—I mean, it's a horrible thing, so—

JON I mean, if we want to have a really quick interview—torture is bad. Okay, Robbie, have a good day.

ROBBIE Yeah, that's it.

JON All right. So, let's get started on the questions.

What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

ROBBIE Well, I'm trying to—let's see, I was 20 years old when 9/11 happened, so it was a really surreal day for me. I mean, I woke up in the morning with, I think, I don't remember who called me, but someone told me to turn on the news and it was the first tower that had already been hit, and yeah, it was just a really surreal moment. I didn't know what to think. Of course, I wondered who was behind it. I was sort of getting sucked into that fervor of "who did this?" Why aren't they telling us who did this? And then by the time they eventually, sort of, started broadcasting that it was bin Laden, I didn't really feel like they ever presented any evidence or proof, necessarily, between that time or it was sort of like a mystery when they delivered us

that supposed proof of bin Laden being behind it. They didn't really provide any proof, it was just sort of announced. And then it snowballed from there.

And I remember at the time—I was sort of like, I had become sort of a pacifist in—only really because my girlfriend at the time was one. She was a Japanese citizen. She wasn't super political, but she had a really strong view, an anti-American foreign policy view. And, I think, just being with her at the time of 9/11 she was over my house, it was not too hard to find myself sort of on the side in this minority position all of a sudden where I was arguing with people that I knew—a lot of my friends, even family members—about—they were demanding we need to go to Afghanistan and get bin Laden, we need to take him out. We need to take on the Taliban. I remember, even the evening of 9/11 arguing with people about why should we attack this country just to get one man. The concept didn't make sense to me.

And it still doesn't really make sense to me and I feel that that's something that the rationale for going into Afghanistan and invading it is glossed over with all the focus that the Iraq lies got. So, that was something that really stuck out to me at the time, but I guess I didn't further question the events itself. I just thought that the rationale for going to war seemed completely baseless to me.

JON Well, then, you were ahead of the curve as far as I'm concerned, because I was one of those people who wanted to carpet-bomb the Middle East. I wanted revenge for what happened. (Yeah) I've often said I was like every other American. I was ignorant about the world. I didn't care about the important things that a citizen of a country should care about. And then 9/11 happened and it scared the crap out of me. I had to know what was going to happen next. And I glued myself to Fox News, which I've said, was the red, whitest, and bluest and I was trying to be the most patriotic person I could be and so you were definitely ahead of the curve.

The only thing I questioned on the day of 9/11 after the Pentagon was hit I'm like: "Where the hell is our military?" But, I didn't really ask any more questions like that until later. But this isn't about me, so—

What was the first thing you questioned about 9/11?

ROBBIE The first thing I questioned about 9/11, besides what I just mentioned? The sort of rationale for retaliation. I mean, I questioned the evidence that bin

Laden was behind it. That was the very first thing I remember questioning openly. But I didn't really question it in a sense that I thought that the U.S. Government was trying to frame or deliberately mislead the American public. I just thought this fervor and this sort of blood-thirsty feeling that we all have and want to get revenge is clouding our judgment and I questioned that.

But, in terms of actually questioning what was happening—I mean, I know your feelings on the whole controlled demolition rabbit hole and how that's become a lot of a distraction in the "9/11 Truth Movement"—

JON How DARE you bring that up on my show! [Laughter]

ROBBIE [Laughs] But, I mean, on the day of 9/11 I know that that's not simply just a conspiracy theory that came later. Even when I saw the buildings falling, I thought that it looked very strange to me. And, I guess at the time, it just reminded me of movie special effects. I was—I remember being very confused by that. I remember thinking, well how did those buildings fall like that? I just didn't comprehend it. I didn't necessarily question it, and I didn't until years later sort of see that other people were questioning that too, and then they sort of went overboard with that. (Well--) And between the whole idea of questioning 9/11 in to just that specific thing.

JON Well, with regard to the buildings, just so everyone's clear. I mean, that's where the majority of people were murdered that day. (Yeah--) So, it's natural I would think if you were a victim's family member to question how those buildings came down. And it was one of the questions that the families put forward to the 9/11 Commission. So, it wasn't—I don't want to say it was crazy to question how those buildings came down. I never questioned how they came down until I was introduced to the "9/11 Truth Movement." I mean, to me, the idea of the planes hitting the buildings and that caused enough damage for the buildings to come down made sense. It didn't even occur to me to question how they came down.

But, anyway, how dare you bring up that topic on my show.

[Laughter]

All right, so did Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM) confess to the 9/11 attacks prior to his capture?

ROBBIE Yeah, he did, but it was under some strange, more ambiguous circumstances. I mean, from what I understand, I haven't actually listened to the supposed confession. But Al Jazeera—they had a reporter actually, apparently, go out and interview him and he confessed the whole thing to this reporter. And, there's some people who came out and questioned the authenticity of the interview. I think it was—let's see, who was it? It was someone named Dia Rashwan who was an expert on the Islamic movements at the Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies in Cairo said that, "He has very serious doubts about the authenticity of this tape. It could have been a script written by the FBI."

I'm not sure why he surmised that, but from what I read about it, it seems like the tape has been heavily edited. And, also, the—I guess the tape was in conjunction with a video interview, and there's some weird story about how Al-Qaeda was the one videotaping the interview and they refused to give them the tape once they eventually broadcast this information. So—but you can probably fill in some of that information.

JON Well, no, the only thing—that was very good—the only thing I have to say is the name of the reporter was Yosri Fouda—

ROBBIE Yeah, from Al Jazeera.

JON From Al Jazeera—and, you know, Coleen Rowley, 9/11 whistleblower, Coleen Rowley met Yosri Fouda. And this is a quote from her:

"As far as Yosri Fouda, you should read his co-written book *Masterminds of Terror*. KSM and bin al-Shibh didn't 'confess' to Fouda, rather they boasted as they were trying to use Fouda to get their story out for PR purposes. It all sounded very credible to me and not unlike what Daniel Pearl (died) trying to do."

But I think they did "confess," but the point is Coleen Rowley met him and thought that he was a credible individual. And that's one of the reasons I don't discard KSM as being a suspect for the 9/11 attacks.

ROBBIE Well, yeah, KSM is kind of a—is an interesting figure because, if you really take into account all the statements he's made sort of after 9/11, it does seem like he is sort of jumping at the chance to take credit for everything. I mean, we'll get into that later but—I'm sure you would agree with that.

JON Oh, absolutely.

ROBBIE So, it's kind of interesting that if he really does have his finger in every single one of these pies, he really is the "mastermind," but I don't think we should take that at face value. Simply because it makes him seem like this James Bond-esq almost villainous mastermind who was able to orchestrate all these different things.

JON Right. One of the things that's interesting about who was the "mastermind" of 9/11 is that it shifts within the media between Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Osama bin Laden. They refer to both of them as the masterminds. I guess it depends on what day of the week it is. I have no idea. But I've noticed that weird thing that goes on. Anyway—

ROBBIE Yeah, oh no, yeah it totally does. And they've also even the more obscure, sort of more, I guess intellectual reporting that's done it coming from a similar angle, they sometimes even, you know, peel it back even more and say that Zawahari is kind of the mastermind and bin Laden was just sort of the money, he's like the money and the pretty face behind it all. (Right)

So, there's all different types of variants of the narrative of who was really the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. And I think that term "mastermind" has almost become meaningless at this point. Because, I mean you can even argue that, you know, whoever conducted the 9/11 attacks, whoever was really the mastermind behind it, they were most likely inspired or, you know, sort of influenced by the Bojinka plot, which most of the evidence suggests that really was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's plan, like he came up with that idea and the 9/11 attacks followed a very similar template to that—to the Bojinka plot.

JON Right, so again, these are reasons why we don't completely discard KSM as a suspect, but there are questions about Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. You know, his connections to the ISI, which seems to be a theme. Apparently, Osama bin Laden had an ISI handling officer. I forget his name, but Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, KSM had ties to the ISI and I never hear about this or these things coming up in the media but they're interesting to me.

All right, so the next question is: How many times was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed waterboarded?

ROBBIE Well, officially, he was waterboarded 183 times. (Right) Which, I mean, it sounds very excessive, obviously. I mean, 183 waterboardings. We don't know for how long each one of those times was. When I read that statistic and when I sort of tried to look into it and dig deeper, we don't—that could mean he was waterboarded for 183 different days for a duration of 12 hours each time. I mean, we have no idea, really, if this was just like every time they poured water on his face, they counted it as one waterboarding. (Right)

And, I mean, if this guy was waterboarded that many times, regardless of the duration. Regardless of the frequency, how closely together he was waterboarded. It would drive any person into some kind of state of mental (Right)—maybe not insanity, but it would develop a mental illness in a normally mentally healthy person, I think, in most circumstances. You would either suffer from PTSD, anxiety-panic attacks. As a credible witness for a crime, obviously would no longer be a credible witness. You wouldn't be able to—I don't think anybody who's gone through that would be able to take the stand in a criminal court. Especially if it was someone who—a crime of this magnitude. It's—

So—

JON Well, we're going to get into the federal court versus military trials a little bit later.

Just so everybody knows, on June 15, 2009, the Associated Press reported that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed said he would "make up stories" in order to get them to stop torturing him. And on August 6, 2007, *The New Yorker* reports that a former CIA official estimates that about "90 percent of the information was unreliable." I believe that was referring to Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

Now, with regard to torture—and this is getting a little bit off the subject of 9/11, I just wanted to point this out to people. This was an important fact. On May 14th, 2009, it was reported that Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi was tortured "in an effort to produce intelligence tying Iraq to Al-Qaeda." According to Colin Powell's former Chief of Staff, I think his name is Larry Wilkerson:

"What I have learned is that as the administration authorized harsh interrogation in April and May of 2002 – well before the Justice Department had rendered any legal opinion – its

principal priority for intelligence was not aimed at pre-empting another terrorist attack on the U.S. but discovering a smoking gun linking Iraq to Al-Qaeda."

ROBBIE I like that phrase "discovering a smoking gun." (Right) Instead of just completely manufacturing one out of thin air.

JON Right, I mean, the myth that they were trying to protect us is just absolute bullshit.

ROBBIE Well, of course. I mean, even—wasn't it Colin Powell's Chief of Staff Lawrence Wilkerson who came out and—I think he even signed some kind of affidavit where he in sworn testimony said that he believes that all the inmates at GITMO, except for a few exceptions, are totally innocent and the only reason we've kept them there is essentially for PR reasons, that we are worried that if we released them, then it will become a disaster for us politically because all these people will start talking about what they experienced—the kind of torture that they might have been put there.

But then also, I think he has suggested and other reporters who have combed over all the details of this, like Marcy Wheeler in her blog Empty Wheel, she has come to the conclusion many times that a great percentage of the torture at GITMO and at these other places was done simply to get false confessions. It was done in the same way that Bush and Blair were trying to fix the intelligence. I mean, it was, they came at these detainees with a specific fact or something that they wanted to get out of them just so they can, you know, get this on paper that this person said this.

So, it's—I mean, a lot of that, in my mind seems like—even if it goes beyond just trying to draw a false connection between Iraq and Al-Qaeda through torture that—we simply don't know, that's the problem. We don't know how much of this information was gained through torture and we don't know how many other times they tried to get false confessions out of people for other things.

So, it's just a mess. I mean, it's kind of just a clusterfuck. I mean, so that's just another reason why we need to close GITMO and these black sites immediately. It's—

JON Well, have you noticed after the release of the Senate report that just came out about torture, that people are pointing to 9/11 as being torture and that

justifies the actions of the CIA and others after 9/11, as far as torture is concerned. Have you seen that?

ROBBIE Yeah, I've seen that. (All right—) I mean, it's—

JON Well, the only thing justified by 9/11 besides the anger and anguish people felt was the need for a real criminal investigation to find out who was responsible and a means to hold those responsible accountable. That's the only thing justified by 9/11. Everything else that has been done in the name of 9/11, as far as I'm concerned, have been criminal acts.

ROBBIE Absolutely, I completely agree. And they never, they never provided that to us. I mean, they went through the motions of doing it. Essentially, the American public got on board with this wave of hatred toward the Middle East after 9/11. All the Government had to do was leak a few things, make a few suggestions, and then eventually come out and officially announce it was Al-Qaeda and bin Laden, and that tied it up for most people. There was never—people just didn't look back, unfortunately, except for people like you and I.

JON Right. And I just saw a poll saying that a majority—49 percent, I don't know if that's a majority, but—of Americans say that torture after 9/11 was justified.

Torture is always, always, always wrong. And your sister, Abby, just did a report recently, and she cited a document from, I think, 1984, during the Reagan administration, that talked about how it's illegal in the United States Government or elements within in the U.S. Government to commit torture.

ROBBIE Of course. I mean, it's just funny to me that it's become this debate about well, does it work or not? I mean, it's like how can that—it's just so—it's disturbing to me that that's even a narrative out there because it is so horrendous. I mean, Abby and I have discussions about this a lot, if you rank it on a scale, like the top five most horrible things human beings can do to each other, it's in the top 3, next to rape and murder, so it's just interesting that that's become—I don't know, it's just so weird. Imagine the media talking about, well, does rape work or not? Can you get information that way? Or does it provide false information. It's that surreal to me that they're actually having discussion about it like that.

JON I know, and they don't—often times in the corporate media they use the Orwellian term, enhanced interrogation technique or EITs. (Yeah) They don't refer to it as torture, and it is.

ROBBIE Oh, yeah, I mean, did you happen to catch that Vice interview with the torture architect?

JON No, I did not.

ROBBIE Yeah, this guy, I guess, he was outed in the torture report. He was an Army psychologist whose job that he did for the U.S. Military was he was a teacher who would teach soldiers and like other special op soldiers how to resist interrogations. So, like, if American soldiers were to be captured in another country, this guy's job was to teach them before they would go into these operations—if you get captured, here are the things you can do to resist waterboarding, to resist these kinds of torture, to resist sleep deprivation.

So, they asked this guy to reverse engineer those tactics he came up with to actually create the torture program that they ended up using.

JON Well, if you're going to bring up a report like that, I may as well bring up this latest report that came up today. And I want to thank Sebastian Durrbach for pointing this article out to me.

It's from NBC and it's called: "Bin Laden Expert Accused of Shaping CIA Deception on 'Torture' Program." And this is about the Senate Report that just came out, and I'm going to quote the article.

"A top Al-Qaeda expert who remains in a senior position at the CIA was a key architect of the agency's defense of its detention and 'enhanced interrogation' program for suspected terrorists, developing oft-repeated talking points that misrepresented and overstated its effectiveness, according to the Senate Intelligence Committee's report released last week."

"The expert is no stranger to controversy. She was criticized after 9/11 terrorist attacks for countenancing a subordinate's refusal to share the names of two of the hijackers with the

FBI prior to the terror attacks. But instead of being sanctioned, she was promoted."

"NBC News is withholding her name at the request of the CIA, which cited a climate of fear and retaliation in the wake of the release of the committee's report in asking that her anonymity be protected."

And this article came out today. Just so everybody knows, her name is Alfreda Frances Bikowsky, and she, along with MANY OTHER PEOPLE, need to be held accountable for many things. And I just want to point out that we know this name because of the work done by Ray Nowosielski, John Duffy, Rory O'Connor with regard to the *Who is Rich Blee?* podcast, which came out in 2011. Her name was first publicly revealed on Sibel Edmonds The Boiling Frogs post, but it was the work of Ray and John and everyone that essentially made her name important. Or helped to make her name important.

ROBBIE So that's—go ahead—

JON So that's her name: Alfreda Frances Bikowsky. So, I have no problems releasing her name. Do we want accountability, or don't we?

ROBBIE That's really amusing to me that NBC News thought that people wouldn't be able to find out that name. They must just think people are dumb enough to not be paying attention to the work of Ray and you and other people. Sort of the people at HistoryCommons and stuff. So that's interesting that they would—so this is, they proclaimed that recently? That they don't want to release the name?

JON This is the report from today. And, in fact—

ROBBIE That's bizarre.

JON According to the report, one of the reasons that they were having problems releasing the report was because they didn't know whether or not to classify her name. There was like a debate about it.

ROBBIE That's fascinating. I feel like one of us or someone should contact NBC and say look, we know her name. This is not a secret.

JON Well, I already posted it on Facebook as many places as I could. [Laughs] (Yeah) to let everybody know.

All right, so the next question is: How many times did the 9/11 Report source the interrogations of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed?

ROBBIE Apparently, 211 different times in the report. (Right) And, let's see, yeah and there were other people more obscure, you know, Al-Qaeda people that were also sourced. According to HistoryCommons, Al-Qaeda leader Khalid bin Attash – this might be Walib instead of Khalid bin Attash was sourced 74 times; 9/11 hijacker associate Ramzi bin al-Shibh was sourced 68 times; Al-Qaeda leader Abd Al-Rahim Al-Nashiri was sourced 14 times. And this is my favorite one: "Generic interrogations of detainees with no names whatsoever were sourced 57 times."

JON Yeah, that was a weird quote. (Laughs)

ROBBIE But—

JON Go ahead.

ROBBIE I was just going to say, but, this wasn't picked up on by very many people at the time because, I think around—when was the 9/11 Commission released? It was 2004, right?

JON July 22, 2004, I believe.

ROBBIE Yeah, so when it came out I don't think anybody really picked up on the fact that these interrogations were completely baseless because many of them were based on torture. It wasn't until later that people started looking back at it when all the torture revelations came out that that became really self-evident. But, I think, even MSNBC—I don't know who on MSNBC—this is from HistoryCommons. It says that:

"MSNBC eventually counted the number of endnotes in the 9/11 Commission Report that cite detainee interrogations and they found that more of a quarter of them, 441 out of 1700 references—this is, and I'm talking about all the endnotes in the 9/11 Commission, this is every single note, that one quarter of them—that they based their report on comes from these type of interrogations."

JON Right, I think that NBC report came from Robert Windrem who appeared along with Michael Ratner and Philip Zelikow on *Democracy Now!* to discuss this subject.

Now, are you familiar with the disclaimer that was within the 9/11 Report about the information obtained through the interrogations?

ROBBIE Oh, yeah, I'll read it to you, if you'd like [Laughs].

JON Yeah, go ahead. Please.

ROBBIE So the actual disclaimer, I think it's Chapters 5 and 7 in the 9/11 Commission Report, are sort of like the back story about who was involved. It's kind of like the narrative of how this attack happened and who was involved, etc. etc. In the disclaimer, they have in that chapter it says:

"Our access to them has been limited to the review of intelligence reports based on communications received from the locations or the actual interrogations took place. Chapters 5 and 7 rely heavily on information obtained from captured Al-Qaeda members. A number of these 'detainees' have firsthand knowledge of the 9/11 plot. Assessing the truth and statements by these witnesses—sworn enemies of the United States—is challenging."

And, I thought what was an interesting omission from that whole diatribe that they write in there is there is no mention of actually what kind of evidence they got—the phrase "intelligence reports" can really mean anything. It can just mean a synopsis—actually, that's what it does mean from what I've studied in terms of intelligence lingo. When you get an intelligence report, often it's not like a transcript of an interrogation or a transcript from a surveilled phone call. It's just a synopsis of what went on in that transcript. (Right)

So, I mean, it's fascinating—they don't overtly mention we didn't have transcripts. But that's fascinating in and of itself that they were given second-hand information that wasn't even—they weren't even provided transcripts of. And from what I understand, they also weren't given any audio or video tapes and later, of course, all those CIA interrogation video tapes were destroyed.

So—what are your thoughts on that? Has anyone in the 9/11 Commission ever said what kind of information they were given for these chapters? Like, were they given—

JON Well, as I mentioned, those three individuals who were on *Democracy Now!*—but, before I get into what they said—and that's the reason I wanted you to read that statement because that's what they talk about on *Democracy Now!*

The information that they got was: "Third-hand, passed from the detainee to the interrogator to the person who writes up the interrogation report, and finally, to its staff in the form of reports, not even transcripts."

Is that from that statement that you just read?

ROBBIE No, I don't think it actually does—

JON Okay, I got that from my Facts Speak for Themselves article. I'd forgot the source, but if it's there, it's got a source.

The 9/11 Commission—

ROBBIE I believe it though.

JON The 9/11 Commission became unhappy because the Government's investigators were "not asking the detainees the kind of questions it wanted answered."

Now, back to *Democracy Now!* And the three people I mentioned. Robert Windrem who wrote that NBC report says:

"There is—and Mr. Zelikow pointed this out to me, as did two of his former staffers—there is on page 146 of the Commission report a description of why they decided to use the interrogation information. But, wherein that box, as it's referred to, has some information about their concerns, it does not state that they had concerns about these interrogations being undertaken with duress. It did not state that specifically. And talking to Mr. Zelikow and talking to two of his former staffers, they did express at that time certain concerns about—

and as Mr. Zelikow said to me, they guessed that there was harsh interrogation techniques used. There is a general description on that box on page 146 of their concerns, but it does not go specifically to the issue that we're discussing here today, which is whether these interrogations took place under duress. And that was certainly something that there were internal discussions on within the Commission staff."

ROBBIE [AUDIOBAD]

JON And, Philip Zelikow tried to say, of course, there was a concern and so on and so forth, but they never asked according—they never asked these people who were doing these interrogations whether or not they were under duress. And Michael Ratner who was on Democracy Now! Said:

"Well, I was a bit surprised to hear Phil say that you can't assume that the evidence that he had from interrogations was based on torture. Can I say it 100 percent? No. But you can say that he based it on Zubaydah, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and others, who we now know were waterboarded, and they're the evidence that's used. So you put two and two together, you get four. You get the fact, essentially, that these people were tortured to get their testimony."

ROBBIE Yeah, I mean, it's pretty blatant and I wish more people in the mainstream would make light of that. But, I mean, I guess my take on it is I have a slightly different view of the idea of duress. Prisoners under duress. I mean, when you look at what GITMO is and what it represents and what it, how it compares to the actual U.S. justice system—which is corrupt already. Many aspects of our functioning, so-called functioning justice system are completely fucked and imbalanced. But, GITMO in and of itself, I mean, just being a prisoner there—let's just say you're a prisoner there but you're not subjected to any torture, you're still under a form of duress simply because you're not being given a proper trial and legal proceedings. (Right) So, it has that gulag quality of it where you don't—you can literally have no idea when you're going to be released, when you're going to get to talk to your lawyer, if this person is even your actual lawyer or if he's some kind of double agent franking for another aspect of the U.S. military trying to get information out of you. I mean, it's probably such a terrible experience just removing all that torture that I would describe any prisoner's experience there as being under duress just in a general sense.

JON Well, with regard to the information obtained for the 9/11 Report, if Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was waterboarded 183 times, every day is a day of duress. You never know when you're going to be tortured during (Exactly) interrogation sessions and it's absolutely absurd.

So, how credible is information obtained through torture.

ROBBIE Well, it's clearly not credible.

JON Okay, then.

ROBBIE I mean, but we simply don't know. That's the problem. We don't know how exactly they used these interrogation—I hate using that phrase interrogation—we don't know how they used these torture techniques to get this information out of them or exactly when they asked them these questions and when they tortured them.

But I think you brought up the point where it ultimately it doesn't matter because just this idea of not knowing when the next time you're going to be tortured is is a form of psychological duress. And that's kind of the point, I think, that some people are missing from this.

And then this Vice interview that I was talking about earlier. The guy's name is actually Dr. James Mitchell, and he's the architect of the CIA's torture program. And, he kept making this argument to the guy who was interviewing him. He wasn't denying that he was involved in this. He wasn't questioning the morality of it. He was standing up for the program. But he was sort of, he was trying to explain to the guy, this isn't like we're waterboarding someone and there's a guy in the room yelling questions at the guy being waterboarded. It was a psychological—it was also a psychological torture technique, which you just described, where they would have someone waterboard them and they would be sort of the bad cop, and then the good cop would be a guy in a suit at a desk essentially saying we really don't want to do this to you again, and we won't, if you just answer these questions.

So, it was like they would use the threat of waterboarding and torture as the interrogation technique. (Right) And I think that's what this—that's probably the only correct thing that this guy said in this interview is that he was trying to distinguish that. I mean it was mostly he was just trying to

like break through some of the over-simplification of how people perceive this. But he wasn't disputing the fact that it was—he wasn't saying that it was wrong or anything. I thought that was interesting that it wasn't, it's not like in 24 where someone is screaming in your face as they're torturing you. It's more well-crafted than that, I should say, And I hate calling it something actually crafted, but—this was devised by a psychologist, you know, someone—

JON They just had a psychologist admit that he took part in waterboarding, and I'm thinking to myself, you know, somebody who's been to the psychologist before, and they ask the question a lot, how does that make you feel? Can you imagine being a psychologist waterboarding somebody asking "how does that make you feel?" You know?

ROBBIE It's disturbing. I mean, it's as—I imagine a lot of the time, just—I imagine to myself during the Bush administration, like there must be some kind of evil psychologists who are devising some of this stuff. And it turns out that there were.

JON Well the bottom line is that information obtained through torture is simply not reliable. So, if the 9/11 Report is based on this tortured testimony, how credible is the 9/11 Report? And the answer to that is it's not very credible. It's reason 1,398,296 as to why the 9/11 Commission and its Report cannot be trusted.

And with regard to the Senate Report that came out recently, 9/11 Family Members, Kristen Breitweiser and Monica Gabrielle, they wrote an article for *Huffington Post* and the article is titled "Three Thoughts on Torture Following the Release of the SSC Report on Torture 2014" and this is from December 9, 2014.

. " . . . one need only a cursory understanding of the 9/11 Commission Report to know that a large portion of the report regarding the planning and carrying out of the 9/11 attacks was collected and based upon Khalid Sheikh Mohammed interrogations. If we now know that these interrogations produced bogus, erroneous information, dare we ask how much of the 9/11 Commission's Final Report is based on total bullshit? Yet something tells us that asking former staff director Philip Zelikow or former Commission Chair Lee

Hamilton for a new 9/11 Commission Report, won't get us very far."

And that was Kristen Breitweiser and Monica Gabrielle, members of the September Eleventh Advocates, the both of them.

So, I thought that was a pretty powerful quote and I don't think it got the attention in the corporate media it deserved, but I wanted—

ROBBIE Of course not, they'd rather interview blood-thirsty 9/11—I mean, I don't want to insult any 9/11 victims' family members, but they'd rather have people who are still sort of holding on to that more blood-thirsty feeling, and they had, I don't know who it was—you probably remember the name of a 9/11 widow going around saying: "Yeah, I think torture is fine." Like she was sort of bringing up that idea that 9/11 was torture. This was sort of —

JON Yeah, her name is Terry Strada and I want to say a few things about that incident. And I've written about this. I wrote about this in my book. I'm not going to hate a 9/11 Family Member for their viewpoint, because I don't understand and can never understand what it's like to have lost someone that day and I don't know, there are many family members and there are many family members with different levels of knowledge with regard to the 9/11 attacks. So, that blood-thirsty thing you were talking about, Terry Strada who has been an advocate recently for the release of the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry having to do with Saudi Arabia, made some comments about how she's okay with torture.

And I just want to say that I respect her drive to get the 28 redacted pages released, but I cannot condone when someone says that torture is okay. And you're—it's okay to disagree with a 9/11 Family Member.

There'd been—there was a woman, Debra Burlingame, who was the poster child of the war on terror for many years—

ROBBIE Was she Chip's wife? Chip Burlingame?

JON Yeah, Chip Burlingame's wife—or, I'm sorry, sister? Yeah, I think she is the sister. She was on CNN and FOX and all those for years whenever the media needed a 9/11 Family Member to convey pro-war ideas. And I can't

hate her, because I don't understand what it's like. So I can disagree, but I'm not going to hate somebody.

Anyway—early on—

ROBBIE Yeah, I just wanted to raise the point that you don't see any of the Jersey Widows going on the media to talk about it. I mean, they obviously don't have any interest in raising that issue again, even though it's a very—

JON Well, no, they just did. Two of them just wrote that article for Huffington Post. But, again, they're not going to be the 9/11 Family Members that you see on the corporate media.

ROBBIE That's what I mean, yeah. CNN's not asking them to go on, but—

JON Exactly.

All right, so the next questions is—and we talked about this a little bit. Early on in Obama's presidency, Eric Holder announced that he was going to try Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and the others in a federal court in New York City. There was so much backlash that it never happened. Some say the reasons certain people didn't want this in a federal court was because he was tortured and that tortured testimony wouldn't be accepted as evidence and it essentially could be thrown out.

What is your opinion of the whole situation? Federal Courts versus Military Trials.

ROBBIE Well, I mean, obviously, a federal court is going to be more transparent and even-handed than a Military Trial, but I mean, I remember when Obama first made that announcement, I thought it was weird because we had already learned—I mean, didn't we already learn previous to his announcing that that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed had been waterboarded that many times? I mean, that was already out there, right? (Yeah)

So, I remembered when that happened I was thinking well, that's weird. Because I immediately thought about the point you just raised that how would they be able to try a guy who was tortured so many times? And part of me almost thinks—I mean, I don't want to give Obama any benefit of the doubt on this, but part of me honestly believes that Obama might have just been really naïve about the whole situation and for his being a former

Constitutional Law professor, maybe he actually thought that this was a possibility and, I mean, I don't know that. I just—that's where my mind goes about it—and what's kind of funny, there's an actual CIA report, internal CIA report, of his interrogations and it was called: "Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's threat reporting. Precious truths surrounded by a body guard of lies." And a former CIA analyst, Bruce Riedel asks: "What are you going to do about KSM in the long run?" It's a very good question. I don't think anyone has an answer. If you took him to any real American court, I think any judge would say there's no admissible evidence. It would be thrown out.

And, he's right, obviously. So, yeah, I mean, I think that was probably a big part of the reason why it was thrown out of court—not thrown out of court, but why it never happened. And I think Obama, in sort of the Left Wing—the more Democrat loyalist Obama supporters at the time sort of used that endless excuse again that the Republicans were to blame, and the Right were to blame as to why they couldn't bring this trial to the United States, when I don't think it had anything to do with that. I mean, there was a lot of Right Wing outrage at the time the same bullshit they always do, but—

JON Well, it was weird, the people that were against the idea—federal trials—were the people on the "Right" and I hate the Left/Right paradigm. The people on the Right the Dick Cheneys, the Mike Bloombergs, the Rudy Giuliani—I think even John Ashcroft came out against it. There were so many people on the Right that came out against it, and some said they were doing that because they didn't want this idea that torture took place to come out. Or for that to be, you know, a big issue. But it's already a big issue. (Yeah)

So, I think—and I've said this a lot of times—I think that the Government is afraid of 9/11 actually going into a courtroom.

ROBBIE Oh, yeah, I completely agree with that.

JON There are—during the Moussaoui sentencing phase, you know, it was not a trial—Lorie Van Auken educated me that what everybody calls Moussaoui's trial was just the sentencing phase. He had already plead guilty. But during that, and here's an example from the Associated Press.

"In cross-examination, a defense lawyer got FBI agent Michael Anticev to admit that the FBI was aware years before

Nine-Eleven that al Qaida planned to slam planes into prominent buildings."

And that was on March 7, 2006, from the Associated Press.

And there were other things that came out of the Moussaoui trial that were like Oh, My God! What? You couldn't believe it. And so, I think there was another instance recently with regard to airport security, where during these proceedings information came out that said some of the people at the airport saw Mohamed Atta casing the airport. Did you remember that? Did that just come out recently?

ROBBIE I did not hear that, actually, no.

JON Well, but the point is that when 9/11—when you go to a Federal Court, which is what the families really wanted. I spoke with Lorie Van Auken during one of my interviews and she said: "that we wanted this in court." And the reason that they wanted it in court is because you have to provide evidence, you have to—there's cross-examination between prosecutors and defense people. I'm not a lawyer. I don't know everything that goes on in a courtroom, but it's a lot more legitimate than the bogus Military Tribunals, which, if there's ever a trial for the Military Tribunals, it's not real justice, okay?

And I have a statement from the September Eleventh Advocates and I'm going to read the entire thing. I tried to look for a quote from the thing, but the whole thing was just good. So, I'm going to read it. And they released it on November 19th, 2009, and it's called: Statement of September Eleventh Advocates Regarding Reaction to Attorney General Eric Holder's Announcement On Moving 9/11 Trials to New York City.

"We are encouraged by Attorney General Eric Holder's announcement that the trial of alleged 9/11 mastermind, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, and four additional detainees, Walid Muhammed Salih Mubarak Bin Attash, Ramzi Bin Al Shibh, Ali Abdul-Aziz Ali, and Mustafa Ahmed Al Hawsawi, would be moved to our Federal Court system in New York City.

Unfortunately, this has evoked a knee-jerk reaction that has been brought to an almost feverish pitch by the media pundits

and the politicians. This response seems to be agenda driven rhetoric unsupported by facts.

Fear mongering is a tactic that is often used by those in power to hide wrongdoing. Perhaps those responsible for ordering torture have something to hide. Could those people be creating this frenzy?

With the apparent desire to try these suspects in the military commission system, one would think that the success rate of prosecutions would be higher than that of the Federal Courts', but that is not the case. To date, the military commissions system has had a very low success rate and has only brought one 9/11 terrorist case to completion. On the other hand, the American Justice System has been used to try terrorists 214 times since September 2001, with a success rate of 91% - 195 people were convicted.

The one 9/11 related case that was brought to completion in the military commissions system, U.S. v. Hamdan (Bin Laden's driver), brought Hamdan only a 66-month sentence. He was sent back to Yemen in January 2009. Where was the outrage then?

In fact, having accused September 11th alleged terrorists on American soil, in Federal Court, is not precedent setting. The alleged 20th hijacker, Zacarias Moussaoui, was held in a Virginia detention center and was later sentenced in Federal Court, also located in Virginia. Where was the outcry at that time?

During the course of that hearing, we fortunately did not experience a terrorist incident. Admittedly, an attempted attack could occur whether we try these suspects in America or Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Does that mean we should not try them at all?

It should also be noted that the military commissions system allows for secret proceedings where tainted evidence and hearsay could be used. Thus, any resulting verdict could lack credibility. For those who fear an attack because trials are

being held on American soil, isn't it just as likely that a verdict lacking credibility could provoke an attack?

Additionally, we believe the decision to try these men in our Federal Courts is less about giving detainees the same privileges as American citizens and more about America being a nation that conducts itself according to the rule of law. As a matter of practicality, in order to protect our citizens and soldiers around the world, it is best that we not devolve into barbarians seeking revenge. Retaliation then becomes an even greater risk.

It is time that we actually look at the facts and stop reacting from a place of fear."

And that's from the September Eleventh Advocates.

ROBBIE Yeah, I guess I have two thoughts on it. I do think that the obvious thing is, yeah, they don't want to take the lid any more off the torture program than they already have. But, as you said earlier, there's so much information out there, now about who tortured, who devised the program, what methods they used that at this point, maybe that's the reason why they're preventing—I mean, and I do think there was an orchestrated media campaign about KSM being tried here. It doesn't make sense, as you pointed out, that these other "terrorists" were tried here successfully. There's a 91 percent conviction rate, which to me, I guess tells me that even some of those Federal Court trials are probably rigged in some way or another that they have that high of a conviction rate. (Right)

As we know, a lot of these supposed terrorist trials that have happened here are based on sort of sting operations where the FBI would encourage a group of younger people to radicalize themselves and they would, you know, arrest them before the actual supposed attack was going to take place.

So, not quite sure if I agree with that comparison with how successful our court system is here. But, I do think, and as Lawrence Wilkerson has said and other people have said, I do think that having transparency about these trials, especially the people who are still at GITMO would be bad for the 9/11 official narrative.

And, I don't—I can't say specifically how it would be bad, but my feeling is that no matter what, any transparency, any cross-examination, anything like that that would happen organically in a normal trial here in the United States, could not possibly be good for the 9/11 [Laughs] official story's narrative in the future. I think it would only be a net loss for the people trying to prop up the official story at this point.

And my sister, Abby—I think you might have listened to our podcast where she told me all about her experience down at GITMO—

JON Yes, and before you continue, I mean, that interview I can't recommend enough. It really showed Abby for who she is. She's a very caring individual. She started crying about the inmates and it was a very heartbreaking, educational interview. Go ahead.

ROBBIE Yeah, it really was. She did a special on RT about it. It's really good, as well, but it's more her sort of in her journalist mode. This podcast that she did with me was like from her heart. Her own sort of point of view of the experience there.

I think most people don't even realize that even the military commission that happen down there, when they do actually happen, they're rigged to the point that we—I think most people have a hard time even understanding. Because, when we've seen movies or we understand how a military commission goes in a way it seems just like this is a regular trial except the prosecutor and the defense attorney are both in the military; there's not as much transparency; the media's not allowed to go in there and videotape it and stuff—like the movie *A Few Good Men*. That's how I think a lot of people imagine a military commission would actually go.

But, it turns out that in the case of these so-called worst of the worst GITMO detainees who were supposedly behind 9/11, they are being tried right now, and they're not being tried separately, which seems very obviously wrong to me. Like, why wouldn't they try—for instance, why wouldn't they try Khalid Sheikh Mohammed as a separate trial than to the guy who was the travel agent who wire transferred some money to somebody. Like—that's the strange thing is they are actually trying these five people together sort of with in once case.

JON Well, is that—I mean, during a class-action lawsuit there are multiple people involved in a lawsuit. Is that such a strange thing? I didn't know.

ROBBIE I think it is for a criminal trial like this. I mean, when you go, when you're—especially on something of this large of a scale, I think that—and when you consider if Khalid Sheikh Mohammed is really the "mastermind," why are they trying him in the same exact trial as this person who might have just been a cog in the wheel like—that's strange to me. It seems like it's just designed to create less transparency. To make it seem like all these people are on the same plane of evil. When just from what we know, it seems like obvious that they shouldn't be tried together based on their level of involvement.

But I guess that's not the most important point. What's more important to mention is that a lot of these military defense attorneys who are playing a very admirable role considering that they're in the military; they're at GITMO already, which is probably a very hard place to be if you don't subscribe to the sort of brainwashing that the military tries to do to people there. So, you're a defense attorney working for the military defending one of the worst of the worst, which is an admirable position to take, and these military defense attorneys described to Abby that someone, they believe, I think, it was someone in the FBI actually planted a mole from the prosecutor's side onto their defense team to basically sabotage the whole trial.

JON The whole thing is just one big fucking joke, as far as justice is concerned. And I think that's what the September Eleventh Advocates were trying to convey is that in a Federal Court, there isn't as many controls as there are in the Military Court. You know what I mean?

ROBBIE Sure, yeah, I mean, in theory, yeah. I mean, by default there would be more transparency and more people involved who wouldn't be like in the chain-of-command, so yeah. (Right) And I agree with that general sentiment. I guess I was just trying to raise the point, I mean, originally, that a lot of those terrorists convictions in the United States, if you actually look into them, seem kind of rigged too, but again, these were actual judges in the United States who weren't, didn't have any loyalty to the military who were ruling this way, so you know—I don't know, I mean, I don't think it's ever going to happen that we're going to get KSM tried in an American court. They're basically, these five guys are facing the death penalty, and it's very likely they're all going to be convicted and put to death. But there's very little press about that right now.

JON

Oh, that's something I wanted to bring up.

When the 9/11 Report was released, Thomas Kean was asked a question about some of the unanswered questions of the families and so forth. And he said: "Well, unfortunately there are some unanswered questions and the people who were involved in the plot are dead." You know, referring to the hijackers. And he said: "Maybe when we catch Osama bin Laden we can get more information about the 9/11 attacks." [Laughs]

And then, years later when they have this operation to get Osama bin Laden, they received explicit orders to kill on sight. They had no interest whatsoever of bringing Osama bin Laden to trial, which is something that the families would have loved to have seen. When you kill somebody outright like that, that's not justice. You have to be able to prove that they were involved and all that stuff. And, yes I know, in the American psyche, he was involved and that's set in stone and there's no question about that, but—

ROBBIE

But even still, I mean, yeah, it would have been—imagine the turnaround. I mean, even just let's say the United States was interested in sort of revitalizing its images for the proprietor of morality, sort of like we're more moral or we do things more justly. I mean, it would have been a great idea to have this guy in jail in handcuffs and sort of this show of: Look, we captured Osama bin Laden. We didn't kill him because this is the way we do things in America. We put people through a court.

So, yeah, I think that it was from the very beginning they were determined to kill him. They never really had any interest in bringing him in. I mean, what purpose would that have served at that point? Everybody in America already thinks he was totally behind it. They don't doubt it at all. (Right) And so, yeah, it's like a slam-dunk. It's like—

JON

I wouldn't say EVERYBODY in America (Laughs), because there were—the "9/11 Truth Movement" did have a big following at one time. Even *Time* magazine said we were a force to be reckoned with, or whatever the hell they said.

Okay, the next question is: What is your opinion on the recent release of the Senate's Torture Report?

ROBBIE Well, I have many opinions on it, but I'm—I think that it's interesting to see people's reactions to it. I've been watching the media coverage of it and I've been watching all these more sort of left-leaning reporters talking about it on Twitter and they are all acting really shocked—I guess what I was surprised by they're actually shocked by the rectal rehydration thing that was revealed in the report.

This is—in case your listeners aren't aware of this—they describe what happens when they need to force-feed someone but they don't use a feeding tube. I guess they actually will mulch their meal into a syringe and anally inject it.

JON I didn't even know you could do that.

ROBBIE Neither did I. I mean, that's just—it's crazy to me. So, that, I mean, that's disgusting. It's horrifying. It's practically rape. But, at the same time, it's really not that surprising to me because I think most people who have been following all the torture revelations—and when I say all, I mean, GITMO, Abu Ghraib, the Black sites—

JON Bagram—

ROBBIE Yeah, Bagram—when you compile all those together, this is a pattern, an M.O. that they've had since the very beginning. Isolating in and of itself the Lyndsie England—she was the enemy. She was the bad apple apparently of Abu Ghraib (Right)—but when you isolate that, just those people were in a sort of Lord of the Flies, Stanford Prison Experiment psychological kind of nightmare. They were just on their own deciding to sexually humiliate these prisoners. I don't even think they were told to do that. It just sort of organically—they were told to soften up the prisoners and people looked the other way and let these lower-level military people do whatever the fuck they wanted. And, they did a ton of sexual humiliation on the prisoners. I mean, they made these guys wear used panties on their heads, handcuffed to walls. They made them masturbate together in front of each other. Just strange, sadistic sexual things.

But, I guess that's—the main point I wanted to make is there was a big story that was revealed on *60 Minutes* about Guantanamo Bay. I think it was sometime around 2005, where there was actually a program in place at Guantanamo Bay that had a nickname called "Sexing Up." And the—some of these military interrogators would use sexual humiliation techniques on

the prisoners as a form of interrogation or psychological torture, and in one specific instance because Muslims are so—they have a certain view of female sexuality, in a similar way to like Orthodox Jews—

JON Yeah, it's just horrible for them.

ROBBIE Yeah, so like Orthodox Jews, for example, they're in very strict Orthodoxy, if you're a practicing Orthodox Jew you don't even sit in a chair that a woman just sat on who is currently menstruating. So that's like just an example of how sort of strict these rules are.

So, the U.S. Military understanding this, devised a tactic—and I don't know if this was a psychologist who came up with this, but someone came up with it—and they would actually have female military personnel strip down, like take off their tops and stuff in front of these detainees. And, even in one instance, one of them, I don't know if this happened multiple times, but they would simulate rubbing menstrual blood on the faces of the detainees as a form of humiliation, which is truly insane. I mean, and apparently it wasn't real blood. It was like food coloring or something, but it's crazy. When you think that—

JON All right, let me talk a little bit.

A couple of things come to mind. One of the things that come to mind, when something happens in the military, it's always a few bad apples. Why aren't protestors given the same courtesy. When there's one idiot in the crowd, the media portrays everybody as the same as that idiot. Do you now what I'm talking about?

ROBBIE Of course, oh yeah.

JON That's one thought I had.

And the other thought I had, and I just had this conversation with John Albanese. The torture report didn't have some of the most heinous things that I'd heard over the years. And Seymour Hersh reported they were sodomizing little boys in front of their mothers, and as a result, the mothers were asking their spouses to come kill them because they couldn't live with what happened. That there were these videos that had ungodly shrieking and stuff.

And John asked me, well, is this information that you want to be true, like to be able to make my argument? And I thought—after further thought of that question—No, I don't want this to be fucking true! No, I don't want the possibility of this being true. To even be there. But, unfortunately, Seymour Hersh is somebody over the years who has gotten a lot of things right. And, you know, you did hear things like that in the Torture Report. You didn't hear people ask the question: "Is this still going on somewhere? Are there other agencies like JSOC that are doing things?"

You know, that was—the Torture Report—it was like there was nothing new, really, that came out of it that we didn't pretty much already know. There were just a few things. And, again, that was just—what was it, it was an Executive Summary? It wasn't even the full report?

ROBBIE Yeah, there was—there's a lot of pages, apparently, that are redacted from it, that only people in certain committees in the Congress and Senate that can read. So, yeah, there's a lot of it missing.

And, Obama, when he first got into office, he released internal CIA memos about the torture program. Do you remember that? It was kind of another similar "revelation?"

JON I vaguely remember that. What I do remember is that Obama teamed up with the GOP to end or try to end something that Spain or Italy was trying to do as far as holding people accountable?

ROBBIE Oh yeah, yeah, they actually tried to subvert their court systems over there. (Yeah--) But what I wanted to say about that horrifying example you just brought up that Seymour Hersh was talking about.

In that first series of CIA memos that Obama released about torture, there's sort of a leading statement of one of the techniques they were allowed to use. I don't have it in front of me, I'm just going by memory. But it says something like: "simulated," I think it—I don't think it says rape, but I think it says: "simulated violence." So, one of the techniques they openly talked about using, on paper, was having a relative of someone else with the person that you've taken prisoner and then maybe in a separate room, or maybe you don't even have them there at all. Maybe you're just tricking this detainee into thinking that they're wife is there too. You then proceed to simulate some kind of either assault, torture, or murder on that relative in

front of the detainee, or you relay messages back to the detainee and say we have a gun to your son's head right now. Or something like that.

So, like the statement in that report, it's very open-ended. It could mean anything from we're going to rape your wife if you don't do anything. (Yeah) So, it's disturbing.

And then, I mean, even in that same Torture Report they talk about how they would put detainees inside of a tiny box, a very small, completely pitch-black box, and start dropping insects into the box. So, I mean, anything that you can think of that would be horrible to do to another human being, I would not put past them.

There has even been a GITMO inmate who has sewed the U.S. Government upon his release that Military interrogators actually sliced up his genitalia with razor blades.

JON Oh, my god! Did you see that one—

ROBBIE I mean, what's worse than that? Like sodomizing children, and chopping up someone's penis—

JON And, none of this stuff pisses off the rest of the world. I mean, everybody's perfectly okay with us doing this. There's not going to be any kind of retaliation for this, right? (Yeah) I'm being sarcastic.

Now, there was another detainee I saw that was part of the news this week that he had no hard feelings about the CIA torturing him. That came out of left-field. I was like, oh my god, are they actually trying to get a detainee to make it seem as if torture is acceptable and stuff like that?

ROBBIE What kind of torture did he say?

JON I don't remember. He just had he something like no hard feelings about the torture and something to that effect. It was just really crazy.

Another thing I wanted to bring up—and you know one of the reasons we're talking about this is because we were lied to about 9/11 and those lies came in the form of many reports, many statements, and in the 9/11 Commission. And if the 9/11 Commission was based on tortured testimony,

then it's simply unreliable. And it's another way of saying that we were lied to about 9/11. Because the 9/11 Commission Report is simply unreliable.

And this week, we saw people use 9/11 left and right. And I talked earlier about the only justifications that come from 9/11. And John Brennan—ugh! My god! He started his statement—CIA Director, John Brennan—started his statement in response to all these torture allegations with the sentence: It was 8:46 a.m.—to be as dramatic as possible, to use 9/11 as the justification for everything that they did after 9/11.

And I want to make the point really fast that torture and the CIA is nothing new. It's actually been going on for years by them. But now today they're using torture, that doesn't make it okay what I just said. I'm just saying that it's been going on for years. And the torture that's going on, or that went on, they're using 9/11—they can't be relied on about 9/11, why don't people focus on that? Or focus on getting accountability for what happened on 9/11?

Anyway—

ROBBIE Yeah, it is really completely fucked up on so many levels that, I mean, just Dick Cheney going out on TV again! To defend it, and if that doesn't cue you, cue anybody to the fact that the U.S. Government is no longer operating under the rule of law, I don't know what will. That the actual Vice President who authorized the torture bragging about it on TV, while the guy who revealed the torture program (John Kiriakou) to the media, John Kiriakou, is actually in prison for leaking that to the media.

JON Well, to me, what Dick Cheney was doing was essentially going on television and telling everybody that: "I am above the law, fuck all of you." That's essentially what he was saying, in my opinion. (Oh, yeah) He didn't say the words, but you know, that's essentially what he was doing. And that —

ROBBIE And you have to ask yourself, how is an ex-Vice President still above the law. I mean, what does that really imply other than a complete subversion of—I mean Wesley Clark has described it as a policy coup. I mean, it's a coup. I mean in a lot of ways that a guy who's not even in Government anymore is immune to the law. (Yeah) And that's, I think that's very fascinating that—I mean, a lot of people are mentioning that, but what does that really mean for our country. And I think it cuts very deeply to the core

of what kind of country we're still living in and what we're accepting as sort of the status quo of what we consider justice here, and—

I guess I wanted to go back, jump back to your point a little bit about so much of the 9/11 Commission being based on actual torture and how we can't trust it. The problem that I see is the 9/11 Commission Report in and of itself, a lot of mainstream journalists will acknowledge and admit, yeah, it was compromised. A lot of it was false information gathered from torture. A lot of them will admit that. But the problem that I see is a lot of that same information that was fed to the 9/11 Commission was also fed and leaked anonymously to a lot of reporters and authors early on during that process to the point where there's all these other sort of side narratives out there, like there's a book called *The Looming Tower* (Right), which is sort of almost the Holy Bible of the Al-Qaeda narrative for a lot of these reporters and journalists (Right). They don't look at things like the 9/11 Commission as credible, but they'll look at a book that was done by an author who was leaked and handed some of the same information that the 9/11 Commission was as sort of the more credible official narrative. (Right)

So, I think that's an interesting problem that we have to deal with too. Once you knock down the 9/11 Commission Report, you still have to knock down a lot of these other things that people will still hold onto.

JON Yeah, but it was the 9/11 Report that was sold to the world as the definitive account of 9/11, and people are still pointing to it today as being—I don't know that many reporters, I know there are some reporters who acknowledge that the 9/11 Commission was a farce. But, in the same token I've seen people say that and then use it as a reference, so I—

ROBBIE Yeah, it's tricky, I mean, like, I guess I'm mostly referring to people like Phil Shenon (Right), Marcy Wheeler, Jason Leopold of VICE News—they have openly stated multiple times that they think the 9/11 Commission, a large percentage of it was sort of rigged. But, I don't think they then will question, sort of a lot of that same information in the 9/11 Commission Report in a more general sense.

That's all I was trying to say. I mean, yeah, I do think that it's not pointless. It's important to keep trying to knock down the 9/11 Commission Report because there's so many things about it that are false and they're still affecting the way things unfold today. (Yep)

JON All right, is there anything else you would like to promote? Or anything that you would LIKE to promote?

ROBBIE Hmmm, let me think. Yeah, I mean, the podcast that I do with Abby is still going. We're trying to do more episodes where we're both together, sort of—I've been doing solo episodes recently because she's just so goddam busy with *Breaking the Set*. But we're starting to do episodes where we co-host again, and yeah—

I'm working on a sort of an expose on the Foreign Policy Initiative, which a lot of your listeners out there will be more familiar with the Project for the New American Century (Right), but maybe not as familiar with the FPI, which is when the Project for the New American Century closed and was disbanded, the same exact people who founded the Project for the New American Century—Bill Kristal, Robert Kagan—they formed this new think tank called the Foreign Policy Initiative that, I think it's just off most people's radar right now because the Neocons are not in power anymore, supposedly, or whatever. But this think tank is still having an influence over a lot of things and policies. They pushed for the Syrian invasions or air strikes. They pushed for the surge in Afghanistan. They've pushed, basically, for every hawkish position that's been out there since the Obama administration's been in office. And, Robert Kagan was also advising Hillary Clinton when she was Secretary of State.

So, I mean, the Neocons aren't gone, and I guess the thing I wanted to show people with this expose is that they're still very much alive and well and they might sneak up on people when they're least expecting it and actually like—

JON Well, Robbie, this week we've seen how many Neocons on television, you know, defending torture? They're not gone.

ROBBIE No, exactly. And the sad thing is—I don't want to split hairs, but I wouldn't even describe a lot of those people overtly Neocon. And that's almost more disturbing to me that the Neocons—the real Neo, like the Neocons, the real ones, the Bill Kristols and those people—they managed to inspire the Bush administration and then, in turn, inspire the American public and all these more—maybe these people used to be more really conservative, but now they've accepted this idea that torture is valid and it's one thing for just a straight-up Neocon to come out and present that kind of information. But someone like John Bolton and these other people, I guess it's more

disturbing to me because I don't see them as classic archetype of Neocons. They're just sort of going along with the program.

JON I just call them criminals. They're all just fucking criminals.

ROBBIE Yeah, are brown shirts—if you want to go down that avenue. The fascism analogy is not popular these days, but I mean, it's hard to describe it any other way.

JON Yeah, I know. There's fascism in America. There's no doubt about that. Anyway, Robbie, I want to thank you very much for your time today. You did a fantastic job.

ROBBIE Thanks, Jon.

JON And I look forward to talking to you again.

ROBBIE Yeah, please keep up the show. You've had some wonderful guests on, and I hope anybody out there who maybe this is the first episode they've listened to, go back and listen to all your previous episodes, because you've had on some incredibly important guests who offer all different kinds of perspectives about, sort of, the theme of your show. (Right, exactly) And I really appreciate what you've done.

JON Thank you very much.

All right, Robbie, have a good night.

ROBBIE You too. Take care.

JON Bye, bye.



Chapter/Episode 15 – Jon Gold – December 29, 2014

Mickey Huff (MICKEY)

Jon Gold (JON)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." This week I am NOT your host. Instead, Mickey Huff, the Director of Project Censored will be our guest host. This show is going to focus on how the 9/11 Commission and its Report were sold to the world as the definitive account of 9/11. In my opinion, this is one of the biggest lies about 9/11 that we've been told. It is extremely important that people know about this very dangerous lie.

MICKEY Hello, this is Mickey Huff, I am the Director of Project Censored, a professor of history and social science at DiabloValley College, and I am guest hosting this program today. We're going to be speaking about 9/11 issues, and my guest here is Jon Gold.

He's been an advocate for 9/11 Justice for over 12 years. He was a member of the steering committee for 911truth.org. He helped to found the site 911blogger.com. He has worked with different 9/11 Family Members over the years. He received an "Honorary Director Award" from the FealGood Foundation for his work bringing attention to the environmental disaster that was 9/11, and for raising money for the sick and dying 9/11 First

Responders. He was a contributor to the "Complete 9/11 Timeline" available at www.HistoryCommons.org. He helped with the film *9/11: Press for Truth*. He has worked alongside Gold Star Mother and anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan for several years on different projects including Camp OUT NOW, the Sizzlin' Summer Protests, and the Tour de Peace. Jon has been arrested two times for acts of civil disobedience, dedicating one arrest to 9/11 Victim Robert McIlvaine, Jr., and one to the Jersey Girls. He was the emcee for the Treason in America Conference in 2010. He has written several articles over the years having to do with 9/11, and authored a book called *9/11 Truther: The Fight for Peace, Justice And Accountability*. He now hosts "We Were Lied to About 9/11."

And that's the program we're listening to right now.

Welcome, Jon Gold.

JON Hi, Mickey. Thank you very much for being the guest host today.

MICKEY It's my pleasure to guest host this kind of program, Jon. I've taught a course on 9/11 Historiography for 10 years. It's certainly an interest of mine and there's so much that we are not told, certainly in the corporate media about that, so the title of the show "We Were Lied to About 9/11" is probably an understatement.

Let's get started. Tell us what the day of 9/11 was like for you, given that that's what sparked so much of your activism.

JON Well, let me see if can put this into context for you. I wrote about this in my book. I shared my birthday with my Grandfather, which is September 4th. I thought of myself as his 51st birthday present. Anyway, he passed away from pancreatic cancer the year prior to 9/11. Right before my 29th birthday. He was the most important person in the world to me, and I can't overstate that.

So, the next September, I had my second birthday without him, which made me incredibly sad. I would go to his gravestone on our birthday for years. Anyway, a few days after my second birthday without him, 9/11 happened. And, I was already sad, and then that happened. My grandfather was a salesman, and I would often go to work with him. A lot of times, we went to New York City together. Once or twice, I don't remember, he took

me to "Windows on the World" which was the restaurant at the top of the World Trade Center. So, the towers were very sentimental to me.

Anyway, what was the day of 9/11 like for me after telling you that . . .

I was sitting—I was at work and I was working and someone was listening to Howard Stern on the radio, and they were broadcasting it for everyone. And Howard had said that a plane had struck the tower, and I think he was making jokes about it because it was the first plane and nobody, we didn't realize we were under attack. And then the second plane hit and everybody in the world knew we were under attack. So, instantly, I was just sitting at my desk and I went to the news, CNN, to see what was going on and I was reading about everything that was going on, and after the Pentagon was hit, I looked at my friend and I said, "Where the hell is our military?" And that was the first question that I ever asked about 9/11. But I didn't ask any more questions like that for a little while anyway.

And the day was very traumatic. I left work—they let us go early—and I drove around for a couple of hours. And I was thinking about my Grandfather and the towers and the people that were dying and I was very upset. Then I went home and I was in my apartment and they kept showing the towers falling over and over and over again. So I turned off the television and tried to watch a movie or two to get my mind off of things. And—incidentally, one of the main reasons I ask this question of my guests is because most everyone I know can vividly remember where they were that day, and what they were doing. And many people in D.C., however, seemingly can't recall exactly what they were doing that day. So, that's kind of a point I'm trying to drive through when I ask that question of people—aside from the fact that everyone's story is interesting as to what they were doing that day.

And that was it. It was a very heartbreaking day for me and I was traumatized by it.

MICKEY Indeed, you mentioned the imagery that was seared into the minds of many Americans that day and certainly people around the world. On your show, *We Were Lied to About 9/11*, you've had a series of interviews with people—researcher Erik Larson, 9/11 Family Member and Jersey Girl Lorie Van Auken, Former NY Times Reporter Phil Shenon, his book *The Commission: What We Didn't Know About 9/11*. You've also interviewed NSA Whistleblower Thomas Drake, researcher Robbie Martin, Media

Roots, and basically the thread here among all of these guests, stellar guests all, really question and seriously challenge the legitimacy of the 9/11 Commission and its overall Report. And you've often said the 9/11 Report was sold to the world as the definitive account of 9/11—it's the official historical narrative of 9/11 and what we're supposed to be thinking about this.

Could you give us some accounts from the corporate media doing this? Can you give us some examples of how this is happening? And then we can go down and look at maybe some accounts from politicians as well.

JON Absolutely. Okay, I have a series of quotes that I've collected. The first one is:

"Among the Commission's charges is to write the definitive account of what actually transpired on that day and how it was able to happen."

And that is from Thomas Kean, from the Second Public Hearing of the 9/11 Commission, which took place on May 6th, 2003.

Another quote:

"The independent commission's mandate is to supply a definitive account of the Government's handling of the terrorist plot that killed almost 3,000 people."

That's from *The New York Times*, October 29th, 2003.

Another one:

"They transcended partisan affiliation to work together for the people of this country. The result is not only a definitive account of what happened on September 11, but also a thoughtful and compelling analysis of why it happened and where we must go from here."

That wasn't the corporate media. That was actually Joe Lieberman, and that was September 7th, 2004.

Another one:

"Full-page magazine ads last week billed 'The Path to 9/11'

That was a movie that was put forward by ABC and it says:

'As Based on the 9/11 Commission Report.' Period. The message being peddled: This film would stay faithful to the definitive written account, with commission Co-Chairman Thomas Kean on board to certify its authenticity."

And that from the Associated Press, September 14th, 2006. Basically, Thomas Kean was a consultant for that film to give it the stamp of approval, supposedly, of the 9/11 Commission.

This is a quote from *Salon*:

"The 9/11 Commission Report, the definitive account of the attacks and the intelligence shortcomings that missed it."

That's from *Salon*, June 13th, 2013.

And, the last one is from the description from Amazon of a book that James Ridgeway wrote called *The 5 Unanswered Questions About 9/11*. And in that description, it says:

"The 9/11 Commission Report is widely declared to be the definitive account of the most devastating attack ever to take place on American soil, but in truth the most vital questions about 9/11 have not been asked."

So that's some from the corporate media talking about how the 9/11 Commission was the definitive account. Now—

MICKEY Well, it certainly has been planted that way. That means this is—we're not supposed to question this, right? Then you have a list also of—you mentioned Joe Lieberman—there are certainly other political figures that—

JON Well, I have actually a little bit more from the corporate media (Mm-hmm) that I wrote down. So, I'm going to go ahead and continue with this.

This next part is from my article entitled: "The Facts Speak for Themselves" which has all of the sourcing within the article, and that's available at 911TruthNews.com. Okay:

"The Washington Post reported that it is 'a useful analysis of the changes that have taken place since, as well as the changes that have not taken place,' and calling the commission's unanimity and comprehensiveness 'impressive.' *WaPo* also reported that 'the final report is a document of historic sweep and almost unprecedented detail, offering the sort of examination of a highly classified subject that customarily would not be possible for decades after the fact. From the findings of spy agencies to the tactics of fighter pilots, from the conversations of heads of state to the verbatim texts of secret Presidential briefings, this is the Government laid bare."

The New York Times reported that it was "uncommonly lucid, even riveting," and is an "improbable literary triumph."

Time magazine said that the report was "meticulous in its reconstruction of the attacks and unflinching in its conclusions about why the Government failed to stop them."

Now, the 9/11 Commission's report was actually nominated by the National Book Foundation in 2004 for best in Non-fiction.

So, just to let you know.

MICKEY [Laughs] Yeah, [AUDIOBAD] category, but it's certainly another example, however, of how the official story is being buttressed (Exactly) from many and the corporate news media.

So what about quotes from politicians? Do you have more?

JON Yes, I do. Do you remember a Katherine Harris?

MICKEY Ah, I—yes, yes I don't know how we could forget Katherine Harris and her role in the 2000 election and so forth.

JON She was the woman who suppressed the votes of, I think it was several thousand black people?

MICKEY 68,000 African Americans disenfranchised in the State of Florida alone and Katherine Harris certainly helped that along. She was a Bush administration insider for sure, a Bush loyal, shall we say?

JON Right, and she referred to the 9/11 Report as: "one of the most important publications of our age."

Senator Hillary Clinton said that the 9/11 Commission's report was "a great testimony to their willingness to search hard for the truth, to get at the facts."

Senator Charles Schumer said the 9/11 Commission did an "incredible job."

Now, in 2004, Bush's Presidential Campaign sent out something and it said:

"The Commission's report makes the case for the policies that U.S. President Bush has been pursuing in the War on Terror and eliminates any doubt that the best defense against the threat of global terror is a strong offense."

And Bush said:

"I agree with their conclusion that the terrorists were able to exploit deep institutional failings in our nation's defenses that developed over more than a decade."

So, that's just some comments from politicians. At the end of this interview, I'm actually going to be playing a video clip of several other politicians saying several other things. So, at the end of the interview, be sure to stay around and watch the clip.

MICKEY How else is this being done, the buttressing of the official narrative. Maybe we can even turn a little bit and is there, instead of—is there anyone that actually have—you have—that has questioned the 9/11 Report's release, in the corporate media. Was there anyone that was questioning the authenticity of the Report after its release?

JON Okay—well, before I get into that, really quickly, I'm just going to go over a different kind of praise (Mm-hmm) that the 9/11 Report received. And it came in the form of requests for what was called "9/11-Type Commissions" for other horrible events in America's history, such as Katrina and the bail-out crisis. I think it was John McCain who said: "I think we need a 9/11-type commission"—further trying to lend credibility to the 9/11 Commission and its Report when, in fact, as we all know, the 9/11 Commission was completely corrupt and compromised.

 All right, now, did anyone question the authenticity of the Report when it was released?

 Well, the Report was released on July 22nd, 2004, and there were NY Times/CBS Polls questioning people about whether or not they believed what we were told about 9/11 and, apparently, they started doing these polls in May 2002, and did a poll after the release of the 9/11 Report and that poll said that 24% said they were "telling the truth," 56% said they are "mostly telling the truth but hiding something," 16% said they are "mostly lying," and 4% were "not sure." That was from the poll taken by NY Times and CBS.

 911Truth.org actually commissioned Zogby to conduct a poll in August 2004, and it found that "half (49.3 percent) of New York City residents and 41 percent of New York's citizens overall say that some U.S. leaders "knew in advance that attacks were planned on or around 9/11/2001, and consciously failed to act." *The Washington Post* is the only major U.S. newspaper to mention the poll results, and only mentions them as an aside in a longer article. No New York newspapers mention the results of that poll at all.

 The biggest form of criticism, at least as far as I know, there was an article—are you familiar with *Harper's Magazine*?

MICKEY Of course, yes.

JON Okay, good. They wrote an article in October 2004, and it was called "Whitewash as Public Service."

MICKEY Yeah, I remember it.

JON You do remember it? (Yeah) the further title: "How the 9/11 Commission Report defrauds the nation." That was the biggest critique that I was aware of, and that is the last one that I'm actually aware of, at the time of the release of the Report.

But these reports, as I said, they didn't get any attention, as compared to the praise that the 9/11 Report received.

MICKEY No, and that's a smattering of evidence you just presented and I can't help but bring this up—I do bring this up in my classes about the topic. Historian and political scientist, Michael Parenti, wrote a work called "History as Mystery" a number of years ago, and this is an apt quote from it:

"Those engaged in the manufacturing of history, often introduce distortions at the point of origin well before the history is written or even played out. This initial process of control is not usually left to chance but is regularly pursued by interested parties who are situated to manipulate the record."

And, of course, the Bush administration was perfectly situated to manipulate the record. We know the long history of ignored warnings. We know that they dragged their feet for over 400 days on creating a commission and then cynically put Henry Kissinger in charge of it. [Laughs] (Right)

So there weren't many things they could have done worse, arguably, and they went kicking and screaming all the way into the Commission so, of course, they were going to control it with insiders, including of course Bush insider Philip Zelikow who had an amazing degree of oversight on what was happening with the Commission Report.

So, again, it's this listing that you have of the definitive account as it's repeated over and over and over again. I remember a quote from George W. Bush at the time where he was talking at a press conference saying "In my line of work you've got to keep repeating things over and over again for the truth to sink in. You've got to catapult the propaganda." (Exactly) And they certainly catapulted the Commission as great propaganda as the so-called definitive account.

JON Well, it's not only the reports that I mentioned, it's the pundits that came after the reports that parroted the reports over and over again throughout the television and so on and so forth, to give people this idea that we had the best, the most definitive account of 9/11 that we could possibly have.

And, it's funny, Lee Hamilton when asked about the 9/11 Commission, he often says that it was their job to "tell the story." And that's not true. The mandate of the 9/11 Commission was "to give a full and complete accounting" of the 9/11 attacks. It wasn't to tell a story, but that's essentially what they did. (Laughs) They told a story.

MICKEY I know, you've long wrote about and discussed the role of Philip Zelikow at the Commission, do you want to say anything about Zelikow's role?

JON Well, the thing about Philip Zelikow, to me, is that he belongs in jail, as far as I'm concerned, for the things that he did during the 9/11 Commission to prevent a real accounting from taking place. And I can't emphasize that enough. The man belongs in jail, along with a number of other people, as far as I'm concerned. And that's something we didn't see after 9/11. Nobody in Government that was—I guess if you want to call them incompetent, or criminally negligent, or whatever you want to call it, nobody in Government was held accountable. And, in fact, people who should have been held accountable, were instead rewarded and promoted.

And, just to give a really quick example of this. This is a recent story that just broke. There was a report from NBC News that just came out that talked about this individual who was responsible for misleading Congress on the effects of torture and how wonderful torture was and so on and so forth. This same individual lied before the 9/11 Congressional Inquiry about information about – she supposedly took information about the hijackers to the FBI in person, but they have no record of that. And then she went on and said: "Oh, well, then I must have faxed it." So, she lied before the 9/11 Commission; she was responsible for the lies regarding torture; she also decided to go watch KSM, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed be waterboarded at the Government's expense because she thought it would be cool.

Anyway, NBC wrote a report about her and refused to say her name. And her name was Alfreda Frances Bikowsky, and she was somebody who was promoted after 9/11 who should have been held accountable. So, that's—

MICKEY Well, the main thing—that's coming out just this last couple of weeks, but that name had been around earlier, but again, the corporate media doesn't want to seem to report this. And, by the way, as the rest of the country seems to be caught up in the sort of hoax/hacks from Sony Pictures/The Interview, this is just one example of news and information that is going on that people could be paying attention to other than these other propaganda distractions. And ones that do go back to the core of how we got to this ubiquitous surveillance state, a state of torture, and permanent warfare. And, again, 9/11 is a big gateway into this permanent war state, and I know that's also something that you have criticized, and certainly looking at the list of people you've interviewed here at We Were Lied to About 9/11—certainly Thomas Drake stands out, as a whistleblower, Phil Shenon's comments on the 9/11 Commission. You haven't interviewed John Farmer, but as an insider and a legal counsel to the 9/11 Commission, he said the Report was a whitewash.

JON I sent out an interview request to him and never heard from him, so—

MICKEY Yeah, it would be interesting to see his claims, although there's certainly differences among people like John Farmer and David Ray Griffin, and Peter Dale Scott and others, it would definitely be interesting to have a discussion with John Farmer about his points, having that inside angle.

JON Right, well he was very—he was part of the team on the 9/11 Commission that investigated NORAD and I wanted to have a show to discuss NORAD's lies and I figured there would nobody more qualified. But, I haven't heard from him.

MICKEY His book is called *The Ground Truth* so hopefully you can get in touch with him. It would be good to hear that dialogue. (Right)

Okay, how about this then? Since we've been talking about the historical record and we've been talking about the great effort to control the so-called definitive account, what can be done at this point, do you think, to correct the historical record?

I would argue getting these stories out to the public, having programs like this, is a great way to do that. But, let's hear from you, Jon Gold, what are some things that we should be doing, do you think, to correct the historical record? Who is working on such an endeavor, large and small?

JON Well, for years Paul Thompson started the 9/11 Timeline that was originally available at CooperativeResearch.org, it further moved on to HistoryCommons.org, and that is a great tool for people to use and it does correct much of the historical record—or at the very least it shows the contradictions to what we were told was the historical record. So, the people at HistoryCommons.org, they're currently working—they're always working to fix the historical record.

Another thing that could be done is—there are teachers that develop syllabuses to teach 9/11 to their students, and what I've done over the years is I've tried to contact a lot of them to try and get them to tell the students that we were lied to about 9/11. That we don't know the definitive account of 9/11. And, unfortunately, I haven't had much success with that. I do have a report with regard to school curriculums that I'd like to read.

MICKEY Yes.

JON This is from NewJersey.com, July 13, 2011:

"A decade later, a detailed set of K-12 curriculum is being launched to give New Jersey educators tools for teaching about 9/11. Developed over three years and completed in time for the 10th anniversary of the attacks, the curriculum is called 'Learning from the Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism and 9/11 in the Classroom.'

The material includes lesson plans on teaching the events of that day itself, but also delves into topics ranging from the 'Impact of Hateful Words,' for elementary students to 'What is Terrorism?' in middle school and 'Reaction to and from the Muslim and Arab Communities' for high school students. Also included are lessons on 'acts of kindness' that occurred on 9/11, and ideas for students to help their town, community and the world.

Created by a volunteer group called the 4 Action Initiative, made up of Families of September 11th, the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education and Liberty Science Center, the effort also included former Gov. Thomas Kean and dozens of New Jersey teachers who wrote and piloted lesson plans. The curriculum is to be introduced by

representatives of the group and acting State Education Commissioner Christopher Cerf at Liberty Science Center on Thursday."

So, basically, what I was reading that for was to, again, show Thomas Kean's involvement to put the official stamp of approval. Thomas Kean who was the Commissioner of the 9/11 Commission. So whenever he puts his name to something, it supposedly lends credibility to something about 9/11, but in my mind it just destroys the credibility.

MICKEY Yeah, again, having taught a course on 9/11 issues, I also teach modern U.S. History, and I tell my students—it's very interesting—I tell them to look in the last chapter of the course textbook. And, I've used Howard Zinn's text; I've used Eric Foner's text; I've used several different texts in the class. But, I tell them to go to the final chapter and look at what is being said about 9/11. And, particularly with something like the Foner work, which is a pretty progressive historical narrative—*Give Me Liberty* it's called—again, it basically kowtows to the definitive account that you and I have been discussing, and it's really kind of disappointing, but it's a great opportunity and example to show students that hey, we should be focusing on the construction of these historical narratives and how they work themselves into the books, and work themselves into the consciousness of the nation and of people here, because it's very hard to undo these kinds of things that are repeated over and over again.

JON That's absolutely right and it's actually one of the things that scares me is how are kids being taught about 9/11. I mean, there are many kids who was five, six years old when 9/11 happened and have no idea about the history of things. And, they could grow up thinking that this is a normal world that we're living in—this post-9/11 world where we preemptively invade countries, where we lose our civil liberties, where all these horrible things happen. And I don't want children growing up thinking this is normal. Do you know what I mean?

MICKEY Yes, I do know what you mean because I'm teaching a lot of people that were that old when 9/11 took place and when I'm going back and showing the creation of this so-called definitive account and all the holes and problems in it, as well as historical problems with commissions in general, you definitely get the sideways glance. You get a lot of folks shaking their heads in disbelief. And that's why I use so many varied sources is to say hey, don't take my word for it, but how much have you actually

investigated? What have you actually read? What have you actually seen? And most of them, of course, have only seen the corporate media accounts, political accounts, just like the listing that you gave off earlier here in our discussion. And so when I get them to realize that they really haven't looked into it much at all and they've accepted a lot of it on its face, then they go back and start looking. And then they actually also then come to a position of questioning. And, to me as an educator, that's one of the things that I do about moving this issue forward is getting people to question these accounts and question what they're told so that it may lead them to their own process of discovery.

JON Right, exactly. And, it's unfortunate, I've spoken to kids who go to school and they tell me that all they're taught about is the day of 9/11. There's no context given. There's no question about the 9/11 Report. And it's scary to me. I don't want them growing up thinking they know the truth when, in fact, they don't.

And so that's scary and it's important to me, for them anyway, to know the historical record.

MICKEY Yeah, I know that that's certainly something that you're doing with the program is, again, really trying to set the record straight and, again, I can't agree more with that fact that someone as an educator that that's really what I've tried to do with the subject of 9/11. And some of the interviews that have been done on this program have been useful in class for students to listen to and encounter these people.

So, again, I think it's a nice service to be providing to people that you can show these counter-narratives to official accounts that may lead people to questioning and being active participants on how they're informed and their own views are shaped about the world—rather than passive spectators and observers. And I think that anything that we can do to encourage critical and independent thought is a step in the right direction.

Jon Gold, is there anything else you'd like to add today to the end of our discussion?

JON Sure, again, I want to thank you for being the guest host today. I didn't honestly know anybody who was an ex—I tried to have the experts on, have the best of the best on the show and I honestly didn't know anybody

who knew more about this particular topic than I did, so I was the expert today. [Laughs] It was funny—

MICKEY Well, that's fine.

JON Somebody told me that I could've written the questions out and given the answers to someone else to have this interview. And somebody, my friend Scott Ford said that would have been the Milli Vanilli effect—creating an expert.

MICKEY Well, it's been my pleasure to have a discussion with you. I've long been familiar with the work that you've done and the activism you've been engaged in around 9/11, and it's been my pleasure to have you take the platform and share with people all that you know. And I think it also gives people that listen to your show "We Were Lied to About 9/11" a little more insight on who you are and where you're coming from, and I think that's very important for listeners as well.

JON Well, thank you very much, Mickey, and I also want to promote Project Censored of which you are the Director.

MICKEY Thanks so much. Right. Listeners can go learn more at ProjectCensored.org and of course we have our own radio show where you've been on there as well—"The Project Censored Show" on Pacifica Radio. And, definitely Jon, keep up the good work and thanks again for everything you're doing. I believe you also now are going to have some additional clips for people, so please stick around and check out these examples of things we were talking about on today's show.

JON Thank you very much, Mickey, for your time today.

MICKEY My pleasure, Jon.

JON All right, take care.

MICKEY Bye, bye.

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (PELOSI)

Rep. Steny Hoyer (HOYER)

Rep. Robert Menendez (MENENDEZ)

Rep. Jim Turner (TURNER)

Rep. Dennis Hastert (HASTERT)
Rep. Roy Blunt (BLUNT)
Rep. Christopher Cox (COX)
Rep. Tom DeLay (DELAY)
Rep. Porter Goss (GOSS)
Rep. John McCain (MCCAIN)
Sen. Joseph Lieberman (LIEBERMAN)

PELOSI We were very impressed by the fact that the Commission Report came out unanimously, that it was a real service to our country and that it will be available to the public. So, I know I speak for all of my colleagues when I salute the Commission for its excellent work, for its leadership, its patriotism, and its service to our country by being so thoughtful in putting forth such a useful document.

HOYER We are very grateful to Governor Kean and to Congressman Hamilton for their leadership of this critically important Commission. This Commission's report, I think, will be very important and useful and helpful.

MENENDEZ I'm proud of Governor Kean and his work and as a former colleague of Lee Hamilton on the International Relations Committee, I'm proud of their collective work, and their ability to bring a Commission Report that is unanimous in its vote.

TURNER And what we hope will come from this Report is not only some sense of closure to those families who lost loved ones on 9/11, but enable this Congress to regain the sense of urgency that we need to protect this country. It was a bi-partisan report. It was one that should be read carefully and listened to, and if you read the findings that will be within the pages of that document, you're going to find that we need to move even faster, we need to be even stronger in protecting this country against terrorists than we are today. And that's what I hope is accomplished by the release of this Report.

HASTERT Ladies and Gentlemen, I just want to say: Read this Report. It shows that we're at war with an [AUDIOBAD] and a very dangerous enemy. It's an extremely important contribution to our understanding of what happened the days leading up to the tragic events of 9/11.

BLUNT Reading that Report shows the kinds of things we need to do as we move forward.

COX This Report, the 9/11 Commission Report comes at a very propitious time. We are poised not only to continue the reforms that have already been undertaken in both the Executive and Legislative branches since September 11th, 2001, but also to enact new reforms, and there's much in this volume that we can study and infer lessons from.

DELAY Thank you, the release today of the 9/11 Commission Report provides America another opportunity to assess our progress in the War on Terror for over the last three years.

GOSS I think this is an extremely important contribution to the debate in America today, and this is a very readable document. It puts a face on how terrorists operate and what goes on in their deranged minds and why they are going to do the things they can do and how they can do them. It educates us. And people should read this and understand. And we're taking this seriously. Actually, we're ahead of the curve on some of the recommendations here, which is the good news. And we will follow through on some of the other recommendations and give them close consideration.

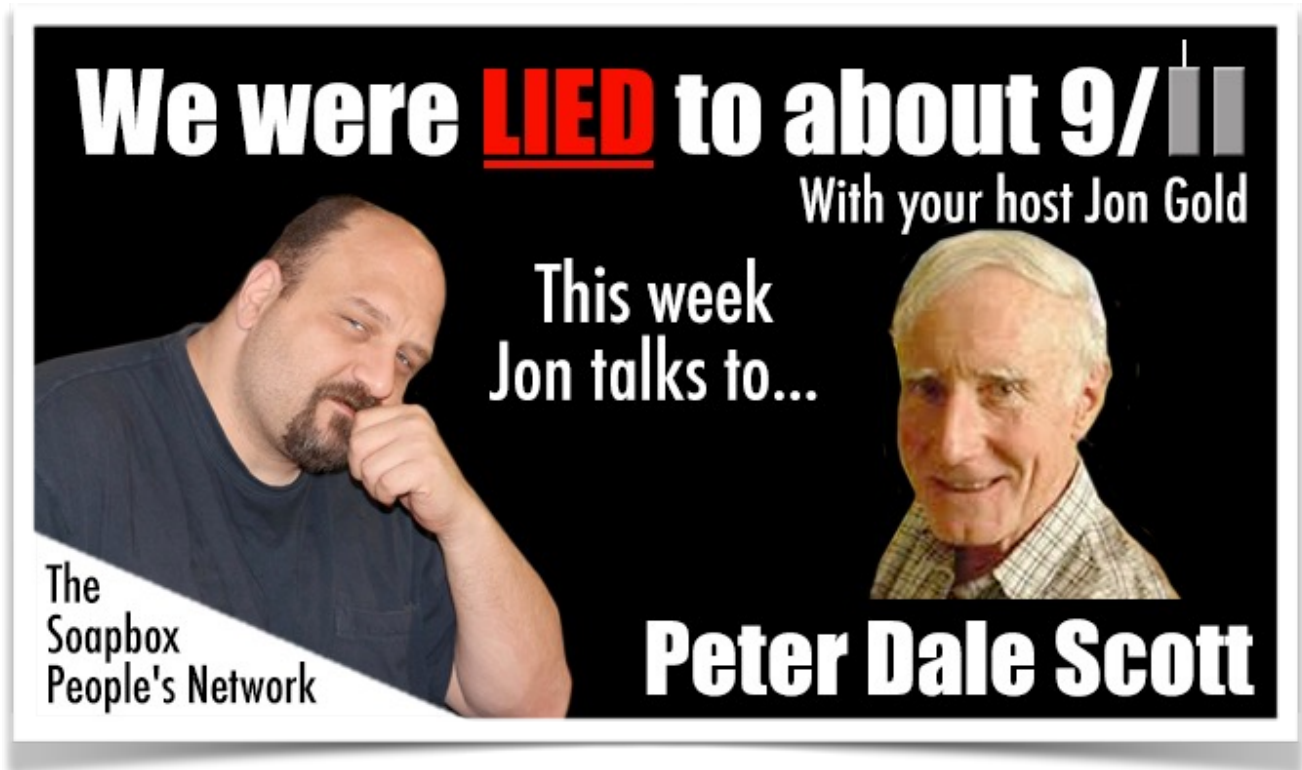
MCCAIN Joe and I and Arlen Specter and Evan Bayh are here to thank the 9/11 Commission for the magnificent job that they did.

MCCAIN Let me just speak very briefly, this Commission has issued in a bipartisan fashion, which is critical, a report which I think is the blueprint for future reforming of Government both in the Executive branch and in Congress.

LIEBERMAN Tom Kean, Lee Hamilton and the other members of this Commission who have issued this Report have more than met the challenge that we gave them. They have exceeded our highest expectations. They have answered the questions that the families, we, and all of America wanted answered. How could this have happened? And what could we do to make sure it never happens again. This is a straight-talking, tough, bold, non-partisan report and Tom and Lee and the other members of the Commission have done an extraordinary service to their nation in bringing it forward.

MCCAIN I also hope that this will out-sell President Clinton's book. (Laughter) I don't know if you're getting \$12 million or not, but I certainly hope so.

APPLAUSE



Chapter/Episode 16 – Peter Dale Scott – January 7, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Peter Dale Scott (PETER)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week's show is going to focus on the similarities between the JFK assassination and the 9/11 attacks. I do believe it is important to look at our history so people can get a good understanding as to how our Government works. As George Santayana said: "Those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it."

Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with the prolific Dr. Peter Dale Scott. How are you doing today, Dr. Scott?

PETER Oh, we have a lovely sunny day out here in California.

JON Oh, my goodness, it's freezing over here!

PETER We've been cold, but what we mean by cold is like 40.

JON Oh, I know, believe me.

All right, so what I'm going to do is I'm going to read your bio for everyone. Here we go.

Peter Dale Scott, a former Canadian diplomat and Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley, is a poet, writer, and researcher. His diplomatic service from 1957 to 1961 included two years of work at UN conferences and the UN General Assembly, and two years in Poland.

His most recent political books are *The Road to 9/11: Wealth, Empire, and the Future of America* (2007), *The War Conspiracy: JFK, 9/11 and the Deep Politics of War* (2008), *American War Machine: Deep Politics, the CIA Global Drug Connection, and the Road to Afghanistan* (2010), and *The American Deep State: Wall Street, Big Oil, and the Attack on U.S. Democracy* (2014). He is also a poet, and in 2002 received the Lannan Poetry Award.

His books have been translated into six languages, and his articles and poems have been translated into twenty. The former U.S. poet laureate Robert Hass has written (*Agni*, 31/32, p. 335) that "*Coming to Jakarta* is the most important political poem to appear in the English language in a very long time."

And I just have a little something personal to say about Dr. Scott. You've been very influential to me over the years. I greatly appreciate your work. It's an honor and a privilege to have you on today. And, so, I just wanted you to know that.

PETER Well, I just want to say about that, that you know I pretty generally say no to interviews now, usually, but I was certainly not going to say no to you, Jon.

JON Oh, well, thank you very much, Dr. Scott.

Okay, so the first question – and I ask all of my interviewees this question. What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

PETER Well, at seven in the morning I took a car down to a body shop mechanic and I arrived at the garage and the mechanic could hardly speak. He literally sort of pointed to the TV, rather than explain what he was talking about and he sputtered something. And I got to see in this garage on a small TV some of the footage about the towers. So, I didn't leave the car, I went

home and turned on the TV and I guess I watched TV all day. I don't remember too clearly, but I know I watched an awful lot of TV that day.

JON So, okay, so you saw a lot of the towers coming down over and over again, and—

PETER Yes, how much—we saw it so many times in that era that I don't know what was on that day and what was on succeeding days, but yeah, I was glued to it. And, of course, I felt I had a special interest because I had already developed a theory. I had said in print, sometime in the mid-90s, that American politics are disturbed from time-to-time by events we don't understand—what I now call deep events. And we seem to have about one every decade. And so, five years later this was an event we don't understand. It was—it seemed to me, in my case, it kind of fulfillment of a prophecy.

JON Well, I was very much like most Americans. I was very ignorant about U.S. foreign policy and so many different things, so it took me a little while before I started to turn around.

What was the first thing you questioned about the 9/11 attacks?

PETER Well, I've been asking myself that question and I think my memory is not really very reliable on this, but I suspect it was two things. First of all, that they were telling us right away who had done it, without having an investigation. Certainly, if it wasn't on the first day, it was very soon after. I was saying to myself, this is a crime but they're not investigating it as a crime. They've already solved the crime. That's a way in which it was very much like the John F. Kennedy assassination.

And then the second thing that—certainly very soon—was that we realized we were getting ready to go to war and the war we went to actually in 2001 was Afghanistan, but we now know the administration started immediately planning for two wars, both Afghanistan and also Iraq, and at one point there was a strong move to pin the whole thing on Iraq, which luckily, they backed off from.

JON Right, exactly. They were very much within the first couple of hours—Donald Rumsfeld was asking somebody to check the possible connections between Saddam Hussein and 9/11. That was within hours of the attacks.

With regard to what you said about how quickly they identified the hijackers, Kristen Breitweiser—and I mentioned this in other shows—during a meeting with the FBI, she asked them how could you swoop in on the flight schools that these hijackers supposedly trained at within hours of the attack? It's basically, you had no idea that this was coming and so on. And they told her that they got lucky. So—

PETER Right, I think we're going to talk about this a bit later on, but (Yes, exactly) the war conspiracy I have about 40 pages comparing the John F. Kennedy assassination with 9/11 and the very first thing I have to talk about is the instant identifications of the alleged culprits, what I call the designated culprits (Right). And there's no evidence in either case how they were able to do it. It's a mystery how they put out the first description of the killer, the shooter, in Dallas and it's a mystery how they had a list of the people before the last of planes had gone down.

JON Right, and I believe that it was Richard Clarke who said he was handed a manifest before Flight 93 crashed.

PETER Exactly, by his—by the way, his book is not totally reliable. We have to understand that there are things that he says in that book that are very hard to reconcile with what we know. But just taking him at his word, he's saying that at about 9:59 he got a list of the, or was told that the FBI had identified the suspects and that's at a minimum of four minutes, maybe more in fact, before the last plane went down, Flight 93.

JON Now, before we get into more of that, could you please define for my audience what deep politics is?

PETER Yeah, okay. I claimed the phrase in a book back in 1993, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK*, and I defined it there as all of those political practices and arrangements, deliberate or not, which are usually repressed rather than acknowledged. Now that's a very succinct definition and I've expanded on it in succeeding books, in particularly in my book *The American War Machine*, I begin by talking about how repression is a normal activity that we do both with respect to our own behavior. Certainly, there are certain things that we do every day that we don't talk about, and that's considered the civilized thing to do. And, also in politics there are certain situations which everyone knows, but again, are not talked about and I gave the example of the corruption in Chicago for 40 years where the mob had their claws in to City Hall so that they had something like a thousand murders

that were connected to, that were mob killings and, I believe, that for 30 years not one of them was solved.

Now, that's a pretty important fact, but you're not going to be taught that usually in a political science course, so it's part of the deep politics of this country. The fact that the CIA has worked with the mob is more relevant to what we're talking about. That's not going to be taught in Political Science I.

So, that's what—we have deep politics because not everything gets talked about and that's our way of trying to keep people in allegiance to the states.

JON Well, I would just like to say that Mike Lofgren, who refers to it as the deep state has been getting a lot of attention on Bill Moyers show recently and I wish that it was you instead.

PETER Well, I'm glad he's getting the attention because I do want to see these things talked about, but I will also claim that I used it before he did. I mean I used the term deep state—I took it from Turkish politics and used it in my book *The Road to 9/11* back in 2007. Do you want my definition of the deep state?

JON Sure, go ahead.

PETER I just took this off the Internet when I was on the Voltaire network. I said it's the wider interface in America between the public, the Constitutionally established state, and the deep forces behind it of wealth, power, and violence outside the Government.

And, Lofgren is very much on the same page. He mentions Wall Street as being part of the deep state. I put Big Oil into my title. I don't think he puts as much emphasis on the oil companies as I do, because I think my emphasis is more on how it works in foreign policy and the role of the oil companies is huge there in the different ways they interact with the public state. There are really—I talked about three levels in my last book. There are really four. There's the public state. And then you have these new agencies like the CIA that are not contained within the checks and balances of the Constitution. And behind them at the fourth level you have places like Wall Street, which Wall Street virtually forced the CIA on President Truman who didn't really want it. But, in between, I didn't—I mention in my book, but I didn't point out how there are really a third and vital layer—

the outsourced companies that the CIA works with, and I give in my book quite a lot of attention to a firm called Booz Allen Hamilton. And that layer is important because they have contracts with the CIA or they collaborate with the CIA and they also have collaborated, they collaborate with virtually all the big corporations in America.

So, you have Congressional oversight of the CIA, but you don't have any Congressional oversight of Booz Allen Hamilton, and that's a level, I think, where many significant things happen. So—that's probably enough about the deep state, I guess.

JON Well, thank you. There are two things that come to mind when I hear this. There was a letter, an Op-Ed that Truman wrote, I think a month after the JFK assassination that appeared in *The Washington Post*, if memory serves that said—you might know more about this than I do. Go ahead.

PETER Well, he said in effect, that when I created the CIA, I never had any intention that it get involved into these kind of covert operations, and we could spend a whole hour on that, because he's basically right. He was attacked for it and people to this day are saying he got it wrong.

But the CIA was created in 1947, and it was not given—it was given a very vague phrase, such other activities as the National Security Council may from time to time recommend. And that got them very quickly into their first big covert operation, which was putting money into the accounting election to counter money that was coming from Moscow behind the Communists. And the interesting thing about that is, it was originally a Wall Street operation. And then Allen Dulles in New York said this shouldn't be a Wall Street operation. The Government should do this, and Forrestal, who was the Secretary of Defense, and he himself was a Wall Street figure that—now, in the Government he said, no, the rich people on Wall Street should do it. And Allen Dulles who was not in Government who prevailed over Jim Forrestal who was in Government.

So, that's just one example of how the deep state can steer the state. And then within a year, because there were more of these things happening, they created a new agency in 1948, called the Office of Policy Coordination. And that's where covert operations really began in a serious way. And in a very big way. And very soon OPC had a budget that was far bigger than the CIA's, and they started treading on the toes of the CIA. There was something happening in Thailand that had to do with the drug trade, and as

far as I can reconstruct it, it looks like an OPC officer who was involved in the drug trade shot and killed a CIA officer who was investigating the drug trade. And then they said well, we got together and get OPC under control, so they brought OPC into the CIA but it hasn't been the case that the CIA has control of OPC, the former OPC. It's been much more like the old OPC has taken over and now operates within the CIA.

JON

Well, the other thing that came to mind was an article that came out in the Boston Globe on October 19, 2014, and it was about a book written called *National Security and Double Government* by Tufts University Political Scientist Michael J. Glennon. (Yes) And I'm going to quote directly from the article. The phrase double Government that he says:

"It comes from Walter Bagehot's famous theory, unveiled in the 1860s. Bagehot was the scholar who presided over the birth of the *Economist* magazine—they still have a column named after him. Bagehot tried to explain in his book "*The English Constitution*" how the British Government worked. He suggested that there are two sets of institutions. There are the 'dignified institutions,' the monarchy and the House of Lords, which people erroneously believed ran the Government. But he suggested that there was in reality a second set of institutions, which he referred to as the 'efficient institutions,' that actually set Governmental policy. And those were the House of Commons, the prime minister, and the British cabinet."

PETER

First of all, Bagehot did use the term double Government, but there was very much a much a deep state in Britain at that time and Bagehot's kind of analysis didn't reach to the level of what I would call the deep states, which would have been the Whig Oligarchy who ousted King James, II, back in the 17th century and had basically been running England ever since.

The word establishment, by the way, only became fashionable in the 50s and it was a British writer talking about this Whig establishment in England. And that is the heart of the British deep state.

Now, this book by Michael Glennon, I haven't read all of it, but it's a good book and he's on the same page as me in that he sees that the CIA is at a higher level than the Congress and that's the double Government that he's talking about, and I would say yes. In fact, if you're going to talk about two

levels, those are the two levels that are most actively involved in the structure of Government and I would agree with him.

But, again, he unlike Lofgren, he does not talk about Wall Street as far as I can see. He does not talk about big oil. He is a political scientist and he's talking about the structure of Government. And what I'm trying to say, and so is Lofgren, is you've got to look behind the structures of Government to see that there are processes that are not structured in the same way, but are not equally powerful when push comes to shove, they're really more powerful.

JON Okay, what we're going to do, is we're going to discuss the similarities between the JFK assassination and the 9/11 attacks.

The first thing that comes to mind, how did the corporate media treat those who questioned the JFK assassination?

PETER Well, they treated them pretty badly. I was not one of the early critics, take a man like Mark Lane. He was just treated terribly. But it wasn't just the media. You have to remember that both the FBI and the CIA were behind what the media was doing. The CIA had a document, which we now have called CIA Instructions to Media Assets—that means, of course, there were people that were working for the CIA in the journalistic world—CIA Instructions to Media Assets Re: Concerning Criticism of the Warren Report. And it was—that's where the term conspiracy theory comes from. The CIA said we've got to fight these conspiracy theories. And, beautifully, the media then and now, whether it's JFK or it's 9/11, they attack conspiracy theories. And they're doing what the CIA instructed them to do.

JON Absolutely, and you know what, during the Church hearings we found out about Operation Mockingbird, I believe, and supposedly all of that was shut down after all these revelations. But I honestly don't believe that.

PETER Oh, I don't for a second, no. And, by the way, you don't need a document. You don't need a decision in a room. That's the importance of Wall Street. Wall Street also includes the—the big TV networks are basically in New York and they all go to—they dine at the same clubs, they all think in the same way. And it could be just a word from Joe Alsop who had cousins in the CIA, but he was a journalist, but a journalist was famous for doing whatever the CIA wanted. And my book about the Vietnam War talks about Alsop's war in Laos in 1959. The CIA started fighting in Laos because

Eisenhower was persuaded by a very, totally lying news story from Joe Alsop. You didn't need a CIA decision for that to happen. That's just that type of media up at the top where things are decided at a small dinner party and then become CIA policy and corporate media policy—and it still goes on, yes.

JON Well, we see all the time how the Government has influence over what newspapers do. For instance, the New York Times withheld the story about wiretapping for a year because the Bush White House asked them to.

PETER There are any number of instances of that and it isn't just the United States (Right, absolutely) and a more extreme case where a story can get blue-lined and MI5, MI6 on a regular basis are looking at what the newspapers are going to put out and telling them what they can and what they can't. And, of course, if we go to Russia or China it's going to be much worse. We still have relatively a free press and every now and then the press will do something that the President doesn't want.

And a notorious instance of that was the Pentagon Papers being released in the New York times, and the Nixon White House went crazy, but I wrote way back then in 1972, I wrote a piece saying that the President didn't want those things released but that Wall Street was already very worried about the effect of the Vietnam War on the dollar. And so I think they were not so unhappy to see those things released.

JON Well, I've said a lot, you know, the corporate media is horrible, but—

PETER They're not horrible, come on.

JON They're impossible to control.

PETER You read them, I read them, and they're compared to the Chinese media (I understand), yeah, they're not as free as they keep telling us they are. That's the point.

JON Well, what I was going to say was there are—it's impossible to control everybody, so there are stories that get broke every once and awhile. And that's something that Paul Thompson pointed out long ago. Is that if you look within the deep confines of the media, you'll eventually see that there are big stories that should be on the front page and so forth, but they find their way into the back pages of the newspaper and so on and so forth.

PETER And then a Paul Thompson retrieves them and, of course, what he did in his 9/11 Timeline, and all of the research and shows that in this society we can—there are things being suppressed, but it's also possible to retrieve them to some extent.

JON Okay, so, let's get into the similarities between the JFK assassination itself and 9/11. So go ahead and begin. What would you like to start on?

PETER Okay, I'd like to mention a couple of things that I don't want to go to in depth and then some things that we will more. One striking thing about the JFK case and 9/11, both were preceded by informed stock activity. I write about this in *The War Conspiracy*, my revised edition. I think most people listening to this show know that there were short-selling in the stocks of air—of airline specifically United Air and also American Airlines, so that whoever did that, cleaned up because the airlines were very adversely impacted by the events of 9/11. The stocks went down. Whoever had short-sold the stock before then was able to pay off their debt with much cheaper stock.

Well, what happened before the Kennedy assassination was different, but you had two businessmen in Dallas—James Ling and (David Harold) "Dry Hole" Byrd. They called him D.H. Byrd. They bought stock in Ling-Temco Vought (LTV) and my calculations on that was that they bought about two and a half million dollars worth of stock and within two years it was worth about \$50 million dollars, because of the Vietnam War, which followed the change of presidency and—we don't have time to do all of that, but Kennedy had definitely announced publicly that there would be a withdrawal of a thousand men by the end of '63, which was the purview to withdrawing the bulk of them by '65. And what happened instead, of course, was the opposite.

And what is very interesting about that particular stock purchase is that one of the two men, D. H. Byrd, was also the owner of the School Book Depository that Lee Harvey Oswald was supposed to have shot the President from. (Wow) That doesn't necessarily make him a conspirator, but it does, I think, make it very likely that he had some idea that something was going to happen. And so he was able to make an informed stock purchase.

JON Can I say something about the 9/11 insider trading?

PETER Yeah, by all means. A lot more has come out in the last couple of years that I haven't really kept up with.

JON Right, well, there were three studies done—one in 2006, by Allen M. Poteshman, called "Unusual Option Market Activity and the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001." There was one by Marc Chesney called "Detecting Informed Trading Activities in the Options Markets," Social Sciences Research Network. That was from January 2010. And then there was another one in 2010 from Wing-Keung Wong called "Was There Abnormal Trading in the S&P 500 Index Options Prior to the September 11 Attacks?" And there was somebody by the name of James Rickards who recently came out with a book saying that there was in fact insider trading but he's saying that it was Al-Qaeda people that were doing it.

PETER I expect somebody to poison a good story pretty soon. I don't think it was Al-Qaeda. I mean, of course, I don't know. But I predict—those other studies—this is good science. It's very important to American History and, of course, there's not a word about it in the media. And, also, you should mention that the 9/11 Commission purported to investigate this and in a rather weasely phrase said there's nothing to it. Actually, what they said made it clear that they weren't categorically discrediting this.

JON I believe they referred to it as innocuous.

PETER Right, meaning I think it wasn't Al-Qaeda [laughs] (Right), but it could have been somebody who was not Al-Qaeda who would be, it could have been, if pursued, could have been, what a criminal investigation should have got into. Well, I—

JON Well the families asked for the names of the individuals who made some of these stock options and put options and so on and so forth and the FBI refused.

PETER Okay, and then—these are things I'm trying to deal with quickly [laughs], but the second one is very important to me. It's a bit technical, but it's central to my thinking.

There has been plans since the Korean War in a major way to—they're called Continuity of Government Plans—COG—and this initially—it was what do we do if there's an atomic attack? You have to plan for something

which the Constitution doesn't cover. The Constitution says if you lose the President, then the vice President becomes President. But supposing the country's decapitated and you lose the President and the vice President and the speaker of Congress and so on. So you have COG planning, and without getting into the details, because it's quite technical, COG planning figures in the case of a JFK assassination, one of my key suspects in Dallas was the top COG figure in Dallas, and you can read about that in *War Conspiracy* or the *American Deep State*.

And, secondly, on 9/11—COG plans were actually implemented for the first time, and that's another important historical fact. These plans have been going on for 40 years and for 20 of those years they have been in the hands of Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney, even when they weren't in the Government—when they were running Halliburton and G. D. Searles, a pharmaceutical company. They were planning for what is loosely called the suspension of the U.S. Constitution. And that itself is a symptom of a deep state that you can have private individuals planning and working on plans to suspend the Constitution. And then when these two men get into power in 2001, because of 9/11 they're in a position to implement those plans. Note that the President was not in Washington that day. It was done presumably by Cheney and by Rumsfeld who'd been planning them for 20 years. So, it's very much a factor, and this is very central to my last book, *The American Deep State*.

And, by the way, people will remember that the President didn't come back to Washington. He went first to Barksdale Airforce Base in Louisiana and then he went to Offutt Airforce Base in Nebraska, is it? Anyway, and that happens to be the base for the—this is all what they called in the Pentagon "doomsday" planning and part of it was they had "doomsday" planes, which would be the seat of Government in the air if the White House and Congress were blown up.

JON Well, there was an E-4B plane spotted over the skies of Washington D.C. on the day of 9/11.

PETER They could be more precise and say it was spotted over the White House and this is extraordinary because that is forbidden airspace. No plane is EVER supposed to be over the White House and they have shot down planes that had been over the White House. But, my book, actually, *The American Deep State*, has on the cover an E-4B and the White House and then there's a summary—CNN reported it. And correctly identified it as an

E-4B and then explained that that's why there was this emergency evacuation of the White House. Everybody started pouring out of it because there was a plane overhead. All that was on CNN and some other important CNN stories got pulled, but luckily, somebody had recorded it and it's back up on the web and if anyone's interested, they can buy my book and the URL—you get the instructions. It's almost the first thing in the book. Even before you get to the Introduction. A note about the cover and then refer you to the reconstituted CNN story.

JON Quick question about COG. I don't remember, was that even mentioned in the 9/11 Report?

PETER Yes, it was mentioned twice—once in the text and once in a footnote. It's mentioned in the text when they're describing what's going on in the White House and they don't pay any attention to it, but they just say that an order goes out—and I think they have the wrong time on it, but they have the right order—that there was an order to implement a Continuity of Government planning.

By the way, that's why when the—part of COG planning is the President and the vice President must not be in the same place. That's why Bush stayed out until about 3:30 and when he came back eventually to Washington, then immediately Cheney left and he went up to live in a hollowed-out mountain at Site R, or somewhere, and spent the next 90 days there with about 100 people. A shadow Government was inside a mountain. What were they doing? Well, I would guess that they brought out the Patriot Act; they brought out detention plans—there's so much, I mean, that's all in my book.

But, so yes, it's mentioned twice. The second time it's mentioned in the 9/11 Report is in a footnote where they say there were these plans and we will not look into them. And so they are confessing that they are not looking at what I think is the central part of the Government's COG.

JON One of the questions about 9/11 that I've always had was that Bush was missing, he was having communications problems that day, and Cheney took charge.

PETER Yes, until 3:30 and then Bush came back.

JON Right, but the thing is, to my knowledge, the Vice President, the powers that he has is to take over in the event that the President is assassinated and to break ties, to break vote ties, in the Senate and that's it—that's all the power he has. He has no military powers whatsoever. It makes sense it would fall to Donald Rumsfeld and not Cheney.

PETER There's something called the National Command of Authority and it is #1 the President and #2 the Secretary of Defense, and no, the Vice President is not mentioned. However, I don't think we should make too much of an emphasis on this other than that some strange things happened that day. Because I think Cheney and Rumsfeld were very much on the same page. And there's actually a period where both of them—well all three of them—the President, the Vice President, and the Secretary of Defense—there are about ten minutes where they're talking to each other but it doesn't fit in the official chronologies—the descriptions of the President leaving Tampa as they rush to the airport and they jump up almost immediately—that's the way it's described by somebody who was there. But it's not true. The plane stayed on the tarmac for ten minutes even though there had been a threat, a terrorist threat, right there in Tampa—the plane just stayed there.

Rumsfeld should have been at the command station. The official story—and it's true for a bit—he was putting people on stretchers. (Right) The country was under attack and the Secretary of Defense went out of his office, into the courtyard, and mingled with people. That was a cover, I think, for then he went back into another office and was in secret contact and he said, he has testified, he was in contact with Cheney. And Cheney communicated two different stories of how he went down to what we call the PEOC, which is the shelter underneath the White House. He gave a truthful account the first time when he said he went down there before the Pentagon was hit, which would mean before 9:35; and then about two months later—that meant that would have validated what Norm Mineta had to say about him and to make Mineta look not credible to them—said he got to the PEOC at 9:58. There's a huge difference. Both of those times were pretty precise, but there's a huge difference.

And I think he spent nearly all the intervening time—he went down to the PEOC, he came back out, there was a secure phone in the tunnel, which I'm totally convinced was a COG phone—and that's why they cannot find certain orders they know were given, but they have no record of them in the 9/11 Report, because, as they said, they didn't look at the COG material where some of the top decisions of that day were going on.

JON Well, two things—Norman Mineta on three separate occasions basically verified his story that the Vice President went to the Presidential Emergency Operation Center, or the PEOC, underneath the White House prior to the Pentagon being struck. So, I wanted to point that out. And we're also on the topic—

PETER Cheney, of course, confirmed that. Cheney's first—when he talked on NBC, about four or five days later, he said the same thing. So, I think we can take it as certain. Even though now the 9/11 Report is trying to say, without mentioning Cheney's corroboration of it, is just saying oh, he came in at 9:58.

JON Well, I do know that there were staffers on the 9/11 Commission who did not believe what Cheney had to say with regard to shoot down orders. I don't know whether or not they questioned his actions as far as the PEOC is concerned.

PETER [AUDIOBAD] want to talk about it, but it's in—I discuss it at some length in *The Road to 9/11*.

JON Okay—

PETER I have one more thing to say about the—if I'm not going on too long (No)—is that on both days, a lot of people were not in Washington. Both in '63 and 2001. And it was particularly dramatic in '63. First of all, in '63 the President and the Vice President were both on a trip together and that, I think there is no precedent for that in the Kennedy administration. And it created a—they had COG planning then, and I've talked to somebody who was part of that COG planning. He said, no, the Dallas trip was a special job, especially important for us COG people because we had to deal with the fact that the President and the vice President were together in Dallas and then nearly all the rest of the cabinet was on their way to Japan. They—two who were not were McNamara and Bobby Kennedy who was the Attorney General. Bobby at that day was really not part of anything, not officially part of anything. But most of the cabinet were on their way to Japan and the COG people had to turn the plane around and bring them back to Washington.

Very quickly, on 9/11 the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who was somebody, who was a bit of a thorn in Rumsfeld's planning, was out of the country. They found him very soon after he came back, but they had to—

JON General Henry Shelton, I believe.

PETER Yes, I'm talking about Shelton. He's not the only one, but he's the most conspicuous one.

So, okay, that's enough about the overall similarities, but then as we talk about the commissions, what really strikes me with similarity in the commissions, I would begin, first of all, with personnel.

Allen Dulles was the most important person to be fired by John F. Kennedy because of the Bay of Pigs, and was arguably the most serious threat to his power in Washington. Why was Allen Dulles put on the Warren Commission? Not just put on the Warren Commission, but you know Warren had a hands-off attitude to his own commission. It was really Allen Dulles more than any other individual that ran the Warren Commission and that was just totally improper, I think.

Now when we come to the 9/11 Commission, I think that one of the big things that they had to cover up at all costs was the fact that they had been protecting—I have three chapters on this in *The American Deep State*—that you have these people who are terrorists or linked to Al-Qaeda and the CIA has actually been using them, has been working with them, has been protecting them from being arrested for a period of about eight years, and this must not come out. And they put on the Commission—well, first of all, who should we mention? There was Jamie Gorelick, she had been involved in this protection, and then a staff member, Dietrich Snell, who had been very actively involved in this, and they call as a chief witness a man called Patrick Fitzgerald—they'd been working with one of the top double agents that they had inside Al-Qaeda, a man called Ali Mohamed that we will have to say more about shortly.

These are people who should not have been on the Commission and they were instead put on the Commission in order to perpetrate the cover-up. And I'll mention one other name: Lee Hamilton. I attacked Lee Hamilton in a book in 1987 for his role in lying about the CIA's involvement with drugs and I spent two pages on that. And so, I certainly—

JON Well, could I mention somebody? The Commission originally wanted Henry Kissinger to be the Chairman of the Commission (Right), but the families asked him about his business—

PETER You can tell the story way better than me.

JON Well, basically, and I've told this story before, the families asked to have a meeting with Kissinger in his offices and 9/11 Family Member, Kristen Breitweiser, did a lot of research into Kissinger and Lorie Van Auken asked him some very pointed questions during their meeting about whether or not he had any clients by the name of Bin Laden, and he was squirming around in his chair. They said he about fell out of his chair. And the next day he resigned. And, they put Thomas Kean in his place.

But the person that I think is the most controversial on the 9/11 Commission, and I'll always believe it, Philip Zelikow, who was the Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission.

PETER I totally agree with you.

I want to say one more thing about Snell. That Snell wrote parts of the report that are particularly pertinent to the Ali Mohamed story. The whole idea of the Commission was supposed to be a people's commission, not a Government commission. He had nine people working for him on his team and all but one of them had worked for the U.S. Government. And all but two had worked for either the Justice Department or the FBI. In other words, the fix was in from the very beginning, and the fix was in also with the Warren Commission.

JON With regard to Dietrich Snell, really quickly, he was also greatly responsible for absolving Saudi Arabia from any wrong-doing in the 9/11 attacks. He also, I believe, spoke—I think he had something to do with Able Danger, I don't remember off the top of my head. And they had hearings on Able Danger, and apparently he got, or Elliott Spitzer got him out of testifying before those Able Danger hearings. So, Dietrich Snell, you know, Philip Zelikow, as far as I'm concerned, they're criminals.

PETER Okay, now there's one last thing comparing the two commissions, and you—this is so important—you actually wanted to talk about it later on, but I'll just mention it here. That both the Warren Commission and the 9/11 Commission came up with recommendations to increase the power of

intelligence agencies. In short, to increase the powers of the deep state. And, so—can I just mention about the Warren Commission here?

JON Go right ahead!

PETER Well, the Warren Commission, they were trying to do two things at once, which were completely at odds with each other. First of all, they wanted to persuade everyone that Lee Harvey Oswald had acted alone. Also, they wanted to recommend and they did recommend that this proves we need to radically increase the amount of surveillance that's going on in American society? Now, does that make sense? I don't think so. They concluded that Oswald acted alone and they concluded also that the Secret Service, the FBI, and the CIA should coordinate more closely the surveillance of organized groups. (Laughs)

And, in particular, the Commission recommended that the Secret Service acquire a computerized data bank that would be compatible with the databank already developed by the CIA. And that became very important within a year or two because you had the Vietnam War and you had an antiwar movement, and the CIA was working with the other agencies in something called Operation Chaos, which was probably illegal. The CIA's charter didn't empower it to work at home. But they developed their own program of penetrating the antiwar movement and the computers were important in that respect, the databanks.

So—

JON So, did you want to talk about Mexico City and Lee Harvey Oswald?

PETER I do, but what is the question that I'm trying to answer.

JON Well, he was not what we were led to believe and I think that's part of it.

PETER Yeah, the first thing you can say—we're talking about similarities now between what I call the designated culprits in '63 and 2001, is that it? (Right) And the first thing is that there are files in the CIA about the designated culprits and those files are used and exploited in such a way to make them look culpable. And we know very little about the files that they had on the hijackers, but we know they had them, at least some of them. And, they knew quite a lot now about Lee Harvey Oswald and first of all, I'm going to go out on a limb and I think that we're dealing with some

double agents in both cases. And the—just from a phenomenal logical point of view, it's very interesting that both Oswald and the—at least two of the hijackers, Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi, who are the two that came to Los Angeles in early 2000, and the CIA picked up on them and they knew they were there and did not share information with the FBI. And this is, you know, FBI agents later blamed CIA for 9/11. It should have happened. It didn't happen.

Something very similar happened with Lee Harvey Oswald. He went to Mexico City. No—reports say he went to Mexico City. I don't think that the man we call Lee Harvey Oswald went to Mexico City, but without a shadow of a doubt, somebody in Mexico City called himself Lee Harvey Oswald, phoned the Soviet Embassy and was overheard referring to his conversation with a man called Kostikov in the Soviet Embassy who, in the CIA files was not just a KGB agent, he was also a specialist in assassinations. And that information was shared by the CIA on a certain day with other people, but in their message to the FBI, they left out, of all things, the fact that Oswald had apparently been in touch with a KGB agent.

Now, I think it's part of the plot for this to be left out because if it hadn't been left out, Oswald would have been, perhaps, picked up, and at a minimum put under surveillance and, for sure, could not have been the designated culprit in the Kennedy assassination. And I think that's what happened also with al-Mihdhar and al-Hazmi. And I didn't say likely, frankly, they were double agents that Saudi Arabia had sent them in to spy on other Al-Qaeda people in this country, but all we know for a fact is that there was a very systematic suppression. The CIA over 18 months was not sharing, and one of the men who was not sharing, a man called Wilshire, actually moved over into the FBI and both got them to start doing the things they should have done long before so cleaning up the record. But he's also making it impossible for them to properly investigate these people. If they'd been investigated, they could have rounded up all of the, or most of the, alleged hijackers because they were in touch with each other. The fact is they didn't because of constructive CIA actions and lies, false information in cables, and so that's the first similarity.

And coming back to Oswald again, he'd been on the watch list, and then in the summer of 1963, he starts to behave like a designated culprit. He gets involved with Cubans; he gets himself arrested; he goes on TV; talks on TV about his activity in Russia—and that, of course, was played over and over

and over after the assassination. And so, should he had been under heightened surveillance, what happened was the FBI took him off the watch list. A month before the assassination they took him off the watch list. (Hmm) And, as I say, that meant that he could be the designated culprit, rather than being rounded up or put under surveillance.

JON Well, that's very interesting because you already mentioned the CIA seemingly protected the two alleged hijackers in San Diego—Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar—who also were suspected to be Saudi agents. And, basically, there's a—I talked about this in other shows—there was a company called Alec Station (Right) and assigned to Alec Station were two FBI agents, Doug Miller and Mark Rossini, and Doug Miller wanted to draft a cable to send to the FBI to inform them that one of the hijackers got a U.S. Visa, and Tom Wilshire directed Michael Anne Casey to block that cable and then later in the day wrote a cable to CIA stations overseas saying that the FBI had been notified. That just seems so criminal to me.

PETER Right, I'm glad you spelled this out in detail, because I am now going to say something I have never said before, but I think it helps to understand things.

Alec Station was a very unusual station in the CIA and the people in the CIA who concocted false cables about Oswald and then withheld information about Oswald, they were also a very special agency within the CIA. They were something called CIA/SIG—Special Investigations Group. Their job was really to spy on the CIA to make sure there were no moles in the CIA. So they were at a distance from the rest of the CIA. Just as Alec Station, which was part of a special agreement with Saudi Arabia, was at a distance from the rest of the CIA. And this is, I think, one of the excuses, perhaps, that was being given—it's a false excuse, but I will repeat it—is that you get a special clearance. If you have a special relationship with another agency in Saudi Arabia, then the people in there get special clearances. And, I think, there was a game of clearances going on that people were not being advised who should have been advised because of the excuse they didn't have the clearance.

The important thing is that Alec Station and CIA/SIG are not regular CIA. They are sort of outrigger outfits with their own relationships and with conceivably their own agendas.

JON Right, absolutely.

And, with regard to the two hijackers, there have been theories put forward as to why the CIA was protecting them and some have said that they were trying to flip them so that they could become informants. Others have said that they were simply protected because they were Saudi assets.

And, I want to mention something—

PETER Can I just qualify that a bit, because I think it's very accurate. Lawrence Wright said in *The Looming Tower* that—or maybe it was in *The New Yorker*, but anyway, he said it—that they were part of a joint Saudi CIA operation. I think that is the real key. The CIA wasn't just watching and laid back; they were involved with whatever those two were doing.

JON And then there are many questions that arise between Bandar, who was connected to money of two of the hijackers, his wife Princess Haifa (Right). Connections between he, George Tenet, who were very good friends, the Bush family—there are many questions about those kinds of connections.

One thing I wanted to bring up about the idea that the CIA was trying to flip the hijackers—I recently wrote an article—basically the NSA said they were monitoring the Al-Qaeda hub in Yemen (All right), between the hijackers in San Diego and the hub in Yemen, but they could not identify where the calls were coming from. Meaning they did not know the hijackers were within the United States.

Recently, NSA whistleblower William Binney notified us that they did know the identities and the phone numbers of the hijackers in San Diego, which meant that they did know that they were in the United States and kept that information from the FBI. And I was speaking with NSA Whistleblower, Thomas Drake, who also posited to the notion that the reason that the NSA did not tell the FBI that they were in the country was because the CIA was trying to flip them.

And that—we've heard so much that there were no communications between different agencies, but if the NSA was protecting the hijackers so the CIA could flip them, then that means they were communicating, you know. But that would be a contradiction.

PETER You brought up something else extremely important when we're comparing the two events, because there's an NSA dimension to 9/11, as you say, Binney has thrown some light on and which is just not really covered in the 9/11 Report at all. And there is an NSA dimension, I believe—I'm being a bit speculative here—but I believe there's an NSA dimension to the JFK assassination as well.

And that is this weird person, Walter Sheridan who involved himself before the assassination and after the assassination. His background was NSA. He was very close to Bobby Kennedy. But he did things which—and he may have done them for a good cause, I don't know why he was doing them. Some of them, I think, illegal. There was a man in State Department, Otto Otepka who was monitoring Oswald and was very upset that Oswald was given a passport in June of '63, when he shouldn't have been by normal standards, but of course, would have been an easier thing if CIA had an operation which involved somebody going to Mexico and pretending to be Lee Harvey Oswald.

Anyway, he was objecting to that passport and he was actively investigating Oswald in the two weeks before the assassination, and then he was—I shouldn't have said two weeks, more like two months—but Walter Sheridan went and locked him out of his office. He got reassigned to this other job. There was a man called David Belisle who did this—

Ah, let me just summarize it saying there's an NSA dimension to the JFK assassination, which has not really been looked at. I'm talking about what Walter Sheridan did before and more famously after the assassination.

JON Okay, one last thing I want to get into. We talked about intelligence connections between the hijackers and Lee Harvey Oswald—one thing I want to talk about is how the hijackers were portrayed by the 9/11 Commission. And this is an excerpt from an article that I had written called: "9/11 Was Not a Muslim Crime."

The 9/11 Report dedicates many pages to Muslims and Islam. The hijackers' religious beliefs are mentioned as well. Hani Hanjour is described as a "rigorously observant Muslim." Mohamed Atta as "religious, but not fanatically so. This would change..." Ramzi Binalshibh thought, "the highest duty of every Muslim was to pursue jihad, and that the highest honor was to die during the jihad." Marwan al Shehhi

had an "evolution toward Islamic fundamentalism." Ziad Jarrah, "started living more strictly according to the Koran. He read brochures in Arabic about jihad, held forth to friends on the subject of holy war, and professed disaffection with his previous life and a desire not to leave the world "in a natural way."

And I'd just like to point out that there are many articles out there that talk about the hijackers gambling, dealing with prostitutes, drinking, dealing with drugs (Yeah--) – these are not characteristic—they don't coincide with the idea that they were all radical Muslims. That's the point that I'm trying to make.

PETER Right, well I think that seeing we've gone to this degree of focus on them, it's time to say that every time I use the word hijacker—I hope this is true of you too—you should say alleged hijackers.

JON Right, alleged hijackers.

PETER They may have got on the planes; they may not have gone on the planes. I'm completely open-minded on that. But I'm not open-minded at all on the question of who steered those planes into the towers. That was not done by an Arab who had a very dubious record as a pilot. That was done by some controlling force outside the planes. I'm totally convinced.

JON Well, there's a question about that. There's some—an article written a long time ago. It mentioned Paul Thompson and some of the research that he was doing, and he spoke of a possible CIA asset by the name of Luai Sakra who supposedly trained some of the hijackers and, apparently, he says, this Luai Sakra, that Hani Hanjour was not, in fact, the pilot of Flight 77, that it might have been one of the more proficient pilots in the group.

I don't know if you're aware of that story, but I just want to bring that up here.

PETER We're talking here about the limits to what we know at this stage, but I want to say, categorically, we do not know, let's perform this—in all three, the three planes that hit targets, it's a prodigious feat in all cases, and I do not believe that it was a human pilot at all. I think it was—the technology exists. It was developed to deal with hijackings. The technology exists to steer a plane from somewhere else without a plane's permission. And that,

to me, is the most obvious explanation of how a plane going at 500 miles per hour can hit a skyscraper in New York when 10 seconds earlier it would have been considerable distance away from it. (Well—)

You can see those planes—we have video of the second plane. It doesn't slow down. If you're trying to hit a target, wouldn't you slow down? Not this plane. Some people say it actually speeded up. But it certainly went in at a speed, which was very—and I'm not equipped to deal with the technology—

JON Oh, I don't want to discount the notion. I don't know what happened on those planes. We only have very scant information as to what happened on those planes, and it's speculative and all of that stuff. But, yes, you're right—alleged hijackers.

Now, let's get on to the idea—how was the assassination of JFK used by the establishment.

PETER No, I'm not done. Sorry, I have more to say on that.

JON Oh, okay.

PETER The most striking thing for me is the case of Oswald and the hijackers—you mentioned it earlier, but I have more to say about it—and that is they were identified almost immediately. Before Clarke said there was a list—he was not alone—a list by before the fourth plane had gone down. Within 15 minutes of the shooting of the President in '63, Inspector Sawyer of the Dallas Police put out on the police radio network, and possibly other networks, a description of the man whose supposed to have shot the President. And he says: "About 30 years old, 5 foot 10, 165 pounds." Now that happens to be exactly the weight and the height attributed to Lee Harvey Oswald in his FBI file and in Oswald's CIA file, but it's not his actual height. It's one that's on paper about him. And, I think, they were never able to trace where that came from. They pinned it on a witness, a man called Brennan, who subsequently failed in the first attempt to identify Oswald in a lineup, and who testified. He said: Well, I saw this man in a window from the waist up. Well, how could somebody who sees somebody in a window estimate that he was 5 foot 10 and 165 pounds. That's just not credible to me.

And the explanations given for the 9/11 alleged hijackers are also for me not credible. So, I really wanted to get that in.

And I also wanted to mention a bit about the falsified paper trails in both cases. I'm much more interested than most people in this alleged passport of al-Suqami that was supposed to have been found in New York, the first version—

JON A lot of people question that.

PETER Yeah, the first version was they found it in the debris. Everything else was ground to a pulp, to powder, but here is this passport, and so they revised the story and the woman testified to the 9/11 Commission that it had been turned in by somebody and was—in other words it was not part—it had been picked up before the towers went down so that it was not part of that pulverized thing. And you can actually see a picture of it online. I looked at it yesterday where it's sitting on a rooftop. [Laughs] Whether the police picked it up, or whether it was turned in, the picture of it on a rooftop has to be a falsified picture. It's not even singed, seriously. It is, to me, an artifact.

And you had raised the question: Who created it? And that the same is true of the "backyard photograph" we call it of Lee Harvey Oswald holding simultaneously a gun and also a copy of *The Militant*, so proving that he's simultaneously a leftist and a shooter. Two facts about him which I suspect are in fact not true.

So, in both cases, you have a falsified paper trail.

JON I think it was Sy Hersh who said it seemed like there was a paper trail left behind. I forget who wrote that? It was somebody I think it was in The New Yorker, I don't remember, that said it seemed as if there was a paper trail left behind.

PETER In which case are we talking about? 9/11 or JFK?

JON For 9/11.

PETER Yeah, both cases, I would say. And that's one of the things that you also believe when you study the Kennedy assassination.

And then you should mention that there's problems about who these people were. There may have been assumed identities in the case of the 19, of the designated, the alleged hijackers, because there were people turning up saying: "Yes, that's my name and that's my picture, but I'm here. I'm in Saudi Arabia and I'm a pilot and I wasn't killed on 9/11."

I'm not going to try and solve these mysteries. I'm just saying there were problems about the identity of the hijackers, and there's a problem about the identify of Lee Harvey Oswald. A man has written a book of almost a thousand pages saying, in fact, there was a Harvey Lee Oswald and a Lee Harvey Oswald, and again, I don't want to go into details, I'll just say that these are people they have records in the CIA files and yet they're very mysterious. I think they're double agents. I think Oswald was actually—I don't want to go—

JON If memory serves, I believe some of the hijackers had forged passports?

PETER Yes, right.

JON So, I mean, the identities of the hijackers, they were never—after they released their names—and I think there was one name they released and then took that name away?

PETER Oh, the Bukharis, the Bukhari Brothers—Adnan al-Bukhari and Ameer al Bukhari. They had to take them away, because one of them had died in a plane crash before 9/11 ever happened, so they just took them off the list. And CNN suspended its story and apologized in a later story for having mentioned them.

JON Right, and—

PETER I want to mention one last thing and, again, I touched on it before. In both cases, prior investigations had been either suspended or impeded, and we've talked about that with al-Mihdhar and al-Hazmi, and it was true also—but that's quite a lot of things—I suspect that they were double-agents and that's why they had so much on them. And there certainly was a double agent in the case of 9/11, that's this man Ali Mohamed. They admit he was a double agent. And he says that he trained the hijackers, and where to sit on the planes, and that they should come on with box cutters and all that sort of thing, and he's barely mentioned in the 9/11 Report and not with respect to what he should have been mentioned for at all.

And, finally, the idea that they acted alone. You know, the first news stories said that there was—well, there was all this stuff that the 9/11 hijackers were really in connection with Saddam Hussein in Iraq and that was going to be the foundation for what Rumsfeld and Cheney wanted, which was an attack on Iraq right away. Rumsfeld said there's no targets in Afghanistan, we should be attacking Iraq. All they got out of it was planning for attack on Iraq.

But I talk in the case of the Kennedy assassination of a Phase 1 and a Phase 2. That Oswald initially was being treated as an agent of Russia or Cuba and they actually mobilized the U.S. Strike Com base in Florida. A cable was sent there, saying that Oswald had visited Cuba, which was not true. But I think this is not just cumbersome mistakes. This was part of to have a Phase 1 threat of Soviet involvement which became Johnson's excuse with Warren to say you've got to say on this Commission that we have to kill all these stories that it's a Soviet plot, so you come up with the culprits acted alone.

And that's pretty much what happened with 9/11 and the hijackers too. I think double agent [AUDIOBAD] is another one we haven't talked about. I already mentioned two at least that were Saudi agents, but you come to a Phase 2 version of events, which is no, no, this Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone, 19 Saudis did it with Al-Qaeda but not with any Government. (Right) And Osama was taken out on Phase 2.

JON Exactly. All right, so let's get on to the next question. How was the assassination of JFK used by the Establishment?

PETER Well, this is one I answered a bit earlier, but I'll repeat it. That the Warren Report was recommended, something that was implemented which was that the CIA should work more closely with the FBI and the Secret Service and particularly merge their databanks. And that became the basis for Operation Chaos.

In my books, I talk about how the assassination of Robert Kennedy was used in the same way. Before he was even dead, Congress passed within one day an act that had been months in preparing, which gave all kinds of extraordinarily powers to the Secret Service and a lot of the excessiveness of the Nixon Administration were based on the way he was using the Secret Service in ways in which were being empowered by this act.

Also, the Martin Luther King assassination, this led to a special Army program—I'm blocking it. Do you remember the name of it?

JON COINTELPRO?

PETER Well, that's an FBI program. This was a military program where they deployed—Garden Plot. It was brought into being right after the MLK assassination. It was terminated finally in 1971 when there was a scandal, but it's part of Garden Plot. There are now a thousand Army intelligence agents monitoring every aspect of civilian life. It was worse than Operation Chaos really. And some people had said that they were—well, it's I think it's a fact that there were Army intelligence agents under Garden Plot that were in the Democratic National Convention in '68, and people have alleged that they helped ferment all that action outside the Democratic Convention, which was really the death of the old Democratic Party because there were two factions of it—the Union faction that was pro-war and the youth and students who were antiwar. And after the 1968 convention and all the rioting that surrounded it, it was a pretty close election, but it certainly helped elect Nixon. And the Democratic Party has never been the same since.

JON Well, some ways that 9/11 was used—just to briefly go over it—was, obviously, to go into Afghanistan, which there are indications that we already had intentions to do. It helped us go into the Iraq war. It helped us create this environment of a perpetual war. It established all of these losses of civil liberties. It established the militarization of the police. There are so many things that we can get into that 9/11 has been used—

PETER I want to pick up on that last one—the militarization—you're absolutely right. And not everyone knows that in 2002, the Army created a command to control North America—Northcom—which is analogous to the command they had working in South American—Southcom—and in Central Asia—Centcom. So that all the techniques the Army has developed for doing things overseas, potentially, they have them in reserve to do here. And, more specifically, they have now only a permanent Army brigade stationed in the United States in contravention to The Posse Comitatus Act, which forbid this sort of thing, this sort of permanent militarization of security. And their mission is so general that they could use it to break up an antiwar riot. They're not likely to ever see those again, but if we did, the brigade is there to deal with it. We are in a state of emergency. It was

proclaimed on September the 14th, 2001, and if we want to get back to a more sane America, I say the first thing we have to do is to persuade Congress to terminate that state of emergency. They're supposed to by law to review it within six months, but in the 14 years, whatever it is, since 9/11 they have never reviewed it once. They have broken the law by not reviewing it.

JON Right, I think they renew it every year.

PETER No, the President reviews it—yeah, this was one of the reforms after Watergate. They discovered the country was in a state of emergency ever since the Korean War and Gerald Ford managed to get through this act, the National Emergencies Act, which said that an emergency would only be proclaimed for one year and then has to be renewed, and that's what Bush did and Obama, to our great disappointment, has also done. And Congress, quite separately, has to review it and either confirm or abrogate it.

And back in 2008, a former Congressman and I tried to get a national movement to make Congress do this. And it was very interesting that one of the people who was told by his Congressman: "Oh, that law was overwritten by COG." And if that's true, then that's confirmation, as if you didn't need it, but COG has changed the Constitutional situation in this country.

JON Wow. All right, the last question, well the next to the last question. Were there "troublemakers" or people that would put forward bad information seemingly on purpose in what might be called the "JFK Truth Movement?"

PETER Yes, absolutely. I've been thinking about how I would answer this question, which you sent me in advance. I decided not to name any names and that means I'm not going to give you examples of bad information, but let me say yes, it happened within—there was what you might call the JFK Truth Movement, and there were people in it who did odd things and then, I saw a table get overturned at one of the first meetings of the JFK Movement and we had somebody misbehave in a similar fashion drawing great attention to insults at one of the annual meetings of the 9/11 Movement. I'm not going to name names.

JON That's fine.

PETER I also saw a great deal of it, of course, in the antiwar movement. That got very well documented.

JON I think a lot of movements today get infiltrated and those people cause problems.

PETER And it shouldn't happen and we would like to go back to a more naïve America where we weren't so paranoid about terrorism, but everything was being investigated. I particularly dislike one of the consequences also of 9/11 is that surveillance is now outsourced to private corporations, and they have a profit motive in reporting things that are not really the case. And so, the whole thing, I think, needs to be rethought and the first step towards sanity would be to end the state of emergency and have some outsiders consider just how big a threat terrorism really is in this country. Yes, it is a threat and we have the FBI. They've been dealing with it. We don't need all these other things.

So that's what I wanted to say about that.

JON Well, with regard to troublemakers, I'd like to say that in this paranoid environment that we live in, judge people by the fruits of their labor. If they have a good track record, if they make mistakes and admit to those mistakes and learn from those mistakes—these are the kinds of people that you should, if you're going to follow someone, or listen to what someone says, those are the kinds of people you should look for.

And I also suggest not getting into—what I used to—it was part of what people called the credibility police, where you—if somebody puts out something stupid, you show them why—I mean it's so time-consuming when you could be doing so many more positive things to over-shadow what the bad people are doing. So that's my recommendation.

PETER That's very well said, Jon, and I want to add to it too. Not only have we had the troublemakers, but we've had people denouncing troublemakers, naming names and saying that person is an FBI agent or something like that (Exactly). I think both you and I have suffered from this personally (yes). I know I have.

JON It's called snitch-jacketing, where you portray someone as an agent so other people don't trust those individuals, you know, whoever they're—

PETER Well I didn't want to name any names and we should probably move on to the next question.

JON All right. The last question I have for you:

Is there anything that you would like to promote at this time?

PETER Well, I think it would be appropriate for me to say that in a sense all four of my last political books, the ones you named at the beginning, and especially two of them: *The War Conspiracy*, 2008 Edition, because there was a '72 edition, which obviously said nothing about 9/11, but the 2008 edition has a lot to say about what we primarily talked about here, which is comparison between John F. Kennedy and the 9/11 events. And my latest book I want to mention *The American Deep State*, that's part of the framework of the book, which is that since 9/11 and the implementation of COG, we've had abundant evidence to make us think more and more—not just about JFK and 9/11, but about all of the deep events, what I call the structural deep events that have changed the American political way of life. And that would include the Bobby Kennedy assassination. It would include Watergate. It would include Iran/Contra. And something a lot of people may not have paid much attention to which is what is usually called the October Surprise, the efforts of ex-CIA people to oust Jimmy Carter preventing him from being re-elected in 1980, which led to Reagan's election and the so-called Reagan Revolution, which I think is a very important moment in the evolution of the contemporary deep state. We've always had a deep state, but the deep state we have today, is more powerful and more dangerous and more harmful to the American Constitution than anything we've ever had before. And so, the overview of all of that is in my latest book *The American Deep State*, and I do recommend that to my listeners, our listeners.

JON I recommend everybody read everything you write. You mentioned the October Surprise, very quickly, Lee Hamilton I think was involved in the investigation of that and involved in the cover-up of that.

PETER Yes, absolutely he was and yes.

JON All right, Dr. Scott, I want to thank you very much for your time today. It was a privilege and an honor to have you on. I understand that your birthday is coming up, your 86th birthday.

PETER That's true, in a couple of days, yeah.

JON Well, I want to say Happy Birthday.

PETER Thank you, I don't want to give the date out because I don't want to have to deal with a lot of well wishers that I have to answer. [Laughter] It's a well-kept secret, but I will be 86 and I want to thank you, Jon, because, you know, if I do an interview like this, it makes an awful lot of difference if the person who is asking the questions knows something about the case, and you know a great deal about it, and so it's been a very fruitful discussion, I think. And I said one or two things in this talk that I've never said before, and I hope people found it worth listening to.

JON Good, so do I. Well, thank you, again, Dr. Scott, and you have a wonderful evening.

PETER Thank you, bye, bye.

JON Bye, bye.



Chapter/Episode 17 – Peter Van Buren – January 15, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Peter van Buren (PETER)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. For this week's show, I'm going to talk to someone who doesn't ordinarily question 9/11, but does write about issues pertaining to the post-9/11 world. I want people who address these issues, who have a voice, to at the very least tell people that we were lied to about 9/11. When you have a corporate media that is unwilling to tell the people the truth, it is my opinion that it is the responsibility of those with a voice to inform the public. We also address civil liberties issues in the post-9/11 world. This show is dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King.

Okay, this is Jon, and I'm here with Peter van Buren. Peter, how are you doing today?

PETER Jon, it's a pleasure to be with you. I'm doing well, thank you.

JON Thank you, very much, Peter for being on today.

All right, so what I'm going to do is I'm going to read your bio.

Peter Van Buren, a 24-year veteran of the State Department, spent a year in Iraq. Following his book, *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People*, the Department of State began proceedings against him. Through the efforts of the Government Accountability Project and the ACLU, Van Buren instead retired from the State Department on his own terms.

Peter's commentary has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Reuters*, *Salon*, *NPR*, *Al Jazeera*, *Huffington Post*, *The Nation*, *TomDispatch*, *Antiwar.com*, *American Conservative Magazine*, *Mother Jones*, *Michael Moore.com*, *Le Monde*, *Asia Times*, *The Guardian (UK)*, *Daily Kos*, *Middle East Online*, *Guernica* and others. He has appeared on the *BBC World Service*, *NPR's All Things Considered* and *Fresh Air*, *CurrentTV*, *HuffPo Live*, *RT*, *ITV*, *Britain's Channel 4 Viewpoint*, *Dutch Television*, *CCTV*, *Voice of America*, and more.

Van Buren's new book is about the social and economic changes in America between WWII and the decline of the blue collar middle class in the 1980s. You can learn more about *Ghosts of Tom Joad: A Story of the #99 Percent*, which is available now.

Okay, so that's your bio. You've certainly been a lot of places, Peter. Or on a lot of shows. [Laughs]

PETER And now the Jon Gold Show.

JON Now—We Were Lied to About 9/11—that show.

All right, so, before we get started I want to say, Happy Birthday Dr. Martin Luther King. This show is going to be dedicated to him, and I think it's very fitting that today, part of what we will be talking about will be civil liberties issues.

Before we get started, I want to quickly say one thing—This show is going to be an experiment of sorts. For years, I have been trying to get people that write about "Post-9/11 World" issues like the wars, our loss of civil liberties, etc. to at least acknowledge or write about the fact that we were lied to about 9/11, to start looking at these issues through the "we were lied to about 9/11" lens or filter. Peter is not known for questioning 9/11, but he does write about the issues I spoke of. I want to thank Peter very much for being willing to come on my show. Hopefully, I won't scare him too much.

[Laughter]

All right, so my first question: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

PETER It's like pretty much everybody maybe in the world. Certainly, Americans it's unforgettable. I was assigned at the time to the American Embassy in Tokyo, Japan, and because of the time difference, 9/11 happened late at night for us. I was actually taking a shower of all things. My wife was watching the evening news and she said: "You better come see this. Something's happened in New York." And I ran down to see and I arrive there to see the news just as the second plane hit the tower, or so they say. And I said: "Okay, I'm going to pack a lunch and I'm not sure when I'm going to see you again. I'm going to go to work." And she said: "Well, why do you have to go to work? This is happening in New York. We're in Japan." And I kind of said: "Well, I think this is going to be a bigger deal than that." When I got to the American Embassy it was well after midnight our time in Japan and there already was a large crowd of Japanese people who had assembled with flowers and candles, and we were welcomed into the embassy and they were very sad for us. I just want to fast-forward and contrast that against a much larger crowd that gathered in the same place in 2003, when we began the invasion of Iraq. That crowd was not very sympathetic; did not have flowers and candles. In fact, jeered us and cursed at us for what America was up to. And, in my mind, I always hold those two events together, and I can't get past the controversy and the contrast.

JON The contrast is amazing. After 9/11, most countries in the world were very supportive of America, including the ones that had been said to have not been sympathetic for America. We heard a lot of propaganda about countries being happy that 9/11 happened and so forth, and that simply really wasn't the case. But, you're right, before the Iraqi invasion, you know, we had— think it was the largest recorded protest in history for an antiwar rally. And it still might hold the record. I'm not exactly sure. Okay, that's very interesting. I haven't really talked to anybody who wasn't within this time zone when 9/11 happened. So, that's pretty interesting. (Yeah)

Have you ever had questions about what took place before or on the day of 9/11?

PETER I have those questions and I think they differ in some ways and parallel in some ways with what many people, like yourself, I think feel about 9/11. I

have—the questions I have are questions. They don't lead me directly to a conclusion. But, for example, I think there are significant questions/issues about the failures of the American Government to identify the hijackers, to understand what was being put together in the United States prior to that terrible morning.

We all know now that the CIA knew the hijackers had entered the United States. The FBI certainly knew something of some of these people. They had concerns that were being expressed about these folks taking flight training. There were a lot of pieces of the puzzle that were on the table and we never really had a full accounting of why those pieces were not put together. And whether—what level of incompetence or whatever might have led to that.

I think, I also have some concerns that have not been answered about the attack on the Pentagon. I'm not a structural engineer, none of us are—I mean, most of us aren't. But what happened at the Pentagon doesn't seem to track with what I have seen in other instances in plane crashes. One of my jobs at the State Department was to deal with the deaths of American citizens overseas. And those deaths, in most cases, were quiet ex-pats passing away in their own homes or hospitals, but it also involved air crashes. I was at the sight of more than one air crash, and the violence, the amount of material that's distributed over a large area is stunning when you see that type of thing. And, the photos I saw from the Pentagon just simply don't look like what I had seen at these other air crash sights.

So, I don't know how to add that up, but it remains a significant question in my mind that needs an answer, and to a lesser extent, Shanksville, but still some of those same issues.

JON

Well, okay, with regard to the Pentagon, it's actually funny that you bring that up. I am someone who thinks Flight 77 hit the Pentagon. (Okay) There were a multitude of witnesses that saw an airliner crash into the Pentagon. There were pieces of debris with the American Airlines logo on them. Apparently, the DNA of the passengers and the crew were identified. There was a book called *Firefight*, which was written by 9/11 first responders who reported to the Pentagon. They said that they found the plane chairs with bodies still strapped within them, inside the Pentagon.

And it's interesting, the idea or the notion that Flight 77 did not hit the Pentagon was originally put forward by somebody by the name of Thierry

Meyssan. He came out with that, I think, in October of 2001. Then he wrote a book about it and it was translated into 29 different languages and spread throughout the world. And very recently within the last couple of years, the same individual reported that Prince Bandar was assassinated, and I don't know if you're familiar (Sure), but Prince Bandar is a big character in the whole 9/11 scenario.

PETER Sure, no, I know who he is.

JON So, I called the Saudi Embassy and they essentially laughed at me, but they told me he was not killed. Someone else called and confirmed that he was not killed, so you know, if this person was wrong about that, he may have been wrong about the Pentagon as well. And I think he was.

I think the question that people should be asking with regard to the Pentagon is: How is it possible that the most defended air space in the world was left completely undefended 34 minutes after the second tower was hit, when everybody IN THE WORLD knew that America was under attack, and yet a commercial airliner was able to penetrate that airspace and hit the Pentagon. And I'd like to know how is that possible?

PETER The easier question, in my mind, is what you've said. Just simply what seemed to be common sense kind of questions that should have fairly straight-forward, simple answers, don't.

JON Well, with regard to NORAD, I mean, they lied to the 9/11 Commission. The 9/11 Commission was considering referring the matter to the Justice Department for a criminal investigation because of those lies. So, we don't know the truth about the air response that morning—among a number of other issues. (Mm-hmm)

Now, are you someone who believes that individuals within our Government were simply incompetent with regard to 9/11?

PETER Yeah, I'm going with that for two reasons. One is, of course, the Occam's razor, the simplest explanation is often the right one. And the other is based on my own 24 years of federal Government service. As you said in the bio, I worked for the State Department. Incompetence is, unfortunately, a predominant factor of Government employment. The Government doesn't necessarily hire the best and the brightest people. A lot of it has to do with the way the personnel systems work. And once you get inside the system,

sucking up is the most important skill that anyone has over any kind of competency, and given the choice between saying something that's accurate, true, or correct, and agreeing with your boss—unfortunately, my experience was that most Government employees simply nod and say, yeah, yeah, whatever my boss said.

So, I'm leaning heavily toward the incompetence theories to explain many Government actions as opposed to anything more nefarious.

That said, it's also reasonable to say that that kind of system—incompetent people who suck up to their bosses, certainly would offer fertile ground for anybody who was up to no good. A more senior person who wanted to pull off something—and I'm certainly not implying that I think that's what happened with 9/11. But, the point is that if you want to get away with something and you're a senior person, that type of system makes it easier than if you had a lot of smart, sharp people underneath you.

JON Well, I've always looked at 9/11 not as an act of war but as a crime. And, as with every crime, there are suspects for that crime (Sure), and I honestly believe, based on everything that I know, that elements within our Government and other Governments, along with people like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed have more than earned the title of suspect for the crime of 9/11. And I just want to quickly address the issue of incompetence (Mm-hmm). The Bush Administration came into office wanting to go to war with Iraq. There's also information to suggest they wanted to go to war with Afghanistan. These individuals, they wanted to go to war—they did. They wanted to make billions for their corporate friends—they did. They wanted to expand executive power—they did. They committed crime after crime after crime during their eight years in office and remained Teflon coated throughout. So, I honestly, I don't see them as being incompetent. I see them as being able to do exactly what they wanted to do.

So, I understand. Keep in mind that I do know that within Government there is incompetence and bureaucracy everywhere. But, just as a for instance, Alec Station, which was the Bin Laden unit, there was an instance where the two FBI agents that were assigned to Alec Station—Mark Rossini and Doug Miller—and they found out that one of the hijackers got a U.S. visa. So, Mark Rossini went to Michael Anne Casey to ask if he could send a cable to the FBI notifying them. And Tom Wilshire told Michael Anne Casey to tell Mark no, he cannot send a cable. And he was surprised by this and so on and so forth. Later in the day, Michael Anne

Casey sends out a cable within the CIA notifying different stations throughout the CIA that the FBI WAS notified. (Laughs)

So, when I hear things like that, they just sound criminal to me. And I found out recently, and I don't want to take up too much time on this, but I found out recently that the NSA was monitoring the two hijackers that were in San Diego, and they monitored about eight calls of theirs going to the Yemen hub—the Al-Qaeda hub in Yemen (Mm-hmm)—and they said that they could only identify where the calls were coming in to. They said they could not identify where the calls were coming from. And we found out recently from NSA whistleblower, William Binney, that the NSA did know the identity of the phone numbers coming from within the United States—which means they knew the hijackers were in the United States and did not tell the FBI, very much like the CIA. And Thomas Drake, NSA whistleblower confirmed that for me.

So, there are a multitude of lies. And the thing about all of this is there's one word—accountability (Mm-hmm). If individuals within our Government were incompetent, were criminally negligent, or acted criminally, the word accountability applies to all of that. And we didn't see that after 9/11. We didn't see individuals within our Government who should have been held accountable being held accountable. In fact, what we saw were people being rewarded and promoted who should not have been. And it just boggles my mind—every investigation we had into 9/11 had its own version of compromise and corruption—especially the 9/11 Commission.

So when I say I'm talking to you as an individual who writes about post-9/11 world issues, but doesn't look at it through the lens that we were lied to about 9/11, which to me, takes away the justification for everything that's been done in the name of 9/11.

I'm not asking you to make it THE issue for you (Mm-hmm) but if you talk about issues pertaining to the "Post-9/11 World," I think that it's in the best interests of the people that they are reminded of the fact that we WERE lied to about 9/11. Especially by those people who have a voice, and reach a large portion of people. People like you. People like Glenn Greenwald, Noam Chomsky. When you have a media that doesn't work—a corporate media that doesn't do its job, it's up to the people who have a voice to let the people know what's going on. So that's (you know--) essentially my argument to anybody who writes about issues like this.

PETER And you make good points, and I think this is one of the reasons why we've become, I guess, online friends is the way to put it is that it's very hard to write on these issues because the dialogue, the narrative if you will, is so polarized. You have the Governments lying and the people who support the Governments lying, which is very narrowly focused on a very sort of broad narrative that chooses to ignore many important questions, which we've already covered some of those.

The other side of this is often times brushed off too casually, and whenever you start to talk about something that adheres to the Government narrative, bring in a lot of static, if you will—

JON Oh, believe me, I'm well aware (Laughter). I've spoken to so many journalists over the years, who used to actually report on some of the issues of 9/11, and I'm like: "Why aren't you still doing it?" And they said: "Well, because when I write about this stuff we get thousands of emails telling me why didn't you cover this, accusing me of this or that because I didn't cover this," and they just don't want to touch it anymore (Yeah). And I completely understand that, but in the same token, it's still our responsibility. This show is dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King (Mm-hmm) and his famous saying is: "Silence is betrayal." And I firmly believe that applies to the issue of 9/11.

All right, let's get on with the questions.

What did you do while you were at the State Department?

PETER I did a number of things. Most people that work as foreign service officers, which is what I was, diplomats are considered what we call generalists. You do whatever the State Department needs to be done, and your role changes oftentimes from assignment to assignment. However, primarily, my core function, if you will, was called Citizen's Services, and my job was to assist Americans who got into one form of trouble or another overseas. Some people call it social work on steroids. Well, there is a large bureaucratic part to it. We—I helped issue passports, register births, do the paperwork when people passed away abroad—those types of things. But I also was deeply involved in the problems that American citizens had of a more extreme nature. When people got arrested, when people were the victims of crime and all the way up to disasters like plane crashes, the Asian tsunami, earthquakes—you name it, if it can happen to an American citizen overseas, it was my job to deal with that in some fashion.

JON What are the top three reasons Americans get arrested overseas?

PETER The top three are: drugs, drugs, and drugs. (Laughs) I mean, there's really not much else. There's the occasional, whatever. But, quite seriously, it's drugs. Americans display oftentimes unbelievable levels of stupidity in dealing with illegal substances abroad, and oftentimes, amazing levels of ignorance that the laws work very, very differently in other countries. In Japan, for example, where I worked, the amount of marijuana that you're caught with determines what, according to their law, what your intent was. In other words, if you have over—and I don't remember exactly, but it's a relatively small amount. If you have over a relatively small amount in your possession, the law says you were intending to sell it. And there's not really a lot of argument allowed under the system over there. If you have more than whatever it is, you're considered a dealer. And Americans often didn't get that and ran into trouble.

 There were cases where—I worked also in Korea. Most of my time was in Asia—where a young person would come back from a week in Thailand with a scraggily beard, long hair, a back-pack, torn clothing, and was surprised when he was selected for extra scrutiny at customs at the airport and they found some dope on him.

 Things like that. There were obviously serious crimes, but in many cases, it was usually guilty of stupidity, I hate to say it.

JON Well, I'm sorry to hear that. Do you hear that, Americans? Stop doing drugs.

 Anyway, please—

PETER Also, stop being stupid. (Laughs)

JON [Laughing] Yes, please, America stop being stupid.

 Please briefly describe what your book *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People* is about, and what happened at the State Department after you released it?

PETER The—as I mentioned earlier, we were all considered generalists. We did what needed to be done. And, by the time the Iraq war had dribbled and drabbed and sputtered into 2009, the State Department had largely run out

of people who had been to Iraq, as part of what was then the world's largest embassy in terms of staffing. So, they started to dig a little deeper into the ranks, and I was volun-told that it was my turn to go to Iraq. I was assigned to lead two reconstruction teams. If you'll recall, we were going to win the war by creating democracy, helping Iraqis build roads, schools and bridges that would in some sense defeat terrorism. It was never a very well-thought out plan, and my job was to go out and make it work.

JON The entire Iraqi occupation, as far as I'm concerned, was illegal. So—

PETER Yeah, it was the stupidest—it was one of the stupid things in a stupid system that was never going to work. And my goal at the time—and I was a relatively mediocre bureaucrat. I was not a highly politicized person. I had my opinions and all, but I worked for the Government. I was not a political appointee. Ronald Reagan was President when I joined the State Department, and I served under every President, Republican/Democrat, since then until I retired under Barack Obama.

So, my goal was to go to Iraq, not get myself or anyone else killed, keep my head down, and try to just get through the year that I was assigned there. Get back to my family and get back home to doing the work for the State Department that I enjoyed. That was the plan.

The reality was that as soon as I got there, literally from day one, I began realizing that the whole thing was a lie. It was a scam from top to bottom to funnel money into the hands of contractors, to waste money, to create photo opportunities—there was no plan at all to "win the war." And, in fact, most of what we were doing was ridiculously counterproductive, harmful to both our side and the Iraqis and everyone else.

And this changed me. It was that moment of clarity, that epiphany, that attack of conscience that changes people that causes them to realize that they'd been living in a bubble that was wrong.

And I came back from Iraq—it's a longer story, but the short version is nobody would listen to me. Nobody was interested in what I had to say about all this. And I decided I was going to write a book. I never really gave a lot of consideration to going to a journalist. I think I was unaware of how that really would work. And, I think also, I wanted to tell my story the way I wanted to tell it, and I wanted to tell it in the length that it needed. I didn't want this to be a little blurb that appeared on page 17 somewhere.

So, I wrote a book about it and basically outlined exactly what I saw in Iraq. And the book achieved some success, some notoriety, perhaps, and the U.S. State Department reacted strongly by attempting—beginning the process of prosecuting me under the Espionage Act. (Geez) They couldn't kind of make that work since I revealed no classified information whatsoever, so they switched over to trying to fire me for all sorts of dumb, trumped up reasons. The main issue was they were going to try and take away the pension and the things that I had earned over the course of an otherwise decent career and leave me impoverished.

That was their goal, and thanks to some very nice people and some very good lawyers, including the ACLU, and a woman named Jesseyln Radack. You may recognize her name (Yes, I do), and if not, jot it down, because among other things she defended Thomas Drake, who you mentioned earlier; she's worked very closely with Bill Binney, who you mentioned earlier; and, she's currently the lead attorney on Edward Snowden's defense team. The joke is she got to practice with me and then once she got good at it, you know, she moved on to the big guys. (Laughs)

JON Are you considered to be a whistleblower? Do you have whistleblower status, any protection?

PETER Yes, I certainly consider myself a whistleblower. I was in the process of getting the formal version of federal Government whistleblower status when the State Department and I decided that we needed to simply divorce and move on with our lives. At that point, I was no longer a federal employee, the book had been out for a year, and the whole question of whether I needed the official status or not, became kind of moot, so it fell to the side.

But I absolutely consider myself a whistleblower and with a little humility, I'm very pleased and proud to say that very courageous men like Tom Drake and Bill Binney welcome me as a fellow whistleblower.

JON Oh, no, I consider you a whistleblower. It's just that, a lot of people file for status and so forth so they can get protections so they don't get retaliated against.

Unfortunately, whistleblowers in today's era are not liked at all.

PETER [Laughs] Tell me about it.

JON I mean, I guess they've never been, but they— Obama has prosecuted more whistleblowers than Bush did.

PETER Yep—than any other President.

JON Yeah, and he's used the Espionage Act more than any other President, I think.

PETER Mm-hmm, that's correct.

JON It's one more—it's an example of how Obama has continued and expanded upon most of Bush's worst policies.

Now, I want to quickly skip ahead, because we don't have a lot of time (Sure). Since 9/11, we have lost a plethora of civil liberties. Which civil liberties do you think have been most affected by the so-called "War on Terror?"

PETER The time after 9/11 I've come to refer to as post-Constitutional America. The idea would be that prior to the American Revolution, you had United States under the thumb of a monarchy. After that, for 220 some years you had the United States struggling to work itself out under a constitution. It was certainly an imperfect process. Dr. King is a perfect example of how that process never fulfilled itself.

But the point was it was an attempt to do the right things and there was some progress made.

9/11 changed all that and launched us into an era where we no longer have the rights that we enjoyed under the Constitution. Among the rights that were lost most significantly—and it's hard to kind of separate how they, because they fit together—but I would have to say the most egregious is the Fourth Amendment—Right to Privacy Against Unlawful Search and Seizure. Edward Snowden has been the most eloquent spokesperson for that. And we've learned that the NSA, as the poster child for all this—I'm sure there are other parts of the Government deeply involved—is now intrusive into nearly every aspect of all of our lives. There is no such thing as privacy in the United States right now. Any privacy that you might enjoy

is simply because the Government chooses to allow you to have that privacy for whatever particular reason.

But dovetailing with that is the loss of our First Amendment rights—the ability to speak freely, to criticize the Government, to assemble—to do all the things the Founding Fathers said we needed to do to oppose a monarchy. If you can't think in private; if you can't talk in private; if you can't communicate with others in private, that dramatically limits your ability to speak openly.

And so, I'm afraid that these things fit together in ways that are quite synergistic, but not in a good way, Jon.

JON

Well, we spoke of the First Amendment and part of the First Amendment is a free press, and after 9/11, a lot of people were afraid to report or ask the toughest of the tough questions. Helen Thomas spoke about it (Mm-hmm). Dan Rather spoke about it, how reporters were afraid to dissent, essentially.

I know a couple of journalists, someone like Robert Sheer, who wrote for the *Los Angeles Times* (Mm-hmm). He wrote an article called "What We Don't Know About 9/11 Hurts Us." And he also wrote a couple of articles dissenting against the Iraq War and the *LA Times* let him go. (Gawd--) And now he's started Truthdig. I just looked at Reporters Without Borders and the United States is ranked 46th in the world for freedom of press. (Laughs)

For a country that supposedly has the freedom of the press in their Constitution, that's absurd. And I think—the press has been very dangerous in a lot ways—as far as propagandizing the American people, as far as fearmongering with the American people, as far as misrepresenting causes.

Like, for instance, the "9/11 Truth Movement." They would focus on two theories—a controlled demolition and the missile hitting the Pentagon, and ignore things like how corrupt the 9/11 Commission was and how corrupt Philip Zelikow, who was the Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission, was—and just misrepresent us. We were supposed to be people supporting the family members seeking truth, accountability, and justice for what happened to their loved ones that day, and they portrayed us in such a way that now when you hear the phrase 9/11 Truth, people are not—or truer—people think that they're the equivalent of a baby killer or dog torturer. So, they've essentially made it impossible to dissent in this country.

And one of the things that 9/11 did, John Ashcroft, one of the first things he did after 9/11 was reinstate COINTELPRO (Mm-hmm). There's a number of instances where people are being entrapped, made to look like terrorists, and it's just not true. And, I consider myself fairly well-known, I guess, so I assume that everything I do is being monitored. In fact, when I went to the White House to chain myself to the White House fence to protest the 9/11 lies, a Capitol police officer came up to me and he said: "Is your name Jon Gold?" I said: "Yes." He said: "Are you still planning on chaining yourself to the White House fence?" (Laughs) I said: "Ye-e-s-s." And that's actually not the first time I was spied on. I belonged to an organization that Cindy Sheehan founded called Peace of the Action (Mm-hmm) that an organization called ITRR was subcontracted by the Pennsylvania Department of Homeland Security and they actually spied on us and they wrote reports that said we were going to be violent and so forth, in an upcoming action, and we're non-violent people, and they would give these reports to the Department of Homeland Security. And it's just not true.

So, the wiretapping, the press, the COINTELPRO, the search and seizure to privacy – you know we supposedly have the right to address our Government with a redress of grievances, and can you—we don't get the time that lobbyists do. We can't go into our representatives' offices and have a nice conversation with these people. It's next to impossible, unless you're a lobbyist who has a lot of money and so forth. And it's just getting worse.

And, you know, if we were lied to about 9/11, there's no justification for any of what they're doing. So, that's what I—that's how I look at it. Now, what is—is there anything else you want to say about civil liberties?

PETER Well, just the idea that there's another thing that goes on with all this and I think you've touched on it there. And that is this lack of freedom to speak—there's two ways to it. One is the overt stuff, and I think you may have explained some of all that. But then there's also the idea that not everybody is courageous enough to stand up to the Government. An awful lot of people see what happens to others and sort of self-censor themselves. And, the Government knows that. They know that the easiest voice to silence is the one that never speaks up. So, for every person that gets arrested or intimidated overtly, as you were describing, there's a lot of other people who say: "You know, it's just not worth the trouble to me. I'm just not going to get as far as Jon did, or Jim Risen did, or anyone else." I'm going to shut the hell up myself before the Government even gets as far as me. And I

think that, in many ways, becomes even a bigger danger. The overt cases are known and can be talked about and, perhaps, dissected and maybe even pushed back against. But all those Americans out there who remain silent out of fear, I think that's where the real danger lies.

JON Absolutely, And, I said the other day, the people have the power to change things and as soon as they realize that, watch out world.

But, unfortunately, a lot of people have fallen for what I call the empire's tricks—the propaganda, the fear mongering, and so forth—and, as you said, people are apathetic, and as long as they have their cars, their houses, their TVs, and so forth, they really, they don't concern themselves, and one of the reasons why is what you said, is how they see other people being treated. And, you know, it's our responsibility as citizens to be as responsible as we can be as citizens, and one of the things we need to do is when our Government does questionable things, we need to point that out to people, I think. I think it's imperative to do so, regardless of what the outcome might be. And I understand people with families might have a problem with that. Activism might be a single man's game in a lot of cases—anyway.

All right, the next question What is your opinion with regard to allying ourselves with Al-Qaeda and Al-Qaeda-like groups in places like Libya and Syria in order to take out their leaders.

PETER We are, of course, our own worst enemies, not only in allowing our Government to use things like 9/11 and "terrorism" to take away our rights, but also in sort of the good-guy/bad-guy of the moment strategy, which seems to be what our Government does. We are opposed to one group, while it's perceived as our advantage, and then who knows, then all of a sudden soon after that, we're on the same side as them.

What's going on in Iraq right now is a perfect example. We're claiming that Iran is one of the greatest dangers to the Middle East and peace there, and then at the same time, we're tacitly, if not directly, supporting Iran's incursions into a foreign country—Iraq. We can't seem to ever get our stuff together, if you will, on this. We're so focused on short-term expediency that we just fail to see beyond the next corner, and act surprised every time it comes up and bites us in the back side.

JON I think that it's done purposely. I mean, we've for years, since the 80s, we've allied ourselves with the Mujahideen. Throughout the 90s we aligned

ourselves with Al-Qaeda or Al-Qaeda-linked groups in the Balkans and the caucuses and—This is a practice that we take part in. It's a formula the United States likes to use. We're bombing Syria right now, but before that we were entrenched in Syria, trying to help to destabilize that country for years (Mm-hmm). Long before Obama came into office and we were also using them to torture people for us.

Anyway, then the Saudis started sending in rebels into Syria under the direction of Bandar. Then the United States was sending the rebels intelligence; then they were sending them arms. Then we starting sending in rebels from Jordan and, then Syria became what it did, and it was all to take out Assad.

You know, last year when the chemical weapons strike supposedly happened—and we still don't know who that was—Obama was itching to bomb Syria and people think he was talked out of it. But if you look at what they did, they essentially got Assad to get rid of his weapons of mass destruction and then decide to bomb them, and they used the excuse of ISIS, which was really a thing of our own creation, along with our allies and so forth. And now, you know, surprisingly, a year later we're bombing them.

And they did the same thing with Gaddafi. They made Gaddafi get rid of all his weapons of mass destruction, and then a couple of years later we bombed the shit out of them illegally, and we allied ourselves with Al-Qaeda and Al-Qaeda-linked groups and so forth.

We're supposed to be in this war on terror and we're allying ourselves with Al-Qaeda? Or Al-Qaeda-linked groups? That sounds like a big contradiction to me. And it kind of takes away the justification, in my mind, for the war on terror.

PETER I agree. I agree.

JON So, I think it's criminal, I really, really do. And there's questions about these allegiances with regard to 9/11 as far as Saudi Arabia is concerned, the Pakistani ISI may have had something to do with 9/11. These are all allies of ours that work with us to help control rebels in different places and so forth, so anyway—

Do you think America has reached the state of fascism? And what solutions do you think exist?

PETER You know, I think that's a great question for us to end on here, Jon, because I am saddened and embarrassed to say that we are significantly headed into a fascist state, if not already there. The only reason I express some hesitancy is because there are so many things that we're still waiting to learn about, and I don't think any of them will be particularly good. Look at what we didn't know prior to Edward Snowden.

So, I'm afraid that fascism is our future, if not already the reality. Fascism, it comes in different forms, and it morphs the fit of the particular country that it's in. Everyone says, well look, you know, look at the Nazis, it isn't anything like that. And they're correct. It certainly is not anything like that. It is a uniquely American form of fascism where capitalism is allowed to flourish, and there does exist something of a free market. If you want to go out and figure out a way to make money, the Government has not great issues with any of that. People are allowed to say and do things within certain boundaries to create the impression that it's not a fascist state. There's not really the same need to be encompassing the way the Nazis were—we'll use them as a good example. That's the one that everyone agrees on in terms of being the ultimate fascist.

Our Government has been a lot more clever about it. They picked and chose which areas they wish to exert their authority in and which areas really don't concern them and they don't really care, particularly, about. If someone becomes a real trouble-maker, that's dealt with, but otherwise, if you want to go out and march around, whatever, the Government isn't going to start machine-gunning those people down—in large numbers. The occasional one is probably a valuable lesson.

But in terms of civil liberties, in terms of truly the ability to speak out, particularly, in terms of the ability to challenge the Government's power, I'm afraid to say that we are, in fact, a fascist state.

JON Yeah, and that fascism, you know, some define it as a combination of corporations and Government, and our Government is bought and paid for. Everybody there is bought and paid for in some way or another. (Mm-hmm) And they do not work in the people's interests—they simply don't. And, you see the fascism when you try to exert your dissent. When you try to dissent, that's when you start to see the signs of fascism.

I call it a "soft" fascism (Hmm), because you're right, there aren't, you know, Gestapo people banging—well, there are instances of it, but it's not an everyday thing where people are marching into your house and arresting you and taking you away to a camp somewhere. Overt stuff like that doesn't happen like it did in Nazi Germany, but that's not to say that I can't see us getting to there. We just keep going in a horrible direction.

And, I want to say it—I don't want to say that it's all based on 9/11, but it's very much based on 9/11. We are living in the post-9/11 world.

And I want to finish by simply saying that—please consider when you write an article, think about the fact that we were lied to about that day. Maybe just mention that, briefly, in any of the articles that you write. And, you know, be prepared, you might get some flak from people telling you about theories and all that stuff, but you just have to ignore that and just do what's right. What I think is the right thing to do.

I want to thank you very much for taking the time to be here today. Is there anything you'd like to promote besides your latest book?

PETER Not at this time. I'm just going to let folks know that I am working on a third book. This one is a little bit different. It's a novel. And it is an antiwar book built around what I hope to be a pretty good war story. It is set in an alternative history where the United States did not develop the atomic bomb at the end of World War II, and instead, chose to invade Japan—a traditional invasion, if you will. And it uses that as a stage to talk about war, to talk about what happens to people at war—both on the military side and on the civilian side, and how a society chooses to carry out its wars. Hopefully, the reader will understand that I am not really talking about Japan and World War II. That's just kind of a nice way to get the medicine along with a little bit of sugar. You know, if you start right off and say Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, War on Terror, you stumble right into people's polarized opinions, and it's very, very hard to be persuasive at that point because folks have already made up their minds on those issues.

But I think if you set that same philosophy, I guess, the same political points in a more neutral setting—in this case, fiction—hopefully, I'll have a chance to reach an audience that otherwise would not be open to new ideas and create the idea that you can tell a war story and come to the end of it and realize how antiwar what it was that you just read.

We'll see—give me about a year and I'll come back on and we'll talk more about it.

JON That's awesome—good luck with that. And your current latest book is called *Ghosts of Tom Joad: A Story of the #99 Percent*. And it's available now.

So, thank you very much, Peter, for your time today.

PETER Jon, it's a pleasure. I look forward to talking with you again sometime. Take care.

JON Thanks, Peter.

PETER Thank you.

Martin Luther King, Jr. – April 3, 1968 – I've Been to the Mountaintop speech

All we say to America is, "Be true to what you said on paper." [Applause]
If I lived in China or even Russia, or any totalitarian country, maybe I could understand some of these illegal injunctions. Maybe I could understand the denial of certain basic First Amendment privileges, because they hadn't committed themselves to that over there. But somewhere I read of the freedom of assembly. Somewhere I read of the freedom of speech. Somewhere I read of the freedom of press. Somewhere I read that the greatness of America is the right to protest for right. [Applause]



Chapter/Episode 18 - Bob McIlvaine - January 21st, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Bob McIlvaine (BOB)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week's show we're going to talk to a 9/11 Family Member about a number of different topics: The 9/11 Commission; collective punishment; corporate media; the buildings; and a number of other things. Yes, you heard right—I said, the buildings.

Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Bob McIlvaine. How are you doing today, Bob?

BOB Just fine, Jon. How are you?

JON Oh, I'm doing great. I had breakfast with you this morning. [Laughs] Thank you very much for that.

All right, I'm going to read your bio.

Bob McIlvaine is the father of Robert Mcilvaine Jr., an Assistant Vice President of media relations for Merrill Lynch & Co. who was murdered on 9/11. Since 9/11, Bob has been very outspoken about a number of different issues. He has spoken around the country and in different parts of the world. With the exception of one, Bob attended every 9/11 Commission Hearing. He has appeared on different news outlets, and has been mentioned in several news articles over the years. He has appeared in many documentaries that call into question what we were told about the 9/11 attacks.

Now, I wrote a little—well, not a little—but a personal bio for you, and I'm going to read that to you now.

The first time I heard Bob McIlvaine was from an audio recording of an event called the 9/11 Omission Hearings, which took place on September 9, 2004, in New York City. Bob started to cry when he spoke of Bobby, and that was the first time I'd ever heard a family member who had questions about what happened that day cry. I was sitting in my apartment listening to the recording and started to ball my eyes out. I also became lividly angry. I had always supported the families, but from that point on, I swore that I would do everything within my power to make sure that they had real truth, accountability, and justice for what happened on 9/11.

The first time I met Bob was at a Chinese restaurant on March 1st, 2006. The purpose of the meeting was to try and convince a friend of then Representative Curt Weldon to get access to a town hall meeting of Weldon's. For those who don't know, Curt Weldon was very big on the revelations concerning Able Danger and we wanted to let him know about other issues. He was my representative and I delivered books about 9/11 to his office and tried to get a meeting with him but was unsuccessful. Anyway, at that restaurant I was so honored to meet Bob. I made sure to tell him that outside of the restaurant when we introduced ourselves. The meeting with the individual was a success and we got our access to the town hall meeting. Unfortunately, nothing really came from our meeting with him.

Since that time, I'd been to different events that both Bob and I have spoken at. I had defended him once against a horrible reporter in Arizona during a press conference. I got the chance to travel with him for hours so we could speak in Keene, NH. We marched together in New York City for the first

NYCCAN ballot initiative. As the emcee, I was privileged to introduce him during the Treason in America Conference.

Some of you may or may not know, but on May 22, 2013, I broke my back. I had to stay in different nursing homes for about seven months until I could get an apartment. Bob would come to visit me at the nursing homes as often as possible. Now that I have an apartment, Bob has been coming to meet me weekly for breakfast, and it's usually his treat. I could never thank him enough for the time he has given me since my injury. Our weekly breakfast is what I look forward to most these days.

He is one of the kindest and bravest people I know, and it's an honor for me to have him on this show today.

So, that was for you.

BOB Hey, man, thanks a lot. I appreciate that.

JON Oh, you're very welcome.

BOB The Wednesday meetings help me just as much as they help you, so—

JON I know, it's like an alcoholics anonymous meeting.

BOB That's the truth. It's like a drug. There's not many people you can discuss this issue with anymore.

JON That's unfortunate, but that is the case.

Okay, so I'm going to go ahead and get right into the questions. Besides the obvious questions—oh, by the way, as I said, I don't ask 9/11 Family Members on this show what the day of 9/11 was like, because it's just too hard, and so I—

BOB It's pretty obvious—it sucked.

JON Yeah, exactly. I don't even want to talk about it.

All right, besides the obvious questions a parent would have after their child was murdered like who, what, and why, what was one of the first things you questioned about 9/11?

BOB

That's difficult, because I'm trying to look back, the first easy six months you're in shock. I mean, literally you are in shock, and everybody deals in shock differently. And you're just trying to get through day-to-day life. And, it's like the people in the neighborhood, I'd say for three months every night we had dinners. People would stop off and hand us dinners. You had a lot of people around. And, you're talking to relatives—it's—the first six months are a blank. I remember eating meals and working on my lawn a lot. So, you're actually not thinking about anything.

Then after six months, then I guess you call it depression, but the shock of what happened that day really hits home because everyone sort of drops you off the mat—not intentionally, or anything like that, but you learn real fast people don't want to talk about that day. So, if you want to talk about 9/11, you have to talk to your wife or your child that remains. But not many friends want to talk about it. So then suddenly you're all alone and you have to deal with this grief by yourself.

And we—and it was very worthwhile—we went to a psychologist and he was just tremendous. We just talked, and you learn that you grieve differently. Everyone grieves differently. And the fact that we could have that conversation. We do know people who left their marriages because of what happened that day. You just don't know. Because grieving is so much different.

So, it's almost like we spent a year grieving. Of course, you never stop grieving, and the one thing we have learned—one psychiatrist told us is that the grieving process—the pain never goes away, but as time goes on, it gets better. You never stop grieving—I forget the exact quote. Ah, well—it doesn't matter. In other words—oh, the suffering gets better. The pain never goes away, but the suffering does gets better. And that's the truth. After six months you catch yourself laughing a little more. You're not thinking about it 24/7.

So, in answering that question, almost to a year, well not a year, but close to a year—I'd say six, seven, eight months—you're just, you're a blank slate. You just don't know what's happening. I went back to work and my wife went back to work. I went back to work like in January of 2001, so work really filled in.

So, I finally got involved, and how I got involved was with a group called 9/11 Peaceful Tomorrows. At first, I really wasn't thinking about the

culprits of 9/11. I certainly, I was a history teacher, I just didn't know what happened. Obviously, it was terrorists that struck United States—I didn't necessarily believe that, but certainly I hadn't gotten my so-called thinking cap on and thought about this whole thing because I'm just trying to survive. And Peaceful Tomorrows—again, I can't tell you exactly when I joined Peaceful tomorrows, but it probably was the greatest thing I did at that time because I really—of course the war talk started. The talk of going into Afghanistan. The talk was they were from Afghanistan. We have to go—I didn't want any parts of war. I just said it was still a crime. I certainly know—I knew of Vietnam, the false flag term, but again, I wasn't necessarily relating it to 9/11. But I joined Peaceful Tomorrows.

So, to answer that question, I really wasn't involved in the dynamics or dialogue of what happened that day. And then—I really can't tell you exactly the first thing, but I would guess, I think the first thing I questioned was: "Why weren't those planes shot down? Shot down by American fliers." (Well, that's--) I don't know when that would have come about, but I just spent so much time—when I was with Peaceful Tomorrows, I just felt so good what I was doing. I was trying to stop a war. I was talking in high schools. I was talking in colleges. People really wanted to hear a message from someone who had lost a child that he didn't want to go to war. So it was a great message. It made me feel good. It made people feel good. So, it was more about that than making me feel good. Not necessarily getting answers.

JON Well, that's interesting because as I've said before, on the day of 9/11 the very first question that I had after the Pentagon was hit was: "Where the hell is our military?" And, I didn't question anything—I didn't have any questions like that for a while. At least until January 2002 when Dick Cheney and George Bush asked Tom Daschle not to investigate the attacks at all. And my question then was: "Why would the President and Vice President, of all people, not want to know exactly how and why this happened so as to make sure it never happens again?"

But our first question was basically the same one. Where was our military? (Right) That's interesting.

BOB Yeah, I wasn't that—again, I really enveloped the idea of becoming an activist for stopping war. Because, I guess, I don't know, how far along—I just wasn't a big Internet person or anything like that, so whatever was in the newspaper. But I felt great joining Peaceful tomorrows because I truly,

truly, truly did not want us to go to war because it was just going to cost more lives. So that's where I put my energy in and it made me feel great.

JON That's great. Another thing that you and I have in common is we look at 9/11 as a crime (Right) and not an act of war.

BOB Yeah, regardless of what it was—My son was murdered, again, it was just—it's a horrible experience and you still live with it. It's a nightmare. (I'm sure it is) Again, war, I didn't understand it. My—I still can't understand it.

JON How do you hold a whole country accountable for the actions of a few?

BOB Right, right. (You know?) It was just absurd. So, that's why my energies, my wife's energies also. We put a lot of work as far as being an activist.

JON Okay, now, we just brought this up—holding a whole country accountable for the actions of a few and in today's world, after the Paris attacks, I mean, after 9/11, the sentiment against Muslims in this country, people were furious with them. Everybody was held accountable for the actions of a few on 9/11. And it was horrible. And I have found out—I've always made the argument that even if Muslims were involved with 9/11, people who considered themselves Muslims, whatever, it doesn't mean you hold all Muslims accountable. It doesn't mean—it's no different than if a Christian blows up an abortion clinic, you don't hold all Christians accountable. It's—and, there's a term for it. Basically, you don't hold everybody who's a Muslim accountable, every religion accountable, every ideology, you don't hold countries accountable—it's called collective punishment I have learned. And, apparently, that's a war crime to hold entire ideologies, or religions, or nationalities accountable.

So, I just want to point that out, you do not do that. And that's what a lot of people are doing today, especially after the Paris attack.

BOB Oh, it's frightening. Well, right after 9/11 I was working at a place, a psychiatric hospital and, well, I know one person in particular, I was very good friends with him, was a Muslim. I never looked at him. I really didn't. It's like a bunch of Catholics bombed a place in London and suddenly—you know, I know a lot of Catholics—you'd think I would start walking around saying: "Boy, you guys are horrible." Well the Muslim I was working with, I mean, I didn't even think of it. In fact, I just thought of it now. He was a

real good friend. But I never, ever connected him to 9/11. It was the furthest thing in the world.

JON It was absurd.

BOB And one thing with Peaceful Tomorrows, at the UN I met a Muslim man, no it was a woman—there was a bombing in Afghanistan and she lost nine people, their family. A Muslim woman and you look at her and think the absurdities of this world. You know, blaming her? You don't even think of it. I never did. And I certainly met a lot of Muslims after 9/11 working with Peaceful Tomorrows and that's the—if you look at it that way and if you know people—again, it's like them and a couple Catholics that bombed the London theater or something, you know. The thing was just so absurd. That's why I did what I did. I just couldn't believe it. And yet, people bought it hook, line, and sinker (Right), and I just and until that day I just—but again, I really thought I was doing something worthwhile and to be an activist like that you get a lot of positive feedback and the fact that I could talk to high school kids and the message was, so what my son was—you don't go to wars because of a criminal act (Right). And that was the only message I was trying to spread.

JON All right, the next question. I saw that you attended the press conference for when they released the Joint Congressional Inquiry's Report into 9/11—and you already answered this question for me—did you attend any of the public hearings during the Congressional Inquiries?

BOB No, the only thing I—I don't know if people were attending the public hearings. The only hearing that I—when they presented the book, the blue book, I don't know how many pages on [AUDIOBAD] press conference with that and of course it was open to the 9/11 Family Members and—so I attended that. And I had the opportunity to talk to the press, which I was very happy because I was sort of angry at that time and I got up and I said: "Hey, this is all because of blowback." I wasn't going to cast blame on anyone. I was a family member and I really wanted to say that. And that's when I—at that time I felt at that time blowback had created this horror that we're seeing. And, of course, to look back at foreign policy. I didn't really talk about false flags or anything. I was still in that stage working for Peaceful Tomorrows. Our foreign policy around the world was what's creating this terrorism around the world. And that's what I could believe at that time, so I really wasn't into what I'm doing now. (So—)

And after—do you want me to talk about after that meeting?

JON Yeah, go ahead.

BOB Well, and this is a big thing to me because afterwards, I don't know if the Jersey Girls—I don't know how I found out, but the Jersey Girls were going to see Lee Hamilton after this to talk about something. And I think I had found out about it—of course, in that blue book, the first joint Congressional hearings, they had these 28 redacted pages and we knew it was about Saudi Arabia. Well, that was sort of shocking to me, well if it's about Saudi Arabia, I knew, certainly I knew that the 19 hijackers, or whatever, came from Saudi Arabia, and I thought well, God, I want—

JON Fifteen of the 19.

BOB Fifteen of the 19. So, I—well, at that time I thought it was all 19, but it doesn't matter. So, I was with David Potorti, one of the founders of the Peaceful Tomorrows and we decided to go to this meeting also. The idea was just the Jersey Girls, and I wasn't on their invitation. I don't think they had an idea who I was. But, anyway, we went to the meeting and this was with Lee Hamilton. It was a very cordial meeting, but you know, everyone was upset. How can you redact these pages? And, in essence, Lee Hamilton stated, he says: "Look, I really feel for you. I understand how you feel." But these were his exact words. He says: "But, because of national security, we—he said we—cannot release those pages. And I'm thinking—

JON I'm curious—why was it Lee Hamilton?

BOB I'm not sure. That's a good question. I just think, you know, I just thought of that too. I don't understand. He might have been there at the Joint—you'd have to ask one of the Jersey Girls, to tell you the truth. I don't know exactly why they decided to go to his office. Why wouldn't they go to Bob Graham's office or why not to—

JON Porter Goss.

BOB Porter Goss, or something of that sort. So, but anyway, I knew they were going and I felt well if they're going someplace something important is happening. So, I remember John Judge drove David and I because he knew where it was and he drove us there. So, we just walked in. We felt we have every right to hear this too.

JON Right. Well, there's currently an effort underway to get the 28 redacted pages of that report released. And there's been an effort for years, for years and years and years, to get these pages released. And I remember in 2006, the September 11th Advocates or the Jersey Girls released a petition and these pages were part of their request, and they had 17,000 signatures and they brought it down to D.C. and it was ignored. So, I know that these pages are important to the family members. Do you have anything to say about that now?

BOB Well, yeah, I'm just afraid that people will think when they come out—it's like they're—the United States, I think, are figuring out a way to throw Saudi Arabia under the bus and are going to claim a few people, those people will disappear and that's the end of the story. But that's okay, I just think it's opening up a can of worms if we talk about it. But I—can I just say something about Lee Hamilton?

JON Yeah, go ahead.

BOB Lee Hamilton, now, since I got involved in 9/11 activities, and probably later on we'll talk about this—I sort of dropped out of Peaceful Tomorrows and I just became a 9/11 Advocate or an advocate for my son. And in your reading—and I really do believe this—the most important thing for any human being in this country to understand present-day history—it's not history yet, but—to understand what's happening today, you must understand history. And, of course—I just started reading. I've read everything. I've got books—I just threw away like 25 books the other day because it's just overwhelming to have. But the strange thing, the fact that I was there—Lee Hamilton said because of national security, we cannot allow this to go public.

Well, then I started reading about the October Surprise—and I don't want to give any history lessons here, but the October Surprise was in 1980. It was a surprise—of course they didn't want Carter to win the presidency, okay? The October Surprise was going to be the information was coming out that the United States was making a deal, was negotiating with Iran to sell arms, or they would sell arms—at that time—they would sell arms to Iran. Now they are mortal enemies, they're holding our hostages. I think they gave them \$40 million dollars to buy arms. In other words, they were negotiating with the Iranians to hold off the hostages' release. Carter was hoping to release these hostages in early 80s or around that time, and he would be

guaranteed to win the election. And if everyone remembers, the hostages were not released until the day Reagan was inaugurated. So October, of course, being just before the November elections, so Carter never was able to release.

Now, there's plenty of information out there. Plenty of information that Bush was meeting in Czechoslovakia with Iranians, right? So, we're not here to discuss that, but just leave that in everyone's mind.

Then we go on to Iran-Contra—well, we did have Iran-Contra hearings, okay, that we're selling arms to Iran, Iran selling arms to—I don't know the progression—but anyway they wanted to stop the Contras in Nicaragua, okay? Again, to stop communism throughout Central and South America.

But, two criminal—I mean, people just have to read. I'm not just going to sit here and discuss it, but people have to read about it if they don't know anything about it.

But, anyway, in the late 80s and into the 90s they had two different hearings that Lee Hamilton was intimately involved in concerning October Surprise and Iran-Contra. And in the readings, of course, you will find out that Hamilton stating that "Because of national security, we can't release all this information." Well, that's mind boggling to me because it just resonates the fact that I remember him saying that. I mean—I have a long—and I'm not a violent person—but I have a long list of people that should be hung at Ground Zero and Times Square for their involvement in 9/11, and Lee Hamilton is one of those. Because I just constantly remember how he said, oh God, here it is, three different times. He's probably the greatest gatekeeper in the history of the United States. [AUDIOBAD] involved in AIPAC and Israel, but you know, some people are saying Israel was involved in this. I don't know and I don't really care.

But the fact remains, we will never get an honest investigation in this country. I mean, like people are calling for a new investigation of 9/11. Well, that's a joke. I'd rather say, hey, I investigated. Lee Hamilton was intimately involved in the coverup of 9/11. Well those who were involved in the coverup, they're just as guilty as the people that I think put those bombs in those buildings or stopped the, whatever. We could go on and on and on about that, so.

JON

Well, let me tell you a few things about Lee Hamilton with regard to the October Surprise inquiry and the Iran-Contra inquiry. He was involved in both of those and they both resulted in coverups. One of the interesting things about Lee Hamilton is during the Iran-Contra inquiry, there was somebody by the name of Chris Kojm who was underneath Lee Hamilton but was working with Hamilton. He followed Lee Hamilton all the way to the 9/11 Commission. And I've heard 9/11 debunkers reference: "Oh, I've spoken to Chris Kojm and he said that the Norman Mineta story was completely ridiculous" and if you know what I'm referring to—Norman Mineta, during the 9/11 Commission hearings was asked questions by Lee Hamilton and he said that on the morning of 9/11 there was a young man in the PEOC—the Presidential Emergency Operations Center—who was talking to Dick Cheney and he said: "The plane is 50 miles out, the plane is 30 miles out, the plane is 10 miles out." And he asked Vice President Cheney did the orders still stand and Cheney whipped his head around and said: "Of course, the orders still stand. Have you heard anything to the contrary?" And so that was Norman Mineta testifying to the 9/11 Commission.

And it's interesting to note that Lee Hamilton kind of coached him along and—they were talking about whether or not they were shoot-down or stand-down orders and Lee Hamilton said that we found out later that these were shoot-down orders, right? And Norman Mineta said, subsequently, I found that out later. He didn't know what orders they were (Yeah), what they were talking about at the time that whole thing took place.

So, that's the Norman Mineta thing. Chris Kojm followed along Lee Hamilton all the way from the Iran-Contra inquiry to the 9/11 Commission hearings.

All right, so, with regard to the 28 redacted pages, I've said this before—you cannot point a finger at Saudi Arabia and not have five fingers pointing back to the United States. We were well aware of their connections to terrorism for years. We used it during the Afghanistan war, through the Pakistani ISI, Saudi Arabia, the CIA—they were all involved in supporting the Mujahideen during the Afghanistan-Russian War. And then after in the 90s, Saudi Arabia had multiple connections to terrorism and we protected them.

If you look at Robert Wright, he was an FBI agent working on something called Vulgar Betrayal, what he called Vulgar Betrayal, it all had to do with

Saudi Arabia financing terrorism and so forth, and he was shut down. And then after 9/11, we continued to protect Saudi Arabia and so on and so forth. And we've used Saudi Arabia's connections to terrorism to further agendas. So, you can't look at Saudi Arabia and not look back at the United States. George Bush had intimate relations with Bandar. George Tenet had intimate relations with Bandar.

And one of the reason that the families want to get these 28 redacted pages released is so they can get 9/11 into a court room and bring this with them. Every time 9/11 makes it into a court room, you find out a lot of things. During the Moussaoui sentencing phase, we found out from FBI Agent Michael Anticev—I think that was his name—that the FBI was well aware that terrorists were thinking of using planes as weapons for years, and so on and so forth. I mean, a whole bunch of stuff came out of the Moussaoui trial.

So, when 9/11—and I think that's one of the reasons they didn't want the KSM trials in Federal Court. Because once you bring 9/11 into a courtroom, you have to face a prosecutor and cross-examination and you have provide evidence. All kinds of things have to happen. And I think that's one of the reasons they did not want the KSM trials in a federal court—besides just the torture aspect of that.

But anyway—

BOB

But let me, I happened to remember—I hadn't thought of it for years and years—but I remember when FBI Robert Mueller was speaking to the 9/11 Families, they brought up Saudi Arabia and then somebody was asking, it could have been—one of the family members talked about who authorized the release—I don't know how many—Saudi Arabians immediately after 9/11 that they could go home. They flew them home. He apologized for it, but the answer was who asked him. I mean, who allowed them to do this? And he said: "I don't know." He says: "But I will find out for you." He says: "Probably somebody in the State Department." And, of course, that was the end of it. Everybody looked at each other: "What the fuck are they talking about?" I'm sorry. [Laughs] It's just that—yeah someone, you know, I apologize, we released them. Well, who released them? Well, I don't know. And, all through the 9/11 hearings people would say I'll get back to you. That did a lot of good. They'd get back to you. Well, the things over and no one ever got back to anyone. They went home and had martinis and said: "Well, that's the end of that." But, yeah, Saudi Arabia is a big deal.

JON Well, that's what I think one of the bigger stories is besides just getting the release of the 28 redacted pages. The 9/11 Commission absolved them.

BOB That's a good point yeah.

JON And the reason that the 9/11 Commission absolved them—they supposedly did look in to the information and the 28 redacted pages, they interviewed the people that were involved, and a lot of the memorandum for the records, which is a description of the interviews of witnesses, talks about how these people weren't trustworthy and so on and so forth, and yet, Saudi Arabia's part, they were absolved. And that has to do with the fact that Philip Zelikow—he refused half of the interview requests for the Saudi investigators. Dana Lesemann, who came from the Joint Congressional Inquiry and who helped to author the 28 redacted pages tried to get access to those 28 redacted pages during the 9/11 Commission. Zelikow made it difficult for her so she went through a back channel to get those pages and was fired by Zelikow for doing that. Philip Zelikow and Dietrich Snell took part in a late-night editing session to take out any Saudi support for the hijackers from the 9/11 Report and they moved it into the back of the book in a footnote.

So, that's the bigger story is that the 9/11 Commission it seems purposely covered up Saudi Arabia's involvement, and it's Phil Zelikow, again. Philip Zelikow. Philip Zelikow.

BOB I mean, all right, but just in my perspective, I really don't believe any of this is going to come out. In other words, the country—I think we discussed this today—the country's so strong; the intelligence community's so strong. As an individual, anywhere I go, anyone I talk to, my first thing is, the United States orchestrated this event. The United States killed my son. And more than anything, I want to tell people—and I'm sorry, I'm going off on this—that Muslims had nothing to do with my son's death. I really, really want people to hear this, because it's just like the Kennedy—it bothers me so much, the Kennedy assassination. Books are still being written. We'll see on Fox News, it's a lone wolf. You know what I mean? And I just don't want—I'm not going to be living long. I'm lucky to be another year on this earth. I don't believe in events—I'm saying this, Jon, I'm like, everything you're saying is true, but the thing is I don't have much time to be talking about Zelikow (No, I know)—again if there's a person we're going to hang in

Times Square at Ground Zero, he would be one of them. He'd be up with Hamilton. Of course, there's a long list of people.

So, people have to do the research on Zelikow. They have to do their research if they want to even—you're an encyclopedia of knowledge, but to read an encyclopedia takes a lot of time. And that's what people have to do. Listen to people like you. Listening to me, I don't really care about Zelikow anymore. Your information it's wonderful. And people say jeez, I hear that name, well I better do some research on Zelikow. But the thing is I don't know if they're doing that. So, it just bothers me—

JON To me it's, again, this is an important story—Zelikow recently referred to the 28 redacted pages or the information within them as "wild accusations." So, anyway, it's just important to me—

BOB One more thing—I really believe the 28—I hope they do come out, I don't know. But the thing is you know they're planning—they're going to throw some people under the bus and then have a stupid investigation—because every commission or investigation they have—it's all loaded. They know what the final thing's going to be. They just—I hope everything comes out of the 28 redacted pages, and what you're saying—

JON Well, I don't think they're going to throw Saudi Arabia under the bus.

BOB They're going to throw some people in Saudi Arabia under the bus. (Yeah) Oh, they'll never throw Saudi Arabia under the bus.

JON No, we just sold them \$63 billion dollars of weapons (Yeah, right). We're working with them to train rebels to send to Syria and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Anyway, let's continue.

You already told us a little bit about your activism with Peaceful Tomorrows. Why don't you tell us about your arrest, your trip to South America, and your trip to Japan?

BOB Well, this is all part of Peaceful Tomorrows and they truly are—you know what it does? It makes—like when we did it, it's very painful. You're leaving your family. You're going to South America. You're going to Japan. But the thing is you just felt so good about yourself. So, it sort of just

covered over the pain you had. And I might have to make a point about Japan also. But I had the opportunity—in fact the Uribe, the President of Colombia's two daughters, they had called me, individually, and asked me if I would come down because they knew I was part of Peaceful Tomorrows, and there was one other person from Peaceful Tomorrows that went down to Bogota, Colombia. And they were having a conference on violence throughout the world and people like from Chechnya. People from Indonesia were there, Malaysia—the restaurant bombing and all that. People from Ireland—Protestants, Catholics.

So, it was just, it was a phenomenal experience for me and I feel I'm very lucky to get out of Bogota because on the trip down there, the plane—and I came down myself, and it was like they called me on a Wednesday and I had to be down there on a Saturday morning. So, I took a plane, stopped over in Atlanta and landed in Bogota like midnight and supposedly a car was going to be waiting for me—nothing. Some people were walking around and I said, Oh God, here I am in Bogota at the airport—nothing, absolutely nothing. I'm walking around. I didn't know what to do. So, I tried to get back in the airport. They wouldn't let me back into the airport. So I said boy, I'm in bad shape. So, finally somebody—I went to ask someone for a phone—a couple people knew broken English and I tried calling a couple people—I couldn't—because I couldn't get anywhere with my phone. Well, anyway, a cabbie comes up to me—of course, what the hell, I don't know what to do. So, he was—he spoke pretty good English—he says: "Where do you want to go?" So, I told him the hotel I wanted to go and he said okay and he just started driving down this road and I said: "I'm in trouble." I said to him: "Look, I'm going to jump out of this car. I don't care how fast you're going. I'd rather take my chances landing on the street and someone take me to the hospital." But then I had—I carried a lot of cash with me—as I was saying I took out \$200 and I said: "Here, I'll give you \$200 if you take me someplace. Take me to the place I want to go." Well, he just immediately made a left-hand turn, stopped, took the \$200 and left me at some dingy hotel. And I said: "Well, this is better than nothing." (Wow)

So, then I got into the hotel and, thank God, the woman—it was a young girl, a young woman—understood some English and I told her where I wanted to go, but I didn't want to take a cab or anything and I couldn't walk. So, anyway she let me use the phone and I was able to get hold of the hotel and they said: "We'll send a limousine over to you." So, I got the limousine—the limousine did stop and God, trying to get home, we were

going through these back allies and broken-down streets—so we finally got to the hotel. The hotel was surrounded by armed military people. I said: "Well, at least I felt safe." (Laughs)

So, I get in and I finally met my contact—I don't know if it was one of the —Uribe twins? But someone came up to me and said: "Bob, you just don't know how lucky you're alive." And I said: "Oh, my God." And I still shake when I think of it. But the first thing they said to me: "You can't believe how lucky you're alive." So, probably I think what happens in Colombia is you get kidnapped and here's what—well, during the hearings I heard this from so many people, in particular, this one young guy who was kidnapped. He was with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) for about a year and what they do is they want to get ransom. This is how they raise money, like the two Japanese fellows from ISIS, they wanted \$200 million dollars. So, what they do, you call your parents, or this guy he called his parents and his parents agreed. He'll come down with the cash and—so they came down with the cash, gave them the cash, they let the kid go and they took him.

And then there was another guy who had escaped. I spent a lot of time with them. That's where I met the woman, black woman, who had lost nine in her family, and I just met so many wonderful people. Their people were killed in the Malaysia bomb. And at that time, again, I was just talking about—I gave a speech to about 2,000 people. It was just wonderful that I was able to do that. And I just met so many people that—what's going on there, it's just mind-boggling. Understanding that, you know, I met people who have dealt with Monsanto and how Monsanto—it's what we call free trade and they take over these poor farmers, and I met so many of these poor farmers. And I met people whose relatives had died from the Irish Republican Army.

So, it's just—it was such an experience to me and one that I can constantly relate to other people that this is what's happening around the world. So, as an activist, I felt so good about that. I spoke about blowback again. And I spoke on radio shows, TV shows, in this short period of time people wanted to have me on. They would come to the hotel. I wouldn't leave the hotel. I wasn't about to leave again. But they would come and do an interview with me. And I was just blasting the United States foreign policy. But, again, it made me feel great. (Right)

Then at Peaceful Tomorrows we went to Japan to honor the 60th anniversary of the dropping of the bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and we pushed people that volunteered. We were talking about a 5,000-pound stone with a caisson and we had halos in front of it and we just pushed it from—I wasn't part of the whole thing, but we pushed for about a week, 5,000 pounds up and down the hills, the back hills of Japan. A lot of Buddhists were with us and the towns people would help us. And, again, I would speak in villages, all over the place, every place we stopped we spoke about foreign policy, wars. I walked with a few hibakusha. Hibakusha are the people who survived the attacks of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. And the one thing I learned in these walks was that they don't want to be looked at as a victim. We just want to eliminate wars. Wars solve nothing.

So, getting back—I felt so good. The pain that you suffered pushing those stones was monumental. Thirty-degree inclines. Pushing 5,000 pounds. If you didn't have these volunteers, little kids would help us. The Buddhists—this wonderful, I mean an 80-year-old Buddhist, and he's pushing the thing. It was just a wonderful experience. And it sort of drowned out your personal pain. You know what I mean? So, that was just mind-boggling. And the fact that we were at Hiroshima and everyone laid down when the bomb was supposed to hit, not supposedly, when it did hit. It's just the people I met. It's just a great world experience for me.

JON How did the arrest—I'm sorry, go ahead.

BOB Oh, the arrest was before all this. Of course, Peaceful Tomorrows, I was an activist and the fact that we decided before the Iraq War—it was a Monday, we decided—Let's see, it was a Tuesday. I forget the exact date—November—I don't know. But two days before we were planning an arrest, an activist arrest, at the White House, and we came down the weekend before and many people just met at a church and we talked about non-violence. And that's very good for me because I have a bad temper. And if someone comes up to me, I'm ready to fight. Not that I'm a fighter, but I'll tell him to stick it up his ass, and of course that might start a fight. (Laughs) So, learning the non-violent techniques of just—you're being a pacifist. Thank God I did that because you got a lot of people in your face.

So, anyway, we planned to go on the day before the war was supposed to start—two days before, whatever. We were all going to march down to the White House, and then people who wanted to get arrested—we all met and

talked about what we were going to do if we were going to be arrested. And they made the decision either we're going to go through with the arrest, but then how many people want to go to jail? And how many people want to pay the fine. And whatever the vote came out, that's the only thing we were going to do.

So everyone voted and the vote came that we would be arrested, we were put into paddy wagons and then we would sit—we were placed in a big room, I don't know where it was, and then eventually paid the fine. That's what the vote was. If the vote was that we were going to get arrested and be put in jail, then everyone was going to have to go along with that.

So then we got arrested—and they allowed Peaceful Tomorrows to be the first ones to lead. They had a huge, long line of police in front of the White House or—a big lawn heading toward the White House, that's as far as we could go and they allowed Peaceful Tomorrow people to lead the thing. And I had a sign: "Not in My Son's Name" and the prints it had on. And two Peaceful Tomorrow people, the three of us grabbed arms. And so, we led it up to the police. The one woman, she wanted to lay down and be carried. I said, I don't want to do that, I just want to have some dignity here. (Laughs) And so I just said, let's just walk through. And the cops were very nice. They said, well, if you start walking through, you're going to be arrested. So, that's what we did. So, they took all the buttons off of me. I had buttons of Bobby with signs and they took them off. They were very nice. They just stuck them in my coat pocket. They didn't throw them away. Then they took the sign away. Then they put us in cuffs and then they put us in paddy wagons. And then we waited there and so—and I met some really neat people, some wonderful people. (Laughs) I really did. In the whole experience I met some wonderful people.

JON [AUDIOBAD]

BOB And, so anyway, we were in there and then they took us to where they were going to hold us. They held us most of the day, then we paid the fine and then I went home. I called my wife.

JON The first time that I was arrested was with Cindy Sheehan. It was in front of the White House and I had dedicated that arrest to Bobby.

BOB Yeah, I knew you were there.

JON My second arrest was when I chained myself to the White House fence and I dedicated that to the Jersey Girls. But I have always wanted—like the family members who have questions about the 9/11 and so forth. Can you imagine the statement that would be made—(Oh, unbelievable!) if all of them went to the White House.

BOB Yep, unbelievable. (we've never seen that) And family members—a hundred, or 50. (Right) You know?

JON Even 25—to get 25 down there and get arrested for the lies of 9/11 and so forth. (Yep)

Right, so —yeah, I'd love to see it. Early on, you looked at 9/11 as blowback as you talked about. When did your views about that start to change?

BOB Well, when I mentioned Mueller, that was one of them—I really hadn't thought of that in years. But, of course, the big one, and I don't know the exact date, but it was when Condoleezza Rice—I get so angry, can we add that to the list of people that should be hung in Times Square or down at the—I'm not trying, I don't believe in capital punishment. If I would hang somebody...

JON Well, I'm glad you did say that—you don't believe in capital punishment, but you know, whatever—

BOB I think I would allow that.

JON See to me, I want to put all the people in jail and let them suffer. They don't deserve the easy out.

BOB I think in the long-run I wouldn't want it. I'm just saying that out of anger.

JON No, to a family member, believe whatever, but I'm just saying from my point of view I want to see them in jail and whatever.

BOB Yeah, but they—if they're going to send them to a jail with a bunch of murderers in Albuquerque, New Mexico, or something like that where the gang members are, that's where I'd like to send them.

JON [Laughs] Exactly. All right, so when did your views about blowback—

BOB

Yeah, I can't give you the exact date, it was August—uh, no, let's see, whatever date that Condoleezza Rice, but—her testimony was unbelievable. It was about the August 6th memo about Osama Bin Laden attacking the United States and I really thought that these people were trying to find out something. And, even to anybody on the 9/11 Commission that really wanted information, I think they finally realized this is all bullshit. Because she was just—I mean, what a professional bullshitter. What a professional filibuster.

They kept—I just remember, of course, Ben-Veniste, he was so pissed off. He said: "I just want to know. Answer that question I asked you!" And, of course, she just went on to some stupid shit. You've got to understand that they're, the context of what you're asking. It's just absolute—if you've ever seen a filibuster, like an old Jimmy Stewart movie where he filibusters for a couple days—just nothing but bullshit.

And everyone—people have to remember that each commissioner only had five minutes, so it was easy to do. It's not like Ben-Veniste could sit there and say: "All right, bullshit for the next hour." I'm going to wait until you answer that question. Well, they didn't have that time. So she could just say anything she wanted.

Well, I was just absolutely livid. I just, I didn't know what to do. In fact, after the whole session, one of the 9/11 Family Members went up to Condoleezza Rice like shaking—I said, what the fuck are they shaking her hand for? I mean, I was really pissed off and that's when my whole attitude changed. I was doing the CBC or the CBS up in Canada. I had a planned interview after that, and that's when I lost it. I said: "This is all effin' bullshit." I said: "This woman should be put in jail. This whole 9/11 Commission here, it's all bullshit." And that's when I just—from then on in, I was angry, I dropped out of Peaceful Tomorrows. I'm going to keep that anger. I have to tone it down. But I want to tell people everything about 9/11 is all bullshit.

And, of course, now the only thing I'll say is the United States orchestrated it. I mean, if you don't believe that, then you're an idiot. And I mean that in the sense that they haven't spent any time looking into it—which most people don't want to do. And that's—my whole life changed since then. I stopped at Peaceful Tomorrows—I'm sorry I did, because I felt so good and I really have to learn to tone down my anger. I'm doing something like this and I have to remember as soon as this is over, I'm done with it. Whatever

happens happens. But the thing is I've had that opportunity and I do want that opportunity to tell the world and I have had that opportunity—and we'll talk about Bobby—that Muslims did not kill my son. And every thing about what's happening since then is all based on a Goddamned lie—period! And that's what happened when Condoleezza Rice spoke or testified.

JON Well, it's interesting, you talk about the anger and the anger helps to drive me. It's not just me wanting the family members to have real justice, truth and accountability and all that in the world. It's not just that. It's the anger that helps to drive me to do what I do.

And, it's interesting, I just had a conversation with a friend yesterday, and she told me that I do not believe what you do about 9/11. And I said: "Well, have you looked into it?" And she said: "No, not really." And I said: "Well, you're basing your beliefs on beliefs. I'm basing my beliefs on information. So, as soon as you're ready to start looking into this, I told her, you let me know, and I'd be more than willing to help you out." But, I don't—the myths of America are very dangerous.

BOB Well, that's, I mean, that's a very good point, right, that's all based on beliefs. But then if you mention to someone, well, Iraq—they lied 935 times about going to war with Iraq and you believe that, or you don't believe that, but you believe everything they tell you about 9/11. I think that's a very good point. Right, it's belief. You're right.

JON I used to be like that. I was like that, the Government would never lie to me; the TV would never lie to me; and, for a while, I was on board with the whole revenge, kill, carpet bomb the Middle East people. And, as I said, I obviously learned that that's wrong. But I was like that. Like every other American I was just ignorant and I didn't care about what our Government did. It's the responsibility of all of us to care about what your Government does. Especially when it comes to murdering people. My God! If you're not going to get angry about the fact that we've been killing thousands upon thousands of people over a lie, I don't know—it's very, it's disheartening.

And, as I told you today, one of the things I've learned since becoming injured is the fact that most people are inherently good. I roll around on my scooter and people get the door for me, and they could be Democrat, Republican, left, right, up, down, doesn't matter. They're good people. And I just wish that people would take the time and really look into this issue, which is a pivotal issue of our age.

BOB Well, it upsets the applecart. It's just that, you know—

JON Well, you have to make a decision.

BOB If you have kids, that means every one of your friends, you might not have any friends for the rest of your life. How can you do that? I mean, I still have friends—

JON I did it.

BOB Well, I'm saying—

JON I gave up all my friends.

BOB But if you had, I don't know, just I—it's the way it is.

JON You have to make a decision when—

BOB It's just that they believe in the exceptionalism of the United States that's been drummed into you since first grade and they just can't do it.

JON I know, once you look into this information, you have to make a decision as to whether or not you're going to be active, or sit on your ass. (Right) And a lot of people are comfortable sitting on their asses. Just let somebody else take care of it.

BOB Bobby worked for Merrill Lynch and, and we still deal with Merrill Lynch and the guy I dealt with for years after 9/11, he went and said: "You've told me about 9/11." He says: "I decided to look at it." And he says: "I think you're absolutely right." And he—they do not—he's not at Merrill Lynch, the family doesn't talk to him, and I never heard from Merrill Lynch since then. So, it just shows you what happened to him. And I think his wife might be leaving him.

So, can you do that? (Wow) I mean, that's brutal. Absolutely, brutal.

JON It is brutal, but silence is betrayal. How can—I can't understand a world where it's wrong to question how 2,976 people were brutally murdered, especially when you know that we were lied to about that day, and

especially knowing what they day has been used for. In what world does it make sense not to do that?

BOB Well, would you turn your father in if you found out something horrible about him? Would you be the one that turned him in?

JON Oh, my goodness. That's a good question.

BOB Well, that's basically what it is. I mean, really, something horrible. I'm not saying murder, but something horrible. And, at this stage of the game, would you turn him into the police?

JON I don't want to put the elements within our Government on the pedestal that my father is—and this is another point I want to bring up.

BOB Well, but that is the point. The Government is your father. The Government is your parents. You've been looking at them for answers. You've been looking at them. You've been saying the Pledge of Allegiance. You've been singing the Star-Spangled Banner. They are exceptional. Are you willing to take that and say: "God! This has been evil all this time." Well, it's a tough thing to do.

JON Well, one of the things I've tried to teach people over the years, is I remember a time when the media was on their attack campaign against anyone who questioned 9/11. And Tucker Carlson was calling people unpatriotic and, for even daring to question what happened that day. And, I forget what I was going to say—

Oh, I remember, I'm sorry. He referred to questioning 9/11 as blasphemous, as sinful. Our elected officials are not gods. These people are people just like you and me that are capable of greed; they're capable of jealousy; they're capable of a whole list of things that human beings are capable of doing. Don't put them on a pedestal. They're not gods, okay? The people need to understand that. I know that's the myths and everything, but they're people just like everybody else.

BOB And I think everyone would agree with you 100 percent. Anyone would agree with you. God knows how many people I know with Ivy League—

JON Do you pray to Dick Cheney? You know? Ask yourself that question. Do you pray to Dick Cheney? No, I don't.

BOB No, but I, you know—it's just that, that's patriotism. You know, patriotism is probably the biggest trump card of the country. Everyone is really petrified of not being patriotic. Because then you can lose anything. You can lose your job—that's a huge trump card. And that exceptionalism of the United States. You certainly have people that do bad things within the Government, but the thing is it always works itself out, so. I've given up on worrying about that. To me, we're a nation of cowards. And that's the way it is and the way it's always going to be until people, you know—

JON I don't know that we're a nation of cowards. I think we're a nation of people that have been fooled by the empire's tricks. And we'll get into that a little bit later.

So, I'm going to get into the next question.

You love reading about history, and what events throughout history do you think people should take a look at?

BOB Well, let's keep it in this century—World War I, World War II, Vietnam War, the Korean War, and 9/11. I question everything. If it's war, I go by Smedley Butler. Great book. It's a thin book to read and everyone should get it. *War is a Racket* and it always will be a racket, and people have become billionaires because of the war on terror. People became billionaires—everything is a racket, or every war is a racket.

You question—the Government comes out with statements, you should read book, but oftentimes books come from the Pentagon, it's edited by the Government, so you're not even sure about that. But you've got to just to read, read, read. Obviously, Vietnam. Obviously, false flag attacks. World War II. Spanish-American War—

JON The Gulf of Tonkin Incident.

BOB Lusitania—so, I would tell anyone you have to question everything, especially on this.

JON Yeah, definitely—and I just want to let people know that I recorded, I read and recorded the entirety of *War is a Racket* for Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox.

BOB Oh, did you, really?

JON Yeah, it's available on her archives for her show.

BOB Well, I said War is a Racket is a racket. The most decorated marine in U.S. history, or he was at least at that time, still is, I don't know.

JON And he was a Quaker. He was a Quaker (Oh, I didn't know that) and it's funny. It's a funny story. I believe he was a Quaker. I'm the one who coined the phrase: 9/11 Truther. (Yeah) And when I did that, I was trying to give, I was trying to inspire somebody who was getting a lot of flak for talking about 9/11, and I said something like: "You're a 9/11 Truther. You're doing the right thing." And in the back of my mind, I was thinking of the word Quaker, because we're from Pennsylvania. And I just put the two together and I got Truther.

BOB Really? How about that, I didn't know that.

JON Yeah, well, it's in my book. You read my book, right?

BOB Yeah, but I don't remember it.

JON But you highly recommend it, right? [Laughs]

BOB Yeah, of course I would.

JON Okay, good.

All right, the next question—and before I read it, I just want to say this—Bob is the only person I'm willing to have on to talk about the buildings. As I've said for years and in my book, if it's still an important question to the families—and I know several of them that still have questions—then it's an important question to me. So, I'm putting up and not shutting up. This isn't for any 9/11 Truth group or any CD Advocate. It's for the families with doubts. It's for the historical record. It's because as I've also said, it breaks my heart that I can't jump on the buildings/24-7 bandwagon or even just the buildings bandwagon for Bob.

So, we're going to approach this from the perspective that it was a crime scene, that it was where most of the people were murdered on 9/11, and that he is a father trying to figure out how his son died.

So, with that in mind, I know this will be a difficult question to answer, but it's one of the main reasons I'm speaking with you today. Based on everything you know, how did Bobby die on 9/11?

BOB

All right, well—not many people have this—and this has taken me a long time, actually, by 2007, when I got all this information together, but—all right, just everyone hang in, everyone that's listening, hang in here though—but, I'm just going to go—I got Bobby's stuff that it took me a while to get, but I just figured this is a first-hand account, so people will believe me more than me just telling you.

I have right here, it's a biohazard box, okay? And if you open it, it's like the first day going down to—let's see, I went up to Ground Zero on Wednesday morning, September 12. The smell down there was absolutely putrid, and I did have a lot of asthmatic problems after that because it was just putrid. Well, if you open this biohazard box, that smell—let's see, we're going on into the 14th year, right? (Yeah) The smell is so distinct, so there, it's unbelievable.

All right, on the—I have a piece of paper inside the biohazard box, Property Clerk's Invoice. Now, we didn't get this until January of—this right here, so I haven't gotten into the other stuff—but, we didn't get this until the first of January where we actually got—this came in to the morgue, okay? And this was taken off of Bobby's body. And then I'm going to describe some other stuff. But what we have here—and I don't know why we didn't get the other stuff—but, we have Bobby's wallet. It has his license—it was his whole wallet—it has his license, it has his I.D., and it had \$13 bucks in it. Now, again, I haven't opened it, because the smell is bad. And I just hate touching it. But I know the \$13 bucks has disintegrated. And it's a fine, white soot that's all over it, and it still is. And, again, that smell, it's amazing, after 14 years, the smell—as soon as I open the box, it just hits you right in the face, like someone slaps you in the face. To show you how bad that smell was.

JON

I'm very glad that I have nothing like that. But, go ahead.

BOB

But we—well, it's great having it, because we're one of the few people who do have something from a body. That's right, it's here. The officer was Martin Williams, and he met us, in fact, he met us at Bobby's apartment on 56th between First and Second on January 7, 2002. And he handed this to us.

And, so it was great getting that. Just the fact that we had Bobby's—we were thinking of giving it to the museum, but no, I just decided that we'll keep this.

Now, as far as Bobby is concerned, I talked about all the things that I was doing after 9/11—Peaceful Tomorrows, going to 9/11 Commission hearings. And then I just finally felt, I really haven't looked into—and I knew that his body was found. We went to the morgue that week, and we—they took us along up there, and we went to the morgue. We were there all day Thursday and they released—we finally get the—we had our funeral director come up and picked up the body and we took him home that week. And we were lucky to get him. We had a police officer—I've still been in contact with him. He drove us around all day. We finally identified Bobby from his teeth up in—he had been to the dentist. And from that, we were able to identify—in other words, they just couldn't go by the wallet. We had to in some way find out if that was his body to release him. He had crown work done and we were able to positively identify him as Robert McIlvaine. And, of course, I'll get into the injuries real quick because that's the only thing he had was his teeth. And, thank God, that we were able to take him home and bury him. Now, I never identified the body. The Coroner—

JON Before you continue—I'm sorry, before you continue, you got all of Bobby's body back, for the most part, correct?

BOB Well, I'm going to go right over that now. (Okay) So, we did have a body, but the Coroner said: "I really didn't know what was there." We knew, obviously the teeth were there, because of that we took him home. So, we took him home and we buried him the following Tuesday. So, again, you can't believe how lucky we were because there's not many people that have a burial site, and supposedly, a body.

But, here's the Office of Chief Medical Examiner City of New York, Intake Form, Disaster of 2001. Let's see, all right, we have multiple credit cards and wallet, driver's license, okay—that's right after his name. Yes, I.D., yes. Age, race, they didn't know for sure. Sex, male. They were able to tell that. And then, next line:

Partial body—Absent, upper extremity and most of head.

They x-rayed his feet. His feet were intact.

Now, this was all done early 9/12.

Next page—Office of Chief Medical Examiner, City of New York, Charles S. Hersch, MD, Chief Medical Examiner, 520 First Avenue. So, this is where the morgue was 520 First Avenue.

Name of Deceased: Robert G. McIlvaine.

Height: 5'10"

Skin Color: White

Race: White

Age: 27

Rigor Mortis: None

Livor Mortis: Not visible

Temperature: Cold

Other—I don't know, something of face, I can't understand that.

Hair color: All right—

Other included injuries:

All right, it's clothing. He also had a black belt that we never got. Gray/Black dress pants. Blue boxer shorts. They have blue boxer shorts from Gap, 34/33. Black dress pants and two black socks.

Well, he was blown out—just remember that—he was blown out of his—now, of course, they didn't say that, I'm saying that—he was in his socks. He wasn't in his shoes. So, whatever happened, he lost his shoes. Now, I assume it's because of the force of the bomb.

Next Page—same thing, Intake Form. All right.

Partial Body—Absent, upper extremities, most of his head.

Okay? So, this is the report that was given—oh, then the final page, they have I'd say like a 12-inch figurine of a body, a male body. I don't know if it's a female body too, but in other words, like you're nude standing with your hands open. (Right) And then, if someone's standing back facing me, so its front's facing me, and from the mouth up, it's all missing.

Lacerations: Multiple lacerations of the chest. It's drawn—numerous lines into the chest.

Left Arm: Exposed compound fracture.

Right Arm: Missing just below the shoulder.

Multiple fractures of the left leg, lower left leg.

On the other picture you have multiple skull fractures, but it was intact.

So, everything that I'm looking at is that everything above his mouth was missing, okay? And then, of course, they go on here, they say:

Eyes: Missing

Nose: Missing

And we do have—well, I'll talk about that in a second, that's the initial report that they gave us. Now, I sort of ignored that. We put that away. And then, I—I think it was in 2007, we got a call from the Medical Examiner who said: "If you—this is the question they asked us—if you had other parts, would you be willing to take them home?" I said, "of course I would." Oh, we had sent—what they do is they ask you to send DNA in to the Medical Examiners, in case there were other things that could be found. And, it was very difficult for a lot of people to do that. They just weren't sure what to do. But I definitely wanted to do it. If there was something missing, I didn't want it sitting in a goddamn envelope in the, you know, where they're putting all this stuff was in some dingy place—just the thought that my son's parts were in there, it just bothered me to no end. So, I said, of course, I would want anything that was a part of Bobby. So, we got DNA from his old brushes, things of that sort to set the DNA up.

This was a very simple hope decision for a lot of family members and, people who did this and every other week they're getting parts. We get a call from them and then they said: "We found a part. Can you come up and pick it up?" And when this all happened, I said: "Well, I don't, I can't make that decision. My wife and my son will have to be part of that." And I talked to Jeff, my son, and of course, my wife Helen, and they both agreed. Of course, if something's available, we'd go up. But, of course, my wife didn't want to go up. Jeff didn't want to go up. So, anyway, we did the DNA and they called and they said: "Well, if we found something, would you be willing to come up?" I said: Of course. They said: "Well, we found something."

So, I went up—and this is very tough—(It's all right, Bobby) but this was like 2007 (It's all right, man). So I told them, but it's good to talk about it because this is it. It is what it is. But we found—here, I'm going, I'm so happy I did it. You can't believe how good I felt coming home, that you know, instead of sitting in some goddamn trailer, you know. You have people that still have their loved one's parts up there. And I don't understand it. But, I guess looking at me right now, after 14 years, I get this upset. But, hey, that's good. I'm glad I am upset.

JON Why don't you compose yourself for a minute.

BOB But they gave me—happy to do it. Still sitting under our bed—brain parts and skull parts, and neither one—actually, they're only three, from the size of a half dollar to the size of a quarter. But I actually brought home pieces of his brain and skull from New York and I actually felt great. You can't believe how great I felt about that. And so we—that's it. That's what we had.

JON Let me just say—

BOB And Bobby, Bobby was such a—talk about having his brain, I should somehow find a maker of Frankenstein and give it to him because he could really make a good human being if he got part of that brain and gave it to someone.

JON Well, let me just say something really fast. Just two things. You talk about his brain and that—Bobby was one of those people who I looked into and I'm so impressed by him, by what he was able to accomplish. He went to Princeton. He had a very high position at Merrill Lynch. He was just a very

impressive individual. And I get sad when I think about people like him who were lost that day.

And another one, Tia Kminek who lost her sister, Mari-Rae Sopper on 9/11. She was a judge advocate general. Before that she was very involved in gymnastics. All these people. These wonderful people were lost that day. And the other thing I want to mention is that, yes, there are still family members who are waiting for remains from their loved ones and a lot of them are furious over the fact that the remains may be in fresh kills, landfill. They are furious about that. It makes them sick.

BOB Of course, well, piggybacking on that, again, you can't believe how good I felt. I don't know if it sounds morbid, but taking that train home from New York City into Trenton and driving home and the fact that we have it. I mean, the thought that these people saying it might be sitting some place, so they put it in a bag. It's a sealed bag, but a lot of people have opted not to get it. I don't know if they sent in DNA. I don't know if the communication—I don't know.

It is brutal. And I don't know how people do it. But that's probably why they don't stay involved in this. Here, you see what happened to me. It's 14 years and I talked about this before, I didn't, I just every once and awhile break down.

JON Is this the first time—

BOB I think people really want closure, Jon. (Yeah, I know) And, of course, if you keep doing it, it just doesn't bring closure. And I'm willing to put up with this because closure is needed, and the rest of the world needs to stop killing each other. And 9/11 is the reason people are killing each other. And that's my closure. So, it's—and you never do get closure. And that's what people are looking for. That's one of the reasons specifically 9/11 Family Members, they just can't keep drudging this up. As you can see, how difficult it is. Much worse for a mother, you know?

JON I completely understand—I could never understand. I said this for years is that I understand the anger that I feel from finding out what I've found out, but I can't imagine knowing what I know on top of having lost someone that day. It's unimaginable to me, and I never put myself in the shoes of a family member, but when I do, when I try to, I can't. It's unimaginable.

BOB I'll tell you what, it's not unimaginable, because the human body works, it's a very strong thing. You immediately go into grieving mode and, again, I'd rather talk about this, because it's, if you lost a dog you know, it's a bad thing, but you're, again, like that psychiatrist said, the pain, it's right in front of you and you can't even think about anything. And then the pain gets better and better and better. It's right in front of you; it's always there. But then the suffering gets—at first, you're really suffering. People have committed suicide. Families have broken up. Well, that was all part of that suffering. The first six months is brutal.

And you might have a man or a woman that are grieving totally separately. Yeah, you're grieving, but the thing is, I want to talk about it. Someone else doesn't want to. I know a family that broke up. He didn't want to go see a psychiatrist. He felt guilty about it, going to a psychiatrist. He's a big—he's a tough guy. Well, she wanted to, well, that's tough, and they ended up separating.

So, it's—divorcing is difficult. Everything is difficult and it's there in front of you. And the thing is, when we lost a child, there was so much support going on. Everybody was trying to help you, so it really helps you out. That grief that you have right in front of your face, well the support you're getting really does help. You're not thinking about it as much. And like that one psychiatrist said, that grief, it's right in front of your face and you can't see anything, does start moving away.

And that's so true. Even after 6 months, even after a month, a week—you have so much help from people. People calling you. People giving you dinners. It's sort of counter-balancing it. You can't imagine. It's just like anything, believe me. We just lost our dog. It was horrible. But, it's not as bad. We've moved on. We're not thinking about it now. For a few days, you feel horrible. Everyone who's had an animal, you know what it's like to lose an animal. Well, it's basically the same thing. (Right)

It's, so, you can't imagine. It's—you just gotta move on—some people have committed suicide. Some people go to drinking. Some people go to drugs. It's how you cope with it.

JON Well, let me ask you a question about the Medical Examiner's report that you read to us. That was the first time you ever read that a loud.

BOB Yeah, first time to anyone.

JON Geez, all right. So, you were given a biohazard box. You were given a Medical Examiner's report, and based on—

BOB Well, let me first get to that Medical Examiner's report. I didn't finish the story on that.

So, we got Bobby's wallet. Left it alone. Did all my stuff with Peaceful Tomorrows and so on and so forth. It wasn't until 2007, that I started to look—I said I really haven't found everything. And that's when I called the Medical Examiner saying they told me about the DNA and I got a separate Medical Examiner's report from that. That's when I—so it wasn't until 2007 did I get, have the actual, what the injuries were so forth and so on. They released that with the pieces of brain and skull.

Okay? In other words, all this wasn't done until 2007. I basically said I didn't have the guts to do this until 2007. I was still doing my own thing and making myself better. And I said: "Oh, this is great. I'm making myself better, but you know, we still haven't gotten final answers exactly what happened to him." So, it's not that far away, that I finally got all the answers. And this is when I started looking into, you know, what happened to Bobby? So, I really didn't know exactly what happened to Bobby until I started looking into it then.

JON Right. And I've heard you say before that, as a parent, you want to know up until that last second what they were doing and how they were killed.

BOB Well, we have good friends who lost their child in a drunken driver—a daughter, and she died they said instantly. But they really wanted to know did she experience any pain. You know what I mean? And, so we used to talk about that. We used to get together with them a lot. Can you imagine our conversation? How many seconds did your child suffer, you know? It's —(right). I mean, it's horrible, but the thing is it just shows you, they wanted to know if she suffered. And they finally came to the conclusion from talking to doctors that she did not suffer a second. And that's—

So, and I'm saying I think that's natural, but it might not be natural for everyone. You know what I mean? (Right) Maybe people just don't want to think about it and let it go at that.

JON So, okay, I'm trying to understand, based on the wounds—I'm trying to get to the buildings—(Right, yeah) so based on the wounds that Bobby received, you think that it was due to an explosion.

BOB Well, yeah, there's no question about it. And, all the work—and, again, this has taken along time before I settled down and really wanted to know what happened to Bobby. And, just briefly, to give you a description of what happened.

He worked at Merrill Lynch, which is across the street from the North Tower. It's, you have the towers and then you have West Street and right across the street is Merrill Lynch. He'd just gotten a job like two weeks before 9/11, or maybe three weeks. He was hired because he was such a great writer. He was a phenomenal writer. That's why I like talking to college kids, or high school kids, saying to them he got into one of the most prestigious financial institutions because of his writing skills. He had no idea about that business or anything of that sort, but he just wrote so well, they you know, any press clips would come from him.

So, anyway, Bobby lived up in 91st, 92nd between 1st and 2nd and he would take the subway down to Fulton and walk from Fulton, which is east of the buildings and come walking across, and of course, walked over and passed the towers and crossed West Street and go to Merrill Lynch. Well, of course, that day everyone was trying to call him. He had over a hundred calls, but never did find the cell phone. So, everyone assumed that he was—there was a—Merrill Lynch had told us that there was a seminar on the 106th Floor and everyone supposedly felt, or everyone felt that he had gone to the 106th Floor because there was a seminar there and to write on it, or you know, to help out with whatever. So everybody went with that story. And in the press—any press that applies to Bobby that came out said he died on the 106th Floor.

Well, of course, in 2007, I've gotten all this. I wasn't positive. At first some people thought he might have jumped. No one knew. I mean the thought that he might have jumped was so horrible we couldn't comprehend that. But the fact is, we took a body home, and if he would have come down with—this is the first thing that I felt—if he would have come down with the buildings, there's just no way in the world he came—we would have taken him home on Thursday intact like that, that they would have found him so quick.

So, anyway, I just—that day I started thinking all right, so he's walking to the building, obviously, wasn't on the 106th Floor, and then at first I wasn't into these buildings blowing up or whatever they were saying. I remember talking to you. I just said I felt sure what you were saying. My feeling was that, well, if they say that, then they'll say well, who put the bombs in and then they'll come up with another—you know, I didn't like the idea talking like that about what happened that day.

But then with Bobby, when I finally got this report, I looked at him and I say, here—oh, an important thing, now they don't say it on this report, but I talked to the doctor—was there burns on him? I should have—I can still view the photographs, but then he said: "No, there were post-mortem burns on him." And this is what turned the whole thing in my life—I try to work on Bobby now because if there were no burns on him—now, there were post mortem burns and they say they were burns that were severe but not like you were totally charred. Again, he actually—I remember him saying, he said: "If you just laid out on the beach for a few days in Miami and you just got really, really badly burnt, okay?"

So, I'm thinking, well, if he's walking across or through, but he had to go heading directly toward the North Tower. Now, the injuries, again, his whole face was eliminated. His arm is gone. Well, I would say that his arm was blown off, okay? And, the idea that lacerations throughout the chest—and this is one that threw me. I said: "Well, how did he get all these lacerations?" Well, my thing is I think he was walking—now, I can't prove that—well, I feel that he—there was a huge explosion in the lobby, and I've been told, from Willy Rodriguez and a couple other people, I don't have their names—that there were bombs going off before—and when we say bombs—all right, let's leave it at that—bombs going off before the planes hit.

JON Let's—

BOB Hold it, hold it. I just think he was walking in—it was like three people standing there with shotguns and decided to blow him, just let it go. I think he died instantly, because he would have made a phone call to us. The fact that his injuries—the fact that he took such a horrible shot to the face, his arm was blown off, there's lacerations—and then, in context with that, blown backwards, and of course, that's where all the fractures in his skull come, and the fact that he was picked up so quickly, or he was picked up

and taken to the morgue before the towers came down. He was picked up immediately, okay?

JON Okay, so what you're saying is that Bobby went to the North Tower and before I guess he could get into the lobby, might not have gotten into the lobby, he was blown backwards by something (Right, right), and the contention from the official account is that it was a fireball. Now, before—

BOB Well, listen, we shouldn't bring up that fireball yet.

JON Well, okay. Go ahead.

BOB Now, of course, I wasn't sure about that—well, if you look into the idea that he had post-mortem burns. Now, if you look at the 9/11 Commission Report and in this report, and I'm not asking anyone to read either one of them, but the 9/11 Commission Report—and this is when I started talking, when I'd talk about, I'd go to these things for New York City canon and all those other things, I would like to talk about Bobby and talk about the bombs that went off in conjunction with how the towers came down.

But, anyway, the fact that he was walking in, okay, and the lacerations on the chest and the fact that he doesn't have burns when he dies. Now, post-mortem means it could have been a matter of seconds. In other words, the blast killed him, okay? He died instantly. No one was able to get a hold of him, yet there were a hundred calls going into him. Okay? With that then, with the 9/11 Report they said the lobby, Floor 77, Floor 22, the lobby, and basement levels were blown up by a fireball. Okay?

And then I started looking into, all right, what is a fireball? I've seen many of, what are the movies? Bruce Willis—

JON Any of the action movies.

BOB Well, yeah, the action movies—I always think of Bruce Willis, he's always in. And, of course, everyone saw the fireball in the North Tower when that first plane hit. That was a huge, huge fireball, okay? So that's when I started really looking into—I really started jumping on board—Richard Gage—I love Richard, he keeps everything alive, but I'm not concerned, as far as me talking, I'm not concerned about the South Tower coming down. I'm not concerned about Building 7 coming down. I'm not concerned about nano-

thermite. And I'm not concerned about the planes, or the actual demolition of the buildings.

I'm concerned about how Bobby died. So, from that, okay? So NIST talks about a fireball, or fireballs. 9/11 Commission talks about fireballs. But that's the only thing they mention. That fireballs caused all this damage. So, I started looking into, all right, what is a fireball? Okay?

Did you want to jump in now? I just wanted to clarify everything.

JON No, I was going to read the account of Mike Pecoraro.

BOB Well, could you just leave that for a minute? (Yeah, sure) So, you want to read it, okay?

JON Yeah, I'll read it, but go ahead.

BOB I started—if you go into, and now I don't want to spend two hours, which I know Jon doesn't want to do, but if you look at the *New York Times*, it came out January 10th, 2002, reports from different firefighters—documentary reports or whatever they call it—in others words, they gave testimony to what happened that day.

JON Testimonial Records.

BOB Like just to give you an example, Ryan Beeker, firefighter: "Got there between 8:55 and 9, getting the impression that the elevators were blown out, bent doors, lobby devastated." Robert Bern: "Core elevators are blown apart, as if giants had punched through tin foil." Peter Baluka "Looked like the plane had hit the lobby. Tall fireball shot down shaft, blew out all the windows." But he was told this. "You did have FBI agent, secret service agents walking around telling people what happened. That's just a sideline. Doors were blown right off the elevators." James Fotee "I didn't see any fire in the elevator shafts. Great deal of soot, like white soot, all over the lobby. No elevators were working. We had to use the stairs." William Green, this the last one. Now, this is all firemen that walked in. These are case and testimony with the New York Times. "Entered through the front door of lobby. Lobby was screwed, all windows broken. Headed for B staircase, which was in the center of the core. I cannot see an elevator. Cars twisted in the shaft. I thought ceiling would be charred. The ceiling wasn't charred. I thought the floor blew up. There were elevator doors that were missing."

This goes on and on and on. There's, you know, at least 125—

JON Okay, so let me—I might as well read this now because it coincides with the lobby.

Mike Pecoraro—and I found this at HistoryCommons.org the entry is called: 7 a.m. 9:50 a.m. September 11, 2001, Engineer finds major damage in basement and lobby of North Tower—Mike Pecoraro, an engineer who is part of the crew that services the WTC complex, is at work in the mechanical shop in the second sub-basement of the north WTC tower when it is hit. When the room he is in starts filling with white smoke and he can smell kerosene (jet fuel), he heads upstairs with a co-worker towards a small machine shop on the C level. Yet, he says, "There was nothing there but rubble. We're talking about a 50-ton hydraulic press—gone!" He then heads for the parking garage, yet finds that "there were no walls, there was rubble on the floor, and you can't see anything." He ascends to the B level where he sees a 300-pound steel and concrete fire door, which is lying on the floor, wrinkled up "like a piece of aluminum foil." Pecoraro recalls seeing similar things at the Center when it was bombed in 1993, and is therefore convinced that a bomb has gone off this time. When he makes it into the main lobby, he sees massive damage: "The whole lobby was soot and black, elevator doors were missing. The marble was missing off some of the walls. 20-foot sections of marble, 20 by 10-foot sections of marble, gone from the walls Broken glass everywhere, the revolving doors were all broken and their glass was gone." Pecoraro says he only later hears that "jet fuel actually came down the elevator shaft, blew off all the (elevator) doors and the flames rolled through down the lobby. That explained all the burnt people and why everything was soot in the lobby."

So, he found out later that it was jet fuel. And you've told me before that jet fuel may very well have come down the building, but this is somebody who was there and described it as if it was a bomb going off and described all these things that sound like a hell of a lot of damage in the lobby where Bobby, you say, was essentially at.

BOB Yeah, well, let's just go to the top of the building. Again, I wish I could be talking to the country. Again, I have talked to the world about this.

All right, we have a plane going in, right? We're just talking about the North Tower. It came in approximately at, I don't know, was it from the 94th to the 98th floor? So, it came on at like a 25-degree angle.

Now this one, a little blurb of mine—I don't know, it's interesting to me. But please visualize—I don't know how many people have been up in the Towers, but they are a big place. I mean, they're big places, or they were big places. And I just saw, I don't know where I saw this, but the size of one Tower in cubic yards is 2 million, 100 and change cubic yards—that's a lot of space. Now, when the plane came in, now the fuel—now, it's jet fuel, okay, which is comparable to kerosene. It's like kerosene, it's not as volatile as gas. I mean you could stick with a spoon and light some kerosene and it wouldn't blow up in your face like some gas would. I mean, just to throw that out.

But the plane goes in. So, it's going in on an angle. The left part of the plane is the lower part and the right part at a 25-degree angle. All the fuel is in the wings. Now, they said when the plane hit, special report says 10,000 gallons of fuel, okay? Now, obviously, that fireball, I mean, that truly was a fireball. Even that fireball—they said it was 10-stories high—did not break out all the windows at that point. I mean, that's what's phenomenal. There is not that much power. There can be a power. It depends how it's mixed with air and things of that sort. But the thing is, that was a lot of fireball. That was a big explosion, okay?

Now, just for the sake, and I don't know, officially, I think the official said that probably 5,000 gallons of fuel were still available. Now, of course, when you know when that plane hit, that fuel just, each floor is approximately 205 x 205, I think one is 2-5 and the other is 2-8. I mean, that's the size of the floor, that's a big floor. So, it hits and you know that fire flies all around. Of course, it ignites a lot of things also. Okay?

Now, let's say 5,000 gallons were remaining. Well, in comparison to, and I know—I just want to show you how little gasoline or little kerosene that is—it comes out to 25 cubic yards of fuel. Well, 25 cubic yards of fuel is not that much fuel. So, Jon read that report—so you're talking now, all—Well, I have a diagram—if people are still listening—I have a diagram of the elevator shafts. At the top of the shaft, at the top of the building you have a mechanical equipment room. Then you have approximately—let's just say they're 34 floors between each—well, in other words there were isolated—how do I put it, Jon? There were—

JON Vibration? Or whatever you said?

BOB Each—the elevator shafts were not on top of each other, okay? The first 34 —all right, let's go from the bottom up. The first 34 floors that goes up to say—

JON Well, there was only one elevator that went from the top to the bottom.

BOB Yeah, I don't want to—let's just. But the point being is we're talking about – the 9/11 Commission talks about the fireballs. All right? There was three levels of elevators, each one—it would go from the top, which is the mechanical equipment room—the top level stopped at a sky lobby. Then you would have to walk from the sky lobby, walk a few steps, then you had a mechanical room. Then you have to walk to the mechanical room to get to the next level of elevators, okay?

So, then you would go approximately another 34 floors, you get to another sky lobby. You get to the sky lobby, get out, walk a few floors, then you have to go—then you have the mechanical equipment room, then you have to get on the next set of elevators shafts, okay?

So, the elevators were shafted in three different parts. Okay? So, let's imagine that kerosene—please try to imagine—that kerosene came in, was splattered all over the place. Now, I will not sit here and contend there was not a fireball. But, if there was any fireball, it would probably be the fumes. And if the fumes gets to an air, right, fuel-air context, then they would go up.

My whole point is, that it's almost—and I say it would be impossible, and I talked to people—that a fireball couldn't have come down most, 99.9 percent, of those elevators because they were all separated. So, you only had—as Jon would say, it only had one elevator, or actually, three elevators—the service elevator, and a 6 and 7 elevator were express elevators and the service elevator went from the middle all the way up. And that's been proven that that did not bring the damage that was done. The damage that was done—I'm not saying a fireball couldn't have come down—but the guy who was running the elevator, Arturo, his name was Arturo, the fireball came down. He survived it. His elevator, the cables were cut by the planes and it came down like 30-some levels and the emergency brakes took over and he survived. Now, he said that the door blew in, broke his legs, and he

got out and then there was a fireball that came down. So, there were people who experienced fireballs. But all this damage in the elevators, or in the basement and in the lobby—and can I just mention, there was all this damage, Floor 22 was destroyed.

Now, why they came up with Floor 22, I don't know. Let's see, NIST came up with this and the 9/11 Commission came up with this. Twenty-two was absolutely devastated. There was no—you only had one stop to 22 and none of them came from the top. And this place was devastated. It looked like an atom bomb—not an atom bomb, but. In fact, I have—here's firefighter Markel Arabenski—I can't pronounce his last name: "When I got to 22, elevator shaft was blown out. No doors, frame, nothing. No burning, no smoke, soot coming out of it. A crumbling elevator does not explode."

In other words, that place was wrecked. Well, here it so happens 22 was a security command center and it was also the heating and ventilation system for the entire building, and I think we can get into the reason for this in a couple minutes. And NIST said it was caused by, not a fireball, but falling debris. 9/11 Commission Report said a fireball destroyed this whole, but there was no fire in there. Things weren't charred.

So, this whole story, my claim is that a fireball—of course, using Bobby—a fireball did not blow up Bobby, did not hit Bobby. If the fireball would have hit him, he'd be charred. And this is where you have to get into what is a "detonation" and what is a "deflagration?"

JON That's what I was trying to say earlier.

BOB In this case it would not have the capabilities. It's like comparing Bolt to Superman. You're saying Bolt is fast. But if he ran 100 yards and ran into a wall, he would die. The Superman runs into a wall, he would go right through the wall. Well, it's the same with a detonation. A detonation starts off with a heat wave, a powerful wave and then followed by heat. So, you will be burnt by a detonation, but the shock wave is what killed you. This is what happened to Bobby. Apparently, he was walking in and then got hit by that huge—1300 meters a second—power that just blew him out. And then the heat wave came and that, of course, is where the heat came from as far as his burns. So, that's my whole premise.

In other words, the planes had nothing to do with Bobby's death. And I think possibly Bobby died before the plane hit. And there are, like Willie

Rodriguez saying that there were bombs going off—the testimony you gave, there were bombs going off before the planes hit.

So, it just clarifies everything to me that—I don't care what happened. I mean, I care, but talking about nano-thermite doesn't do me any good. I have it right there. I know Bobby didn't die from the planes. Well, then, you know, whoever planted the bombs...

JON

I have another account from HistoryCommons.org and I looked through this stuff to try and help you out. The entry is called:

Shortly After 9:59 a.m. September 11, 2001: Fire Department Expert on Building Collapses Thinks Bombs Caused South Tower to Come Down—not the North Tower.

But, all right, the entry says:

When the WTC's South Tower collapses, which was I believe the first tower to collapse, correct? (Yeah) Father John Delendick—one of New York Fire Department's chaplains—runs down a ramp to the garages below the nearby World Financial Center, to escape the dust cloud. He speaks there with Fire Chief Ray Downey, and asks him if the jet fuel from the plane had blown up, causing the collapse. Downey is in fact a renowned expert on building collapses. Robert Ingram, a battalion chief in the New York Fire Department later refers to him as "the premiere collapse expert in the country." 9/11 Commissioner Timothy Roemer calls Downey a "very, very respected expert on building collapse." And Fire Chief Mike Antonucci, who is a best friend of Downey's, says he "was probably the most knowledgeable person on building collapses there was. That was his [hobby], to study building collapses—what affected the engineering of buildings, how they [would] weaken and how he could respond and stay safe." In response to Delendick's question, Downey replies that, "at that point he thought there were bombs up there because [the collapse] was too even." Earlier on, Downey told other fire chiefs responding at the WTC that he was worried about "explosive devices" in the Twin Towers "that could hurt the firemen." He was later killed when the North Tower collapses at 10:28 a.m.

So, I wanted to read that.

BOB Yeah, well, let's just go to Tower 2 real fast—Tower 2 is hit in a corner—all right, let's just quickly speak about why would they put bombs in before the towers collapse? Well, 22 is the answer to that because it constantly seen with bombs going off, the ventilation system was bad, the heating was off, and the doors are locked up at top, well, it just seems like there was fires on every floor because the smoke was just going up everywhere. It seemed like total chaos. The firefighters couldn't get up the steps.

And, if you were planning this, if you and I were planning this attack, okay, would we count on three planes, or two planes taking down these towers? Well, certainly we could not possibly. If those two planes went in there and that's it, and the people up there were killed, we wouldn't be at war with Afghanistan. But it just, it was like, this was the secret demolition plan. In other words, the bombs were going off; it created chaos; it created confusion; the 22nd floor was just totally eliminated; there was no communication with anyone; and you had chaos.

Now, as far as the South Tower—

JON Weren't the firefighters at the top of the building who said...

BOB One firefighter made it to the 83rd Floor, 78th Floor—he was a marathon runner. And he made it up there, and he said: "I have everything under control here. Just send up a few more firefighters." That was his quote (Right) and of course, he died. And suddenly, the North Towers hit right in the middle; south Towers hit in the corner; you have a firefighter say: "Hey, I got everything under control, just send up a few more hoses." Of course, who goes down first? The South Tower. (Right)

So, that is part of the plan. They couldn't count on—I mean, again, people can't believe it. But the thing is, just using Bobby, which I will use, and all these statements you're giving me and, there's hundreds of them out there that fireballs certainly did come down, but they did not have the power to do what they were doing. (All right--) They were—

A detonation is a huge event. The destruction of it, you talked about 300-lb doors were crumbled up like tin foil. You didn't mention, I didn't mention the path station was hit. There was damage to the path station, the subway system. Well, how could that be happening? You saw a fireball go off on top of the—but it goes out a few feet and that's the end of it. It's not going

to create a lot of havoc, you know, 50 yards away, or 20 yards away, or 30 yards away.

My whole point of all this, Jon, is that it makes everything a lie. We can talk about nano-thermite, I hate to use the term collapse—those buildings were pulverized. And we can talk about that—

JON I've been saying for years that if the buildings advocates had just said there were bombs in the building as opposed to a controlled demolition, which gives people this vision of a whole team of experts coming in and setting up charges—it just sounds crazy to people. If they had just said there were bombs in the building, they probably would have been a lot better off.

BOB You're right—it could be, God knows how, and the way this country works. You know, it's like, Jon, I don't trust anyone. I don't trust everyone, but that's why I'd rather come up with my own thing.

JON That's why I'm having you here today because you're one of the few people that did get a body and so let's go over your contention just so everybody's clear.

Bobby was walking to the North Tower. When he got to the North Tower, there was an explosion. And, based on the Medical Examiner's Report of Bobby's remains, you think it was caused by an explosion.

BOB Well, what would you think? What goes through your mind how his death could have been caused. I guess the only thing you could say was falling debris, right?

JON I would say a bomb, but I'm also going to say that I'm not qualified to tell you.

BOB Well, think of yourself as a parent, what do you—I mean, you're talking pieces the size of a quarter and his skull and his brain, part of the—

JON I know—you know what's interesting about Charles Hersch, who is the medical examiner you mentioned, I think he was part of the—when the 9/11 first responders were trying to sue the city because of the health, the environmental impact and the problems they were having—Charles Hersch was one of the medical examiners who was saying that certain responders

didn't die from the toxic dust, it seemed like to save the city. So, I—I remember a lot of people were mad at him at one time.

But anyway, so, the contention—

BOB Well, it could have been, maybe if I die quickly, you know, in the next year, you probably could say toxic dust, you know, I don't know, one day—

JON I think that's the name you mentioned in—that's something that sprung up in my head about the responders. That might be the same person.

BOB Yeah, that's the name I had right here.

JON All right, so based on the Medical Examiner's report, you think that he died from an explosion. And we have multiple statements—

BOB Jon, I hate to say "I think"—I know. I don't really want to debate about it.

JON I don't either.

BOB Well, hold it [Laughter] no, let me say. I mean I looked at. All right, did somebody shoot him with a shotgun? I doubt that. I can eliminate that. Was it falling debris? Well, Bobby was a real athlete. He would have run. He didn't just lay down on the ground and say hit me. And the fact that—

JON He was blown out of his shoes.

BOB Right, and the fact that the back of his skull—there's no question in my mind. And then I do have someone from Merrill Lynch—he didn't know Bobby, but he apparently was on the same subway and he decided to get coffee before he walked down heading toward Merrill Lynch and as he was walking out of the coffee shop, he was blown back from the explosion from the lobby.

Well, again, it's impossible—I'm talking impossible. People have to get that in there, it's impossible a fireball does not do that.

JON My intention—go ahead.

BOB Go ahead.

JON I just want to say my intention was never, never to debate you. I was just letting you tell us (Oh, I know)—Okay, just so people know, I'm letting you tell the story.

BOB So, I just, and that's a big part of it. It's almost like you can eliminate, not that it should be, because putting the whole story together, then you realize this idea that 19 Muslims did this is an absolute impossibility. And then we have to start saying, all right, instead about debating all the issues, the United States did this. Of course, it will create havoc in people's lives, but the thing is, that's what happened. And I don't know who else is involved in it, it's like I told people, I don't really care. You know, Bobby is like one of millions and millions of people who died for what? What's the cause? Is it because of big banks? Big money? Big oil? Well, to me, that's it. And he is part of the group of Afghanistan, Iraq, and all these other stupid wars we have and the falsehoods of the War on Terror and now we're carrying out to this day right now and we could carry on, as Dick Cheney said, till forever. For the next hundred years. It'll be beyond a hundred years. And people have to get that in their head. At least if some people get that in their head, then they'll tell other people. It's just the word has to spread.

But my main point, Jon, is it impossible, if someone can prove the possibility these fireballs created all this damage, then fine, but I just don't see it happening. I spent a lot of time and effort. I talked to people. I talked to people that were there. And that's it for me. I just think--

JON Okay, well, we're coming up on two hours. So, let me get to the next question, because it's an important one.

Can you please tell us about the experiences that you had with local newspapers covering your story? And I'm talking about the *Philadelphia Daily News* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

BOB Well, in the beginning I used to get a lot of local interest like my *Ambler Gazette*, local papers that just wanted a human-interest story. But as the years went on I used to talk a lot about the Commission hearings and all that, so but when Obama, supposedly killed in 2011, the—

JON Osama, not Obama.

BOB I keep saying Obama when Osama was killed in Libya, right?

(That was in Pakistan). Anyway, they called me, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* called me. They wanted a—they knew I was a 9/11 Family Member. They called other 9/11 Family Members. They wanted to know, what do you think? And I just said to him, I said, look—as a matter of fact it was her. She was a journalist for the *Inquirer* and I said: "I don't believe the story at all. I think they're lying, But I said, as a journalist, you have to look at what happened back in 2001." There's been so many reports since December of 2001 and after that Bin Laden has died. Okay? I'm not making it up. I'm not wishing this—it's there. And I said: "That has to be reported. You must question what this country, or what you're giving us." That you see Obama there. You see Clinton there. And it looks like a cartoon. Oh, my God, Osama bin Laden's been killed. And I said, that's what has to be done. And I'm not saying anything outlandish here. It's there.

JON Well, you're saying—Go ahead, I'm sorry.

BOB Anyway, she took the story and then called me back, like the next day and said: "Bob, I really am sorry about this, the editors will not allow me to print what you said." Now, just get that. I'm not saying anything that controversial, but the editors would not allow her to print what I said. That you should go back to that time that there's been many reports that he's been buried, he died and was buried. And she quit the *Post*. She quit journalism right after that.

JON Well, let me say something really fast about that. I can't prove that Osama bin Laden died after late 2001, but the point is there have been eight or nine different reports of his death over the years and any one of those could have been true, as opposed to the one that we were told about (Oh, sure) in Pakistan.

BOB That's the only thing I ask, Jon. Look at, do your work as a journalist. I wasn't trying to put any words in her mouth.

JON And there are a multitude of questions. If you go to my "Facts Speak for Themselves" article, available at 911TruthNews.com you'll see that there are many questions about the assassination of Osama bin Laden. So, go ahead.

BOB And then just last year, someone from the *Daily News*, a young girl that knew Bobby, she called and it's the same, I don't know, it was just, like the one from the *Inquirer*, they wanted to hear from family members. Oh, I

hope the person dies, burns in hell for eternity. You know, one of those type of things, it's how happy I am that Osama bin Laden's dead.

Well, she's basically asking me the same thing. And I gave her the same story. I told her my story, basically. And she just came out right—and this is the exact words she said to me, she said: The Pentagon would never allow us to do that. I mean there's—

JON And this was a friend of Bobby's?

BOB This is from the *Daily News*, and—

JON And she was a friend of Bobby's?

BOB Well, she knew him. Because, no, she wasn't a friend. She just knew of him because of, I think, she went to Upper Dublin, which is Bobby's school.

JON And she said that the Pentagon would not allow—

BOB Yeah, I just couldn't believe it, I said, you know—and that's when she said: "I better get out of this field." [Laughs]

JON Well, I, we talk—when we go out to breakfast [laughs], we talk and we talk, and we always come to this revelation that the biggest problem, or one of the biggest problems in this country is our corporate media. And I try to figure out how the control is done. And, is it an atmosphere of fear of losing one's job? Because that's happened before. Robert Sheer wrote an article for the *LA Times* called "What We Don't Know About 9/11 Hurts Us" and he was fired. He also wrote against the Iraq War and was fired.

Anyway, is it an atmosphere of dissenting? You know, is it—

BOB Well, Jon—go ahead.

JON Let me just—is it because six major companies own the majority of the mainstream media and the owners have that much control? Is it the advertisers they don't want to piss off? And is it the Government using a form of control?

And I think it's all of the above.

BOB Well, I think it's the Government. Period. It's just, and of course, the people that own it, and that transfers down to the editors. It's happened to me with *The New York Times*. I was supposed to do an interview. *Star-Ledger* was going to come up. *The New York Times*. They wanted to do an interview with me—with a bunch of children from, oh no, it was *The London Times*, I'm sorry. They were going to send people over from London and talk to me. And I told them what I was going to talk about. Oops. End of story. No way in the world they were going to do that.

JON Well, what people have to understand, the corporate media—

BOB It's the people that own, and the Government won't allow it. But in the case of the *Inquirer* and the *Daily News*, they will be fired. Well, first of all, they won't be able to get it out. So, the woman quit. She couldn't get that out. It still has to go through the editor. It has to go through a process. And who were the editors? Well, of course, they're controlled by the owners. And the owners, they're part of the system. And you only have six owners. That is the problem. I don't know if it's fear because they don't even get to the point of fear because you can't get the articles out. Obviously, Scheer got the article out. I don't know how he did it, but in my case, he said, in London, they wouldn't allow it because I have a different opinion. They just wanted a rah-rah story, know what I mean? So—

JON Well, people have to understand that the corporate media over the years, first they ignored us—you talked about, or I mentioned in my personal bio of you, that they had the 9/11 Omission Hearings and I think there were hundreds of people there and multiple speakers—did that get any news coverage? No. It got none. Absolutely, none. So, the media first ignored us.

Then they went into attack mode once the 9/11 Report was released and all they did was attack those that were questioning the 9/11 attacks. First, they painted them as unpatriotic. And then they said we were crazy. And then they tried to tie us to murderers. Every time somebody with a voice would speak out, somebody like Rosie O'Donnell, it was amazing to me that in unison the networks—the CNN, the Fox News, the MSNBC—whatever, were all attacking Rosie O'Donnell because she questioned how Building 7 came down, or something like that. It's just, it was, that's all they've done.

I mean, just now we're starting—the 28 redacted pages people are starting to get a little bit of press and some people question that. Why are they getting so much press? But, I honestly believe it's just because it's been so

long and the families have been fighting so hard and they've gone through so many things over the years to get those pages released and they're finally getting some traction and I guess that's why it's getting some coverage.

BOB Well, in my opinion, let me tell you a quick story of Helen and I when we were down at Ground Zero after the ceremonies, you know, there was a dedication and all that. We were waiting for Bobby's friends to come. We were sitting down there by Building 7 and a couple came up to us and they were from Moscow. And I had done a DVD in Moscow. A lot of people had seen it. And they had seen it and they came up and shook my hand, told me their names and said they were from Moscow. And the first thing they said, you know, we had this conversation, they said: "You think you have freedom of the press in this country. It's so much better in Russia. I mean, one thing we do know that we're being lied to many times, but the press in the United States is just so bad."

And I always relay that. Our press is so bad. (Well, I just--) I think they're better in China than it is here. You know, people keep looking at that freedom of press, but it's a lost cause. We are living in 1984 right now, you know, the book 1984. (Yeah--) It's a disgrace, absolute disgrace. They're all whores. They're all cowards. And they get paid big bucks. And that's what they do. They—

JON I just looked at Reporters Without Borders and we're ranked 46th in the world for freedom of the press.

BOB That's a pretty good ranking. We shouldn't be ranking even that. (Laughs) And that's, you know, they should—for what we're supposed to be doing, it's a disgrace. Every, they should be all ashamed of themselves.

JON Absolutely, the corporate media is a disgrace.

All right, so, what do you have to say to 9/11 Family Members that know about some of the lies of 9/11 and aren't speaking out?

BOB Well, I just stay away from 9/11 Family Members. I drop the—well, if they knew about it, I would just say—I don't know what to say to them. I have a very difficult time with 9/11 Family Members because I do not want to get into arguments with any of them. I did once in our support group and I made sure that would never happen again, and everybody has to do what they gotta do. I just, I don't know what to say to them. They all—we have a

support group. Until this year, we met up in New York and it's just like taboo to talk about 9/11. I tried once and there was almost in a fight and I said I'd never do it again. I don't know, I really, because there's nothing good I could say about it. Because you're going to lose family members that want to talk to you, friends that want to talk to you, so why would they want to go there. My wife doesn't want to go there. It's just, I don't understand—

JON Again, you know, like—

BOB I just—when we're around family members, I just go with the flow. I don't get involved in it. If they ask me what I think, then I say, well, you know, right now, it's very difficult because you just have to wait until 9/11 and then speak what you want to say. People came out this year, right? That were first-timers. I didn't make it in 9/11. I didn't get up there. But you had 9/11 Family Members. So, it's probably just very difficult because you got, it's overwhelming. You suddenly have the press going against you, people going against you, so. I don't know what to say to them, Jon. I really don't. Even if they—I mean, I would love to sit down and talk to them, I just—it doesn't seem any 9/11 families want to go where I'm going. And I know some 9/11 Family Members have gone there, Donna O'Connor she was very outspoken and, I remember this and I'll tell any 9/11 Family Member, she got so sick of hating because of that anger that she joined Peaceful Tomorrows because it's such a make-me-feel-good type of thing, yet you're being active. You're trying to change lives. You're trying to change the world. And that feels good. When you do 9/11 stuff, it just creates anger. It's creating people that hate you. You're being disgraced by the press. It's tough to do. And she dropped out of it for that reason. So that's one of the reasons people won't do it. I mean, you're—

JON Well you said you learned in the beginning when you spoke to the shrink that the family members deal with this differently. Different family members deal with this situation differently.

BOB Of course, yeah. Yeah.

JON So—

BOB Yeah, it's tough. I don't know what to say to them. If they want to talk and they want to talk about it, I'll talk for the next 20 hours, if they want to talk about 9/11. But if they don't want to talk about it, I'm not going to talk

about it to them. You know what I mean? (Yeah) If a 9/11 Family Member is looking into this, I'm always available. It's like taking drugs for me. I want to—it invigorates me. It's like when you play a sport, it's juice. It gets you going. You know, I do get upset. I do get emotional, but then it's over and I go back to what I do normally. You get up and eat breakfast and take my dog for a walk, you know? (Right, I know) [Laughs] But, so—

JON Well, the next question is a good one. Is there anything you would like to say to the people of the world that have been affected by the murder of your son and 2,975 people, and how it has been used by this Government? Is there anything you would like to say to the people that have been affected by how 9/11 has been used by this Government.

BOB Well, I did a—two years ago, I did a documentary with International Travel Channel. Now, they had called me and they said, this is Travel Channel, but they really wanted to hear what I had to say about 9/11. And they said it's not like the whole show is going to be you, you're going to get five to seven minutes but we really want to hear what you have to say.

So, we met down at Ground Zero. It wasn't at the anniversary. And we talked right at Building 7, and, I did my thing. But you know, of course, it's only the short—we're there a good hour—but they're only going to use—but the final question, they asked me, they said: "What—oh, who do you blame? Who do you want to blame? Or who are you blaming?" Now, I had mentioned that the Government did it, but who in the Government should we blame for 9/11? And I had said—and I don't know if it—I never watch any videos when they do it, but I know it came on. I said: "I really don't give a damn." I think I said: "I don't give a shit who killed my son." What I want to get—now, this show went to like 70 countries and 120 million people, so I did get a chance to speak to the world. And I said the main emphasis of this—and I did talk about Bobby, what we talked about today. I said: "Muslims had nothing to do with my son." I want the whole—or with the killing of my son—I want the whole world to know about this. The War on Terror is a lie, and if anybody tells you different, they're liars and they're cowards. And that's what I said. And that's exactly what I want to say now. (Okay, good)

The War on Terror is a lie. And all these people are dying. They're dying the way my son died because of a lie. All these innocent people in the world.

JON And that's what I've been trying to tell people for a long time.

BOB They keep perpetuating the War on Terror and they can do this, as Cheney said, they can do it for the next 100 years. All's you have to have is another false flag and boom, we're in trouble again.

JON As I've said before, we've killed so many people over the last 14 years, it wouldn't surprise me at all if there were actual attacks against us because of what we've done.

BOB Well, sure, it's people that—yeah, you're right. I'm sorry.

JON It's a perpetual war. It's never ending.

BOB Because it's a racket.

JON As long as –

BOB It's a racket.

JON We create "terrorists" by what we're doing. So, it's a perpetual war. Anyway, the next to the last question, now you keep telling me that you're going to write a book. And, from my own personal experience, I know that in order to write my book, I had to force myself to sit at my computer and write. It was hard, but I knew that if I procrastinated, it would never get done. So when are you going to write yours, and why do you want to write yours?

BOB I would love to and I'd love to say that I think I'm too stupid to write a book. And I get so depressed, and I definitely have concentration problems and, I've been sick for the last couple of months. When I get my energy back, like right before I got sick, I was writing down a lot of stuff, but you know, I might just keep it to Bobby, and write that piece up. It's such a big, big topic. You know, talking about NORAD, talking about the 9/11 Commission Report, and—but then I look at the American public—no one gives a shit. Who's going to read it. You know, you'll read it, friends of mine, some good friends, you know, in the 9/11 community will read it, but is it really going to change anything? And, I'm not going to—I don't know. I'm up and down with it. I think more than anything, I just want—I just keep writing, not necessarily in book form, instead of publishing it, I just want a legacy for my grandchildren. That's the only thing I want. And I have had a legacy. They can see all the documentaries I've been in. And

that's the most important thing. That my grandchildren will know what I did. And that's very important to me.

The other people, I could care less. If I talk to my friends, they get buggy eyed. They don't want to talk about it. That's why I don't have good friends anymore. They're afraid I'll talk about 9/11. (Do want to say--) Why should I put all that time and effort into write a book for them?

JON Do you want to say what your wife made for you recently?

BOB Yeah, she made a collage and framed it of all the places I've appeared, and that really meant a lot to me because, and I worry about how much she thinks of this and, it seems like she's on board with everything and she—but she just wants me to be well, because I've been so sick lately. So—

JON Right, everybody wants you to be well.

BOB Yeah, but you know, so the book thing, I don't know.

JON It was very nice of her to do that for you.

BOB Oh, it's great. It meant a lot to me. And, it's a legacy I can leave.

JON Yep. Is there anything else that you'd like to say?

BOB No, I don't know if anyone wants to hear anymore. I don't know if anyone's still on, so. But—

JON Oh, I'm sure a lot of people are going to listen to this.

BOB I guess you've got to speak your piece. It's a shame we can't get on TV. It's a shame we can't get in the classrooms anymore. God, I'd love to teach a six-month course at Harvard, you know? (Right) Teach a six-month course at Princeton. I know they're people at Princeton that would talk about 9/11. I mean, it's almost like you need six months to lay down all this because it's just too much information. That's why I sort of like talking about Bobby because it just centers on one person and I feel like I'm proving that Muslims didn't kill Bobby. Planes had nothing to do with Bobby's death. He didn't die because of the towers coming down. You know, and just, I think it's very easy to prove fireball compared to a detonation. And then all that

information about the basement and Floor 22. So, it makes it a lot easier for me and I can put more passion into it.

JON Well, I want to say thank you very much for taking the time today to tell your story, and you know, I love you Bob (Right, I appreciate you too) Yeah, I appreciate everything you try to do for me and have done for me, and I just thank you very much for everything you've done over the years. And it's just a privilege to have you on.

BOB Hey, thanks for letting me vent. I need to vent.

JON No, problem, man.

BOB [Laughs] That's what it's all about. We both can vent to each other.

JON All right, so I'll see you next Wednesday for breakfast.

BOB All right, man. Good-bye, Jon.

JON All right, have a good day.

BOB All right, you do the same.

JON The following is the first time that I heard Bob McIlvaine speak. It took place at the 9/11 Omission Hearings held by then former Rep. Cynthia McKinney in New York City on September 9, 2004.

[Applause]

BOB My name's Bob McIlvaine. I'm from Oreland, Pennsylvania. I lost my son —when I did this for the press, I wasn't able to get through it, but maybe the second time around—I lost my son at Merrill Lynch—(starts crying) can't do it.

And it's not just because it's 9/11 now, it's just whenever I speak it happens. But it brings a cold reality to the whole thing. There's a lot of people dying in the world. And we're talking horrible deaths. The deaths of those people down there were horrible.

To this day—I just had a discussion with—I'm sorry I forgot your name—but, I'm still trying to find out what happened to him. I want to know to that

last second what happened to him. Every parent wants to know that. I run into a lot of parents, you know, in my neighborhood that has lost children, and you just want to know that last second what horror your child was going through. And I think about it every day and it rips me apart.

And, to do this, it truly is a double-edged sword, because I really would many days I want to go to an island and just sit there the rest of my life and ignore the rest of the world. And, as my son said yesterday, he said: Why don't you be happy? Try to be happy. Well, it's impossible to be happy. I have happy moments. The suffering isn't as bad, but the pain is still very immense. It's always there.

And when you do something like that, it brings you right back to day one. Day one I have every day of my life. I've made that choice. It's been a wonderful journey. And I do it for my son because he really believed that knowledge is power. And, if anything you get out of this, it's knowledge, and you have to take it out to the people, out to the American public. That's the only way we can do this. The people of this country must realize what the truth is. And history is replete with so many lies and they continue day-in day-out and it's just not this Bush administration, it's every administration. [Applause]

MCKINNEY That's right.

BOB And, trust me, I'm not an authority up here. All these other people are great authorities. This is a learning process for me. I've made every Commission meeting. I've been involved with the widows. I mean, they've done tremendous work. What they've done—the fact that this is out IN the public, it would have been an impossibility. Just don't forget, George Bush never wanted this Commission.

MCKINNEY That's right.

BOB We would have had Kissinger as the head of the Commission if it wasn't for the widows. They went to him and said to him: "Didn't you have some dealings with the Bin Laden's in your past?" And with that, he quit the Commission, yet we would have had him.

So, it's just so important that you take a lot out of this and take it out there onto the streets (Mm-hmm), because I just deal with the people, deal with my relatives, deal with the people in my neighborhood—they still look at it

and say: "Well, I still want to be safe." No one wants to lose their life. And they look at the President and say: "Well, he's our protector. [Grumbling from the audience] Our military is our protector."

Well, but the thing is, this is the way it is. If you're raising a family and you have three kids, all you want to know is you're protected. And I'm not saying that this is—I'm just saying it's so difficult to get to people to explain to them. Where do I start? Do I start in Iran in '53? Or do I go into the Congo in '60? (Right, exactly) It's a constant thing but it's an education.

And, I don't know, I think there's a lot of people—it's a lost cause in this country, and that's why we have to get out to the students of the world, and they have to understand where this all comes from. It's connecting the dots. My son didn't die just because George Bush wasn't inattentive. It has a lot to do with Clinton. It has a lot to do with Bush. It goes all the way back to Eisenhower. (Yes)

Okay, so I just—

[Applause]

MCKINNEY That's right, that's right.

BOB And this is the legacy of my son. If I would have died in those towers, he'd be doing the same thing. He wants to know the truth. I want to know the truth. And I have found myself in a position—I get invited to this just because I'm a parent. It brings a lot of power to it. And I've had the opportunity to speak around the world. Although I won't fly—I've done a lot of radio and TV, but I haven't flown yet. But, it's been a great experience for me because I had—I'm an educator. I was a teacher most of my life and, and to me, it's all education, and that's what it has to be. We just constantly have to educate, educate, educate. And then maybe people will start participating. And that to me is the solution.

Okay, thank you, very much.

[Applause]

JON This show is dedicated to Robert McIlvaine, Jr.



Chapter/Episode 19 – Bill Bergman – January 30, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Bill Bergman (BILL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week we're going to focus on whether or not there were indications of foreknowledge of the attacks in the financial markets and industry.

Hi, this is Jon and Bill Bergman. Hi Bill, how are you doing tonight?

BILL Good, Jon, thanks. Nice to be here.

JON Good to have you.

All righty, I'm going to read your bio for everyone.

Bill Bergman is the director of research for Truth in Accounting, a Chicago-based nonprofit dedicated to informing citizens about Government financial reporting. He also teaches finance and economics and finance courses at Loyola University Chicago. He has over twenty years of financial market

experience, including thirteen years as an economist and financial market policy analyst at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. His research interests have included wholesale payment system risk and pricing, the role of credit ratings in financial markets, the implications that national emergency and war powers can have for the executive branch in a time of crisis, and financial reporting by local, state, and federal Government entities. He is married, with three kids.

Okay, so that's your bio. Is there anything you wanted to add to that?

BILL I don't, I've had about 55 years of experience. That's when I was born, but I guess we can go on from there (Laughs) and work directly on these questions.

JON Okay—

BILL Again, I appreciate your interest, Jon, and your work in the past in this area.

JON Oh, thank you very much, Bill.

All right, just so everyone knows before we get started in our interview, something happened this week that I think deserves attention, and I wrote a little recap of this week's events about Saudi Arabia and 9/11, so I'd like to read that for everybody. Bill, if you can give me a second.

BILL Sure, no problem.

JON All right, good.

This week, Obama canceled a trip to the Taj Mahal so he could go pay his respect for King Abdullah in Saudi Arabia. He went to see the new King, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, who was named as a defendant in a lawsuit against Saudi Arabia brought about by 9/11 families. Some of the people that accompanied him were John McCain, who loves the 9/11 Report, which absolved the Saudi Arabian Government, James A. Baker, his law firm, Baker Botts represented the Saudis against the 9/11 families in a lawsuit, and Condoleezza Rice who lied before the 9/11 Commission and had an oil rig named after her. Michael Smerconish asked White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough about the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11. Something the families had been fighting for the release of for years and he said, "Well, this is obviously an issue that

you have been working on for some time. And this goes back across administrations. We're—the President will be visiting Riyadh to express our condolences and underscore the important issues that we have going on in the region. I'm not going to get involved in the 28 pages now, Michael, any more than I did before."

After arriving in Riyadh, Obama defended the U.S.'s relationship with Saudi Arabia considering their human rights' issues by saying, "Sometimes we need to balance our needs and speak to them about human rights issues with immediate concerns we have in terms of counterterrorism or dealing with regional stability."

Deputy National Security Advisor, Ben Rhodes, said, "We do believe that Saudi policy will remain quite similar to how it's been under King Abdullah." He said, adding, Obama wanted to forge the same kind of "close relationship" with Salman as he had with his predecessor.

Former President George H. W. Bush praised Saudi Arabia's alliance with the U.S. after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, an invasion that led to the first Gulf War, calling Abdullah a "dear friend and partner." The first President Bush said he would "never forget the way Saudi Arabia and the United States stood together against a common foe marking a moment of unparalleled cooperation among two great nations."

Bush's son, former President George W. Bush, called the King "an important and able ally and a force for modernization in his country." The last thing—the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff because of Abdullah's death, has established a research and essay competition [chuckles] in honor of Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz hosted by the national Defense University. The competition will focus on issues related to the Arab-Muslim world and is designed to encourage strategic thinking and meaningful research on a crucial part of the world. The program will be in place at NBU for the next academic year, officials said. So, that's what happened in the last week. Do you have anything to say about this?

BILL

Well, I guess I do, Jon, more than one thing to say about it. But going forward here in our conversation, I'd also like to note I'm speaking on behalf of Bill Bergman and not on the part of any of the organizations I'm currently working with. I care about the issues that you care about because I

think we both care about them because we're citizens. So, that's where I'm coming from here.

Yeah, I guess this latest news is helping to underscore the fact that the questions we're going to be exploring are not only still open, but behind the scenes there, I think some legal avenues things are intensifying and possibly moving in a direction towards greater disclosure that we're going to appreciate. We're not just talking about things that happened thirteen years ago, we're talking about things that are current and timely, and possibly getting more attention.

JON Yep, absolutely. And, to me, what happened is just a big slap in the face to all of the 9/11 Family Members. Remember now that Obama promised 9/11 Family Members Kristen Breitweiser and Bill Doyle that he would release the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry and has yet to do so. (Mm-hmm)

So, if you want to hear about Saudi Arabia's role, or possible role in the 9/11 attacks, I suggest listening to my interview with Paul Church. (Mm-hmm)

All righty. So, we're going to get started now with the questions for you. First question is: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

BILL Well, one of the things about that day was the fact that I was already on pins and needles because my son, my first-born son, my son was about to be born, and I was going to work—that's actually part of the story. When the news of 9/11 arrived—actually, I first heard of the events when a former intern called me up at work and said, "Are you watching this?" I had no clue of what was happening, and I heard what was happening and it was—what a day! You know, with—my son was about to be born—the first thing I thought of and then, well, I went home immediately and left the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and went home—because I didn't know where the trains were going to be moving and he could have been born at any moment. I didn't know if it was going to be a boy or girl, by the way. That was my first boy. It was very interesting—that was about five days later. But that was my priority—was getting home to my family.

And part because the other phone call that I received about an hour after that first one was from my sister, Laura, who in 1985, I believe, she was on board TWA Flight 847, the one that was hijacked and a Navy diver was

killed on the flight. She made it through and I still remember getting the call from the State Department telling us she was safe before I knew she was even on the flight. And she called up about an hour after that first phone call and said, "Get out of there." So, I did. And, later on, some people said they had to stay at their post. My job was not like that. I was in a research role and I didn't really have a—I could have stuck around and stayed by the fort, but my priorities were going home, and that's what I did.

JON Well, that makes sense—and congratulations on your first-born son.

BILL Yeah, it was exciting. "Mr. Bergman, that's a big baby!" That's the first thing that came out of the nurse's mouth. I know that you're a big boy, but so is he.

JON [Laughs] Yeah, I'm a big boy, at six-three, probably over 300 pounds at this point.

Anyway, what was the first thing you questioned about 9/11?

BILL Well, I think maybe the first day on the train back to work I remember talking to a friend, and one of the things that was in my head was we must have known something was coming. And I said that, out of my mouth, that we had to know, somehow, the intelligence agencies had to know something was up. And I didn't know for sure, but that was my first premonition. In turn, I don't know—the communication that we were getting from our Government at the time, it certainly didn't feel dishonest, but it didn't feel coherent or reliable, especially regarding the defense response to the planes going off course. Something about it just didn't feel coherent or right. And that was my first feelings about the events.

When we invaded Afghanistan—I'm kind of a peacenik—and I almost felt like it was, well, I can't really attack this. You've got to go find the criminals and take care of them. (Right) And now we've learned a few things about the questions underlying whether or not that was a valid response (Right), but that was my feeling at the time. But if I was to try to identify any one point in time when I felt like there was a need to aggressively try to find the truth, as opposed to what we were being told about the truth, was when Henry Kissinger was named the first commissioner, and that didn't sound right. And that was when I said something, in my head, this isn't right—and that's when I first started trying to think creatively and honestly about the questions that are still open today.

JON Well, that's interesting that you pointed out, or you questioned, having a foreknowledge of the events within the intelligence community, because after 9/11 we were told repeatedly that there were no warnings, that nobody had any idea that this kind of thing could happen, over and over again. And that it was a surprise attack like Pearl Harbor was presented, and so on and so forth. We heard that over and over and over again.

And, quickly, to get into my story a little bit, the very first thing that really stuck out to me was when Bush and Cheney asked Daschle not to investigate the attacks of 9/11 (Mm-hmm) in January of 2002, and I thought: "Why would the President and vice President, of all people, not want to know exactly how and why this happened, so as to make sure it could never happen again?" And, then, in May 2002, news of the August 6th PDB came out, which talked about warnings and so forth, and as I said, we were told repeatedly that there were no warnings. So, when the August 6th PDB came out and I realized we were being lied to (Mm-hmm) and the President and vice President didn't want to investigate this? I was off to the races.

As far as invading Afghanistan, that was sold as the good war. You know, like you said: "We have to go after these guys who did this." And that was acceptable to people. But, today, I look at it as the individuals responsible needed to be held accountable. We shouldn't have held an entire country accountable for the actions of the few.

BILL And the many innocent deaths that have arisen, both in Iraq and Afghanistan, are very, very sad. (Absolutely) And, as citizens, we are responsible for this happening. And that's a sad state of affairs.

JON You know, there was a poll that came out a while ago that said that 95 percent of the people in Afghanistan have never even heard of the 9/11 attacks. (Hmm) And, we were indiscriminately bombing so many people—it's just horrible.

Anyway, all right, now what I'm going to do. The next question, I'm just going to let you tell your story. So, please tell us your story and when you use big words like M1 Aggregate, please explain what it is for the dumb folks, such as myself, who are not financial whizzes.

BILL Sure, that sounds—I can do that, I think. As a teacher, that's what I try to do, and we'll go from there.

I guess, in thinking about "my story," one of the early parts of the story, in fact, is relevant and it was before 9/11 and that was in—by August 2001, I was about 80 percent complete with a paper analyzing what happens during a national emergency, or a time of war, for—and by national emergency, I'm talking about Presidentially declared national emergency. A very interesting area of constitutional law with important financial market implications, for instance, the March 1933 Bank Holiday declared by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt during a banking crisis was asserted to be under the authority of something called the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917, that during a time of crisis, the President can do extraordinary things, and he ordered all the banks in the country to be closed because of the run on the banking system. And this one order has a force of law and all the banks in the country closed because one person decided that was the—and whether or not that kind of authority, during—in our Constitutional system we have a shared set of responsibilities between the Congress and the executive branch and the judicial branch—it's a very, very interesting area.

And the new administration, I think, I was sensing in 2001, their tendencies in the areas of military affairs, as well as executive branch authority, a very aggressive view of the scope and authority for the President and the executive branch that was something called the Unitary Executive Theory was developed within the administration to justify more or less the President deciding what is or isn't the right thing to do without being checked or balanced by the Congress. We're in charge here is a oversimplification of that Unitary Executive Theory. And, in turn, that oversimplification for or during a crisis, financial crisis or otherwise, for the independence of the Federal Reserve system and decision-making within the Federal Reserve during a time of crisis.

So, it seemed to be an interesting and unique original sort of contribution that I was working on.

And about two weeks before 9/11, I got a call from Louis Fisher, a wonderful constitutional law scholar, who among other things, has done a great book on state secrets privilege, which you're aware of in the case of Sibel Edmonds, I think. (Yeah) But, a longer story there. Then, two weeks later we got the real national emergency and in turn in November 2001, I presented that paper at the Library of Congress, and I felt like I was just helpful, at least, in trying to open people's eyes. I wasn't an expert in this area, but it was a contribution.

So, that was part of my story, because after working in the areas of financial market policy analysis that I was working in for about three years after 9/11, or two years after 9/11, in late 2003, I was invited to present that national emergency paper at an accounting conference because of the accounting implications and I had received the Best Manuscript Award at this accounting conference (good), the year before.

JON Congratulations.

BILL Thank you. I thought that's, for the moment, the reason that it's relevant is the fact that I was told that I wouldn't be presenting the paper—you're not going to be presenting a paper on national emergency powers. And at that point, I was also invited to work in the money laundering area, which is in a different part of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago within the Supervision and Regulation Department and, among other things, I went through an FBI background check and survived and got some credentials for confidential information handling and signed a non-disclosure agreement and started working. I was told I was part of the fight on terrorism at that time and, not knowing much about money laundering, I was asked at the time to try to develop a reference document for the Federal Reserve system and I didn't have a great deal of background in money laundering, so the first thing I did try to write was a primer on money laundering. And as I did this primer, I did some—I was looking at some things—we should look at money flows around 9/11 if we can learn anything from them and also apply those lessons in the future and to look for things to watch.

So, that's what I did. I started scouring the world for both the external and public information that's out there, as well as the internal data that I was looking at when I was in the Fed. And I saw two things that perked my attention: the fact that in July and August 2001, there was an extraordinary surge in currency circulating outside of banks. That's the currency component of the M1 aggregate that you mentioned. There's two basic types of cash—you've got cash in a bank in the form of bank deposits and checking deposits, for instance, and in turn you have currency circulating outside of banks. If you go to an ATM tomorrow and withdraw \$100 from your checking account, the overall M1 number won't change but the demand deposit number will go down and the currency circulating outside of banks will go up because you withdrew money from your account. And it's that number, the currency circulating outside of banks and the billions of dollars was the amount of the above normal amount. August

2001, at the time I looked at, was the third fastest growing month in currency circulating outside of banks since World War II. There were only two other months out of the 700 months or so that we've had. So, you have three very—and those two other months are of interest. One was December 1999, which makes some sense in the sense that the Y2K phenomenon people were concerned about banks and were unloading currency—some people were so concerned about banks and the Y2K interval that they were withdrawing currency. But the other relevant factoid, which may just be a coincidence about that December 1999, that was the biggest increase of all the 700 months, was the fact that we were under the Millennium terrorism threat that was operating at that time, too.

And, the main reason why this is not just perhaps a coincidence but there's a real reason to be looking at currency circulating outside of banks in light of terrorism throughout is the fact that after 9/11 and after those 98 embassy bombing in Africa, the United States and the banking regulators and the Justice Department have the authority and the ability and they actually do freeze and seize assets in banks of suspicious parties. And, if that's the case, and if you have money in a bank and you're aware of things, you have an incentive to get out of the banks. A longer story there, relating to the Sarasota developments, we can talk about later. But that was the December 1999 background.

The second fastest growing month was January 1991. And, two interesting things happening at that time, just by way of context, were the onset of U.S. military action in Iraq in the first Gulf War, and there's some interesting reasons why currency is used in military and covert operations, which are of interest there, perhaps. In addition, that was an important enforcement month in the BCCI scandal where people were seeing apparently the Federal Reserve and the Justice Department getting more serious about cracking down on the BCCI and may have been withdrawing money at that point in time.

And the third fastest growing month out of those 700 months was August 2001. It wasn't September, it was August, the month before 9/11. With the possibility that suspicious parties were liquifying their accounts either in the United States or outside the United States because of the possibility that their assets were going to be frozen.

JON

My question really fast is, so basically, during a time of threat or the idea that we might be going to war or that cash might become harder to get, is

that what I'm understanding? They make more money available? Is that how I'm understanding it?

BILL They make it available because people want it. And, yes, that's what happens. So, in order to make it available, that's an interesting point. The question is, okay, how do you, if all of a sudden there's a demand for a billion dollars of hundred dollar bills that wasn't there a week ago, how does the system meet that sort of extraordinary requirement? And that's material for the questions that we're asking. And the answer is the fact that the banks they have money in their vaults but they don't want to carry too much of that stuff around. That's why the Federal Reserve exists. The basements of the Federal Reserve and the Federal Reserve banks, the 12 banks around the country, as well as the branches, which are also of interest here, they have vaults with lots of currency, to feed the banking system when the need demands it.

So, the other interesting thing and, in fact, public data suggests it wasn't just currency in circulation that was rising extraordinarily rapidly in August 2001, there was also an extraordinary surge of currency shipments from the Federal Reserve facilities to the banking system in order to meet that demand.

JON Well, that's very interesting. So, is that the basic gist of what you found?

BILL That's the basic gist and, in fact, there's also—it's important to note—that even today it could be completely innocently explained by a banking crisis that was souring in Argentina. And billions of dollars in hundred dollar bills may be responsible for all of this. But the one thing that we know for sure is that we haven't seen any evidence that this plausible investigation has ever been pursued, except for the fact that I was fired after asking the questions that I asked.

JON So, you're saying that in 2004, you were fired for writing about your questions regarding the increase in currency?

BILL That's an over- I guess, simplification. Again, as I mentioned, I was on—I did some interesting things that were already kind of critical, or just, I wasn't necessarily—I was trying to work for taxpayers and citizens when I was there, and sometimes I asked questions in other areas we can talk about, but for now, the main point was I was writing this Q&A and I noticed the currency shipments and I noticed something else—the fact that

the Board of Governors on August 2, 2001, four days before that August 6 PDB, the Board of Governors issued a letter to the Reserve Banks that was a non-routine letter, urging them to scrutinize suspicious activity reports. And the letter never mentioned terrorism or its financing explicitly, so it may just be a coincidence, but this letter came kind of out of the blue and it was urging Reserve Banks to scrutinize suspicious activity reports when, ever since 1998 embassy bombings, this has been an emphasized element—of suspicious activity reporting.

And the 9/11 Commission kind of painted a false picture in this regard, among other places, the fact that the Governments weren't really emphasizing terrorism and terrorism financing in the anti-money laundering facilities programs. But, really, they were ever since 1998, and terrorism was on the radar of the suspicious activity reporting framework. So, the question arose in my head whether or not heightened intelligence warnings of terrorist threats in July and August 2001, were part of that letter that was issued to the Reserve banks. And I asked if that was the case. Why was this letter issued when it was issued? And I was ready to follow up with my ideas why we needed to investigate the currency shipment—and the conversation that I had was shorter than I expected, and a week later my assignment was terminated. I was told I committed an egregious breach of protocol in calling who I called and asking the question that I asked—even though I'd already been asked to answer the question internally at the Chicago Fed. And I thought I was doing the right thing, but my credentials for confidential information were taken away and my position in the bank a month later was eliminated at that point. I was told it had nothing to do with me personally, it was an organizational matter.

JON

That's very convenient, I would think.

Now, the entry on HistoryCommons.org about you, it says:

"As the Government accountability project will in 2006, write: 'The Federal Reserve's failure to date to publicly address the growth in currency in mid-2001, is conspicuous. If a benign explanation exists or if for whatever reasons the currency growth is irrelevant, the Fed should say so publicly. And explain why this is the case. A failure to do so, raises troubling questions.'"

So, that's where we stand right now as far as what you found in August 2001, that there has been no explanation, correct?

BILL Well, but we did get a letter back from a senior staff person who was asked to write this letter, and his explanation was fairly short and incomplete, which was my impression as well as other people I respected. There was a banking crisis following in Argentina and that explains it when, even if, shipments in Argentina could be suspicious along these lines as well. Simply, that people may have been liquidating their accounts in Argentina, not just in the United States. But that's a—the main point is, yeah, that's where we stand today. Even today, this far in the future—especially in light of the Sarasota story, as well as the 28-page initiative. My questions are still open.

And if not, I think they're related to, if not maybe even central, to the information that is being pursued right now.

JON Okay, so it's basically an indication of foreknowledge that something might be happening or might be coming up on the horizon. And we're going to get further into that later.

Now, did you ever try to contact any of the investigations that were going on to tell them what you know?

BILL Yes, I did. And maybe not the investigations, but members of Congress and committees in Congress. I contacted and told them. And, in turn, while we did contact the Board of Governors and tried to tell them what happened at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. In addition, I sent material to some prosecutors and never heard back. At least I did try to get information out. I never sent—I never trusted the 9/11 Commission and I didn't try to contact them.

JON Okay, so—and you found out about this in 2004, so you wouldn't have contacted the Joint Congressional Inquiry, because that was done at that point.

BILL Right, it was late 2003, when I was working on this.

JON So, you weren't given any kind of whistleblower status or protections or anything like that?

BILL Nope, and I trust my Dad. He said: "No, don't go that route." And that's just my Dad. Also, Tom Devine at the Government Accountability Project, a great guy, he advised me no. The legal route is just too fraught with disaster. So, I never did try to get whistleblower protection.

JON Okay. Now, the information, as I said, you're talking about suggested there was knowledge that something was about to happen. Are you aware of the allegations of insider trading regarding the 9/11 attacks?

BILL Yes, I am.

JON Okay. Now, just so people know, there are many claims that elements close to the U.S. Government were aware of the attacks and used that information to make money, that elements within Al-Qaeda used their knowledge of the attacks to make money. I want to try and answer a very simple question, and that question is:

Was there insider trading that was done seemingly using the knowledge that the 9/11 attacks were coming? So, what can you tell me about the insider trading?

BILL Well, I think I can end with my—I can begin with my ending. I think we, again, have open questions here that need to be investigated. I can't tell you whether or not it certainly happened. I don't know if it did. But when you look at the market prices and what was happening in the days before 9/11 and the weeks before 9/11, it certainly appears to be the case that it's consistent with the fact that informed trading was going on. It's difficult to escape that possibility. In turn, when you combine that with the treatment of the matter in the 9/11 Commission Report—the 9/11 Commission Report washed their hands of the matter, it looks like, way too quickly. We couldn't find any evidence of anyone connected to Al-Qaeda that would be doing this.

JON [Laughs]

BILL They had no—the possibility, of course, if there was knowledge in the intelligence committee of an impending threat, you've got the possibility that this was taking place. And it's a very sad thing, but it's possible it was happening. We haven't seen evidence of an authoritative honest investigation yet. That's the other part that's a little bit scary.

JON

Well, what I'm going to do is I'm going to read directly from my article called "The Facts Speak for Themselves" about getting into specifics about the trading, so people understand what we're talking about. (Mm-hmm)

"On or around August 6, 2001, what appeared to be 'suspicious' put option purchases are made. According to one analyst: 'From what I'm hearing, it's more than coincidence.' In early September 2001, 'suspicious' short selling of Rand Insurance Company stocks take place. Also, in September 2001, suspicion of insider trading takes place in many other countries resulting in the creation of several investigations. The country's mentioned are: Belgium, France, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Monte Carlo, Cyprus, the U.K., Italy, and Japan. On October 3, 2001, the San Francisco Chronicle will report that the NYSE sees: 'Unusual heavy trading in airline and related stocks several days before the attacks.' Some of those companies are: American, Continental, Delta, Northwest, Southwest, United, and USAirways. In early September 2001, there is a sharp increase in short-selling of American and United Airlines stocks."

The next part is the most compelling, I think.

"Between September 6, 2001 and September 10, 2001, suspicious trading of put options of American and United airlines occur. Ernst, and forgive me if I say this name wrong, Ernst—Ernst Welteke, the President of the German Central Bank, says that his bank has done a study 'There are ever clearer signs that there were activities on international financial markets that had been carried out with the necessary expert knowledge.' His researchers have found 'Almost irrefutable proof of insider trading.'"

So, that's the basic gist of the examples of what might have taken place prior to 9/11. And, if somebody did insider trading, that means they had a knowledge that the 9/11 attacks might have been on their way.

So—my next question is: Are you aware of the software known as PROMIS?

BILL Yes, I am, and it's related to the topic we're talking about. By way of background, in finance courses, the students are taught something called the efficient market hypothesis, where one thing that financial economics tries to teach students is the fact that you've got to respect market prices and it's hard to beat the market. It's hard to be smarter than the market, for the same reason that when you and I go out of our houses and walk down the sidewalk, we don't see a lot of 20-dollar bills on the sidewalk. And the simple reason is if they were there, someone would have picked them up.

And the same type of phenomenon happens in financial markets, which are so competitive. Information that is relevant for market prices tends to flow into market prices rapidly. If it didn't, then there would still be 20-dollar bills on the floor that people would be picking up. And that's why market prices are worthy of respect and inquiry on a matter like this, because the information certainly appears to be consistent with the fact that there was information flowing about the attacks beforehand and the markets were acting on it. And that's why this PROMIS system, that's why the intelligence agencies, in theory, are monitoring market prices for threats and threats of war and threats of terrorism, through the financial markets, because they're so efficient and information flows into them—about everything, including, apparently, before 9/11.

JON Okay, well, what I've done is I've gotten a description of just exactly what PROMIS is for everyone.

"PROMIS is P-R-O-M-I-S and it stands for Prosecutors Management Information System. Designed as a case management system for prosecutors, PROMIS has the ability to track people. 'Every use of PROMIS in the court system is tracking people,' said Inslaw President Hamilton. 'You can rotate the file by case, defendant, arresting officer, judge, defense lawyer, and it's tracking all the names of all the people in all the cases.'

What this means is that PROMIS can provide a complete rundown of all federal cases in which a lawyer has been involved, or all the cases in which a lawyer has represented defendant A, or all the cases in which a lawyer has represented white-collar criminals, at which stage in each of the cases the lawyer agreed to a plea bargain, and so on. Based on this information, PROMIS can help a prosecutor

determine when a plea will be taken in a particular type of case.

But the real power of PROMIS, according to Hamilton, is that with a staggering 570,000 lines of computer code, PROMIS can integrate innumerable databases without requiring any reprogramming. In essence, PROMIS can turn blind data into information. And anyone in Government will tell you that information, when wielded with finesse, begets power. Converted to use by intelligence agencies, as has been alleged in interviews by ex-CIA and Israeli Mossad agents, PROMIS can be a powerful tracking device capable of monitoring intelligence operations, agents and targets, instead of legal cases."

All that is from an article from *Wired Magazine*, called "The INSLAW Octopus" from 1993. Now, with regard to the trading financial transactions and so forth, I've got this little quote from *Salon*, and we're going to get to why PROMIS is significant in a second. [Laughs]

"According to reports over the years in the U.S. and Foreign Press, INSLAW's PROMIS software has imbedded surreptitiously in systems sold to foreign and global banks as a way to give the NSA secret 'backdoor' access to the electronic flow of money around the world." (Mm-hmm)

It says:

"William Hamilton claims that Reagan officials gave PROMIS to the NSA and CIA, which then adapted the software and its outstanding ability to search other databases to manage intelligence operations and track financial transactions."

And that's from a *Salon* piece called: "Exposing Bush's Historic Abuse of Power" from July 24, 2008.

Now, the reason that I brought up PROMIS is because PROMIS, as it says, you know, looks at what the market is doing. You know, it monitors stocks and so on and so forth for possible terrorist attacks and stuff like that.

BILL And, money flows.

JON Yep.

Now, the 9/11 Family Members asked, I believe, the Joint Congressional Inquiry and the 9/11 Commission about this, and I have some quotes about it:

"Also ignored by U.S. intelligence agencies was the enormous amount of trading activity on the Chicago Exchange Board and in overseas markets. Our intelligence agencies readily use PROMIS software to analyze these kinds of market indicators that presented themselves in the weeks prior to September 11th. Why were these aberrational trades and market swings ignored? We were at the highest state of alert. An attack by Al-Qaeda was expected to occur at any given moment. And yet, massive amounts of trades occurred on American Airlines, United Airlines, Re-insurance companies, and leaseholders in The World Trade Center and none of our watchdogs noticed?"

And that was from 9/11 Family Member Kristen Breitweiser, I believe in front of the Joint Congressional Inquiry on September 18th, 2002. The next thing I have is from a press release from the 9/11 Families Steering Committee. It says:

"Why did our Government fail its foremost obligation to protect its citizens on 9/11? All other questions stem from that. There are questions about domestic and foreign intelligence, INS, NSC, NSA, FAA, NORAD, stock puts, and PROMIS software. There are also questions about the influence of non-Government entities on our Government's foreign and domestic policies. No Government official or agency should be exempt from questions about what they knew or did prior to or on September 11th."

And that is from a statement from the Family Steering Committee Press Conference Remarks on September 10, 2003.

Now, I want to make the point that PROMIS is not addressed at all, that I can see, by the 9/11 Commission or the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11. (Mm-hmm) So, it would seem to me—

BILL If you develop this amazing system for tracking criminal and/or like activity, where is the evidence that we've actually used this incredible system? The fact—it's like the dog that didn't bark. It's, wait a minute, something is fishy just by the absence of information. Perhaps, to think things out here, the possibility exists that they don't want to talk about how they use it, because they want to protect the sources and methods of investigation. [Sigh] But, uh—

JON Well, to me, everything that the 9/11 Commission ignored, becomes a topic of interest, in my opinion. As well as a number of other things. But, you know, this is what the 9/11 Commission said with regard to the insider trading (Mm-hmm)

BILL You have a quote there? It's kind of in my head, but you can go ahead and read it.

JON Oh, no, I have the quote right in front of me. (Okay)

"Highly publicized allegations of insider trading in advance of 9/11 generally rest on reports of unusual pre-9/11 trading activity in companies whose stock plummeted after the attacks. Some unusual trading did in fact occur, but each such trade proved to have an innocuous explanation. For example, the volume of put options investments that pay off only when a stock drops in price—surged in the parent companies of United Airlines on September 6th and American Airlines on September 10th—highly suspicious trading on its face. Yet, further investigation has revealed that the trading had no connection with 9/11.

BILL No connection—or no conceivable ties to Al-Qaeda—I'm sorry for interrupting. Go ahead.

JON "A single U.S.-based institutional investor with no conceivable ties to Al-Qaeda purchased 95 percent of the UAL puts on September 6th as part of a trading strategy that also included buying 115,000 shares of American on

September 10th. Similarly, much of the seemingly suspicious trading in American on September 10th was traced to a specific U.S.-based options trading newsletter, faxed to its subscribers on Sunday, September 9th, which recommended these trades. These examples typify the evidence examined by the investigation. The SEC and the FBI, aided by other agencies and the securities industry, devoted enormous resources to investigating this issue, including securing the cooperation of many foreign Governments. These investigators have found that the apparently suspicious consistently proved innocuous."

Now, they said that the one person they looked at, or whatever, had no ties to Al-Qaeda. The 9/11 Commission would not reveal the name of the "single U.S.-based institutional investor that had no conceivable ties to Al-Qaeda."

Which is interesting. So, the 9/11 Commission is saying that it did not take place and that not even Al-Qaeda took part in the trading.

BILL And, you know, the obvious question is did they investigate the possibility if information was flowing, as we've learned a great deal more about the warnings that were flowering in July and August, whether or not that information was acted on by anybody that had access to it, including the intelligence agencies and anyone they spoke with.

JON Well, the 9/11—

BILL The 9/11 Commission Report does not investigate that question.

JON Well, as I mentioned earlier, there was a very surprising quote from Ernst Welteke and the 9/11 Commission addressed what he had to say in a monograph called the 9/11 Commission Monograph on Terrorist Financing. (Mm-hmm) And I'll just read what they say. (Mm-hmm)

"Shortly after 9/11, Ernst Welteke, President of the German Central Bank, made a number of public statements that insider trading occurred in airline and insurance company stock, and also in gold and oil futures. These preliminary claims were never confirmed. In fact, German officials publicly backtracked fairly soon after Mr. Welteke's statement

was issued. On September 27, a spokesman for the German securities regulator, BAWe (Bundesaufsichtsamt für den Wert papierhandel), declared that while the investigation was continuing, 'there is no evidence that anyone who had knowledge of the attacks before they were committed used it to make financial transactions.'

On December 3, 2001, a spokesman for the BAWe said its investigation had revealed no evidence of illicit trading in advance of 9/11 and that the case remained open pending new information. The spokesman said separate investigations by state authorities had also yielded no information and had been closed.

Commission staff interviewed German law enforcement officials who said that exhaustive investigation in Germany revealed no evidence of illicit trading. Moreover, both SEC and FBI officials involved in the trading investigation told the Commission staff that German investigators had privately communicated to them that there was no evidence of illicit trading in Germany before 9/11. The FBI legal attaché in Berlin forwarded a lead to the German BKA (Bundeskriminalamt), which reported back that the trading allegations lacked merit. It appears, then, that Welteke's initial comments were simply ill-considered and unsupported by the evidence."

Now, I can find NO evidence that the 9/11 Commission spoke with Ernst Welteke to see what he had to say (Hmm), to look at the information that he had. I mean, apparently, his bank did a study. It said so. You know, and it said: "There are ever clearer signs that there were activities on the international financial markets that MUST have been carried out with the necessary expert knowledge." Meaning that they knew the attacks were coming and used that information to make money. "His researchers found 'almost irrefutable proof of insider trading.'"

So, that's the story of Ernst Welteke.

Now, on MY show [laughs], we've gone over how corrupt and compromised the 9/11 Commission was (Mm-hmm), so basically their assertions have to be taken with a grain of salt.

BILL

In addition, these assertions are, in this area, are also consistent with the quote that you're also very well aware of on Page 172 regarding the financing for and the source of the funding for the attack (Right) where the 9/11 Commission states that at the end of the day, we don't know, and it doesn't really matter. It's of little practical significance. Al-Qaeda had many sources of funding and they could have tapped any one of them. It's just they didn't try to follow the money trail, which in turn, relates very, I think, closely to this recent development regarding a court case and a Florida lawsuit in Sarasota, Florida, and Senator Graham's active support of the questions that had been raised and his anger with the integrity of the FBI apparently in its relationships with both the Congress and the 9/11 Commission regarding this family that was living in Sarasota, Florida, that had a father of the woman living there was a senior advisor to the Saudi Royal Family and they left everything behind in the week or two before 9/11, including "an empty safe" which in turn Senator Graham is angry that the FBI withheld evidence that it knew about this family, including evidence that it had that the alleged hijackers were visiting the house in the weeks before 9/11, which is a shocking statement by the former chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee and co-chair of the Joint Congressional Inquiry. He's mad that this hasn't been—and this Florida lawsuit that's been led by the Florida Bulldog and a great guy there named Dan Christensen has succeeded in getting 80,000 pages of documents that the FBI originally denied existed into the hands of a federal judge who was reviewing them for possible release regarding the investigation into this family. And, if in fact this was part of the support for the hijackers, including financial support, that's part of the realm of interest asserted for the 9/11—the 28 pages that have been forever declassified at least so far by—I'm sorry, forever classified originally by the Bush administration and the Obama administration has refused to release them.

So, things are still active, both in the Congress as well in the FOIA lawsuit in Sarasota. Anybody that was supporting the hijackers financially, as well as related networks, they had to be doing it with dollar-denominated accounts in the United States or outside the United States and, in turn, anyone that was in those accounts that knew something was coming may have been liquifying their accounts before 9/11. And that could help explain, perhaps, some of that cashflow I was asking questions about.

JON Well, I wanted to go over what the SEC—the Securities and Exchange Commission found (Mm-hmm) with regard to the allegations of insider trading. (Mm-hmm) Now, this is a report, it says:

"Nearly nine years, two recessions and thousands of conspiracy theories later, the U.S. Government has made it official: Initial speculation after the 9/11 terrorist attacks that plotters made financial bets against airlines or other companies hurt by the events was unfounded. The Securities and Exchange Commission began its inquiry into the matter on Sept. 12th, 2001, and went on to examine trading in the U.S. and foreign securities markets that took place between Aug. 20th of that year and Sept. 11th. While the agency wrapped up its investigation in May 2002, and there were references to the SEC's conclusions in the report by the federal 9/11 Commission, the findings were kept secret. But the privately operated, nonpartisan National Security Archives fought for six years to make the SEC report public, an effort aided by the Obama administration's push to declassify documents across the spectrum of Government affairs. And today, most of the SEC's 'Pre-September 11, 2001 Trading Review' was made public."

And that was AOLNews, and the article was called "SEC Found No Sign 9/11 Conspirators Traded on Plot" and that was April 30th, 2010.

BILL It wasn't an SEC report, it was a report ABOUT the SEC's investigation. I mean—

JON Clearly, it was a report (Yeah) that said their findings were finally released, essentially, and the—

BILL The U.S. Government has made it official as a broad claim already that's a little suspicious.

JON [Laughs] Right.

BILL I have some other—there's some source of perspective for you—I don't have the authors' names on my fingertips, but there was a study, an academic paper, or research paper, by accounting and financing professors—I believe one of them was from Emory University in Georgia, that

examined the trading success of SEC employees. SEC employees apparently have good records of trading success around the times of SEC enforcement action was the area they were looking at. And that's maybe just another little nugget to be thinking about.

JON Well, one thing I find interesting is that they're looking to see if "terrorists" used their information about the attacks to make money. They're not looking—it doesn't seem that they're looking anywhere else, like you know —

BILL Of course not, they don't want to find the possible answer, which is so possibly shocking and sad. We don't want to go there. Thanks anyway. Don't rock the boat. That's the implication.

JON I found two stories that show that the SEC might be corrupt, as a matter of fact. Can you believe that? A Government agency that's corrupt? [Laughs]

BILL I live in Chicago, Jon.

JON [Laughs] That's where Al Capone came from.

BILL And some other folks—a longer story.

JON Right.

All right, so these quotes that I have. It says:

"A trial attorney from the Securities and Exchange Commission said his bosses were too 'tentative and fearful' to bring many Wall Street leaders to heel after the 2008 credit crisis, echoing the regulator's outside critics. James Kidney, who joined the SEC in 1986 and retired this month, offered the critique in a speech at his goodbye party. His remarks hit home with many in the crowd of SEC lawyers and alumni thanks to a part of his resume not publicly known: He had campaigned internally to bring charges against more executives in the agency's 2010 case against Goldman Sachs Group Inc. The SEC has become 'an agency that polices the broken windows on the street level and rarely goes to the penthouse floors,' (hmmm) Kidney said, according to a copy of his remarks obtained by Bloomberg News. "On the rare

occasions when enforcement does go to the penthouse, good manners are paramount. Tough enforcement, risky enforcement, is subject to extensive negotiation and weakening."

And that was from Bloomberg, an article called: "SEC Goldman Lawyer Says Agency Too Timid on Wall Street Misdeeds," April 8, 2014.

The second quote I have. It says:

"The SEC has violated federal law by destroying the records of thousands of enforcement cases in which it decided not to file charges against or conduct full-blown investigations of Wall Street firms and others initially suspected of wrongdoing, a former agency official has alleged. The purged records involve major firms such as Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley and hedge-fund manager SAC Capital, the former official claimed. At issue were suspicions of actions such as insider trading, financial fraud and market manipulation. The allegations come at a time when the Securities and Exchange Commission faces criticism that it has pulled punches or missed warning signs in its policing of Wall Street."

That's from the Washington Post. It's called: "SEC Accused Of Dumping Records," from November 17th, 2001. The person who wrote the story, the originator of that article, was Matt Taibbi (Mm-hmm), and his article was called "Is the SEC Covering Up Wall Street Crimes?" and that appeared in *Rolling Stone* Magazine.

Now, I spoke to Matt Taibbi about the story of the SEC. Basically, I asked him, the originator of the SEC corruption story, if we should trust the SEC's conclusions concerning the suspicious trading of 9/11. Do you want to know what he said?

BILL I would just guess, but go ahead. Yes, I do want to know what he said.

JON [Laughs] It says:

"The whole notion that U.S. interests would have insider traded 9/11 is the dumbest thing you people have ever thought

up, and that's saying quiet a lot. Have you even stopped for a second to think about this rationality? Any person that would be in a position to know about the 9/11 attacks from within the U.S. Government would also have access to mountains of other vital economic information—like changes in interest rates, information about military contract awards, or the results of USDA or CBO or Bureau of Labor reports. It is exponentially easier to trade on interest rate shifts or unemployment statistics than it is to short the freaking airline you're going to use in a terrorist attack. In doing so, however, has an additional benefit of not leaving physical evidence tying you to the crime. If, in fact, anyone did insider trade 9/11, that to me would be proof that it had to be Arab terrorists, or somebody similarly unsophisticated, because nobody with the wherewithal to pull off a "inside job" on the scale YOU folks [you folks, you know, us] would bother trying to steal a few nickels in such a crude, silly way. That's like accusing a man who's just robbed three Rembrandts from the net of ripping the head off a parking meter with a wrench on the way home. The fact that you believe this stuff, to me, indicates that you have no idea at all how the financial services industry works. There are a million easier ways for people in that position to make money."

So, that was his response. (Mm-hmm) And I responded by saying:

"We thought it up. Obviously, you didn't pay attention to the news regarding the allegations of insider trading, nor did you pay attention to the fact that when the families asked the FBI about it, they were essentially ignored. So, I got it. We should trust the SEC is what you're saying."

[Laughs]

BILL

Well, one thing, the implication of his response—he believes the implication that, well, I certainly, I don't know what you think Jon, but I don't know if there was insider trading before 9/11. I just do know that it's very suspicious that we don't have a credible investigation of this possibility. (Oh, absolutely) The open questions, that's what—the fact that these questions are still open is a scandal enough.

JON Absolutely, and just to counter what Matt said, I found this report—and I know this is a lot of information for people to take in, but this is an important subject so I wanted to get as much as I could out there. This is from an article:

"With a U.S. puppet back in the President's mansion, UFC's—I think that's United Fruit Company (Yeah, perhaps, yep) [Laughs]—profits were safe. But it appears the company wasn't the only beneficiary of this Cold War cloak-and-dagger diplomacy: A recent study by economists [Arindrajit Dube](#), [Ethan Kaplan](#), and [Suresh Naidu](#) argues that those in on the planning process also profited handsomely. By tracking the stock prices of UFC and other politically vulnerable firms in the months leading up to CIA-staged coups in Guatemala, Chile, Cuba, and Iran, the researchers provide evidence that someone—perhaps one of the Dulleses, Cabots, or others in the know—was trading stocks based on classified information of these coups-in-the-making."

That is from Slate.com from an article called: "They Made a Killing" from October 2008. (Mm-hmm)

So—

BILL Well, there's an interesting—it's not just, for instance, this intelligence-gathering that you're talking about—there's also a very interesting area of the financial markets called political risk insurance, where private companies are insuring against the risk of loss for companies that have assets that might be nationalized in the event of a coup, or that might, the banking system might be frozen by a company having a fiscal crisis—it's a fascinating area of insurance. And, it's a valid market-based sort of solution for trying to manage your risks in a very risky world. And the incentive for those folks, it's valid for them to try to be aware of developing threats, because that's their job. They're insurance companies. And it's not evil.

So, there's another part of the equation that the insurance companies that were exposed to 9/11 right now are very important plaintiffs in that New York litigation that is still proceeding and open for going after the financing of the attacks, perhaps, or asserted financing of the attacks by people in Saudi Arabia.

JON Right.

Well, I'd like to point out that—we pointed out already, or I've pointed out that the 9/11 Commission was corrupt and compromised. We have information that suggests the SEC is corrupt and compromised, and I provided an example of a study that was done that showed that people with inside knowledge of coups that were going to take place prospered within Wall Street.

So, what I'm going to do, I'm just going to read a couple of names of reports that were done that shows that there probably was insider trading, or suggested there was.

Allen M. Poteshman (Mm-hmm), "Unusual Option Market Activity and the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001," *The Journal of Business*, 2006, vol. 79, no. 4.

Now, I think that study suggests that it might have been the terrorists that might have done the insider trading. I don't remember, exactly.

BILL He didn't identify the source of the trading. He didn't try to make that determination. He just examined mathematically that the prices, and yes, it is consistent in his head with informed trading.

JON The second one is:

Marc Chesney, et al (Mm-hmm), "Detecting Informed Trading Activities in the Options Markets," Social Sciences Research Network, 13th January 2010.

Do you know anything about that study?

BILL I've heard about him and I've heard good things about it. I haven't read his study, but I've heard about him.

JON Okay, the third one is:

Wing-Keung Wong, et al, "Was there Abnormal Trading in the S&P 500 Index Options Prior to the September 11 Attacks?" Social Sciences Research Network, April 2010.

Do you know anything about that one?

BILL No, but there's another—I haven't seen, if you see this on your radar, if you're looking around—there's another set of, for instance, it's not just airlines we're talking about, or re-insurance companies, or that's a very interesting avenue of exploration here that's worthy of looking into, but there's another possible indicator that was—well there's something called the VIX Index, which is a volatility index that's traded at the Chicago Board of Options Exchange, and in the weeks before 9/11—this, it uses options prices to basically try to measure how much uncertainty, or in fact the VIX Index is sometimes called the market FEAR index. And it had some extraordinary movements in the two weeks before 9/11, as well. I haven't seen a study of that yet, and I don't know if we can—it's like these other ones. We really—how conclusive we can be about the conclusions, especially with respect to who did the trading. It's hard to find the truth. But, again, that's the, I guess that's the sad state of affairs, but we still have these open questions, and that's—

JON Yeah, absolutely, and the last thing I'm going to quote, James Rickards wrote a book called *The Death of Money* (Mm-hmm) and in that book, he alleged that insider trading did, in fact, take place—his book recently came out—but, he argues or said it was Al-Qaeda or terrorists that did it. But here's a quote from his book:

"The secure meeting rooms at the CIA's Langley headquarters—windowless, quiet, and cramped—are called 'vaults' by those who use them. On September 26, 2003, John Mulheren and I were seated side by side in a fourth-floor vault in the headquarters complex. Mulheren was one of the most legendary stock traders in Wall Street history. I was responsible for modeling terrorist trading for the CIA, part of a broad inquiry into stock trading on advance knowledge of the 9/11 attacks.

I looked in his eyes and asked if he believed there was insider trading in American Airlines stock immediately prior to 9/11. His answer was chilling: 'It was the most blatant case of insider trading I've ever seen.'"

So—[Laughs] obviously there are contradictions to what the SEC and the 9/11 Commission are saying.

Now, I think I have a question for you. Okay, is there anything else that you would like to promote at this time?

BILL Well, in the subject area that we're talking about, if anything I'd like to promote just because it's where the effort is that 28-pages dot org website. Or, not promote it but just note it and look at the efforts that's being put forth by the folks behind that website and the work of the Florida Bulldog parenthetically and their case in Sarasota. Those are two efforts right now—they aren't going to be conclusive, and as you've noted, those 28 pages, even if we get them, are they the end of the story? And they're not. But that doesn't mean they're not useful, and (Well—) declassifying those 28 pages is going to be important for getting an authoritative investigation underway. We need a new, and subpoena-power investigation including an investigation, I'm sad to say, into previous investigations.

JON [Laughs heartily] Well, I whole-heartedly agree with that.

One of the interesting things, and I've said this before, about the 28-redacted pages is that when the 9/11 Commission apparently looked into the allegations of the 28-redacted pages—allegations, which Philip Zelikow, the executive director of the 9/11 Commission, recently referred to as "wild accusations." The 9/11 Report looked into the allegations and absolved Saudi Arabia.

Now, a short note about that, Philip Zelikow refused half of the interview requests for Saudi investigators. Dana Lesemann, who came from the Joint Congressional Inquiry and helped to author the 28-redacted pages, was denied access to them by Philip Zelikow. Because of that, she went through a back channel to gain access to those pages and, as a result, Zelikow fired her. The Memoranda for the Record, which basically is a description of the interviews that took place with witnesses and there are different pages for each witness. They're called Memoranda for the Record. For three of the individuals—I don't remember the names—directly in the MFR it says that these people are not trustworthy. The people they were talking to about the Saudi part of the plot. They weren't trustworthy and, yet, Philip Zelikow and Dietrich Snell took part in a "late night editing session" to remove any Saudi support for the hijackers from the Saudi Government and they moved it into footnotes in the back of the book. So that's why the 9/11 Report essentially absolves Saudi Arabia, because of Philip Zelikow and Dietrich Snell.

And, I'd just like to say, Dietrich Snell is somebody who was a witness in a courtroom trying to prove that Iran was responsible for 9/11. Because of his testimony, the court found that Iran was involved in 9/11.

Also, I believe that he got his boss, Eliot Spitzer, who was his boss at one time, to get him out of testifying before the Able Danger hearings that were taking place, because he was somebody who supposedly spoke to the Able Danger people, and yet, Able Danger didn't show up in the 9/11 Report.

[Laughs] So, that's a little bit more information for you guys. So, this contradiction between the 9/11 Report and the Joint Congressional Inquiry, I think, is very interesting, because it further shows to me how corrupt the 9/11 Commission was, which was sold to the world as the definitive account of 9/11.

Anything to say about that?

BILL I think we need a new investigation, and the question arises where does it take place? (Right, exactly) How do you trust whatever system is established to—

JON Well, I don't trust the Government to do it. I don't know that I trust the United Nations to do it. I don't know about the International Criminal Court, which we don't adhere to, anyway. So, I would think it would have to be like a Jim Garrison-kind of person to bring a case against whoever. Wouldn't it?

BILL It's possible—I don't want to give up completely—but, it's possible someone in Congress could do the right thing. And the powers in the Congress legally can potentially be used. A good leader in Congress leading the way would be an effective tool. However, it's hard to find evidence to be confident that that can happen.

JON Well, the last thing I have to say with regard to the insider trading—or the allegedly insider trading—if it was Al-Qaeda, or a terrorist that took part in insider trading, the Government would have been ALL OVER that. Instead, they did the opposite and said it didn't happen at all. So, even though certain studies and individuals have shown there is evidence to believe it did happen. And I have a quote from somebody:

"Never believe anything until it has been officially denied." From Claud Cockburn, who was, I think, a British journalist.

BILL As sad and cynical as we can get about it, it's also good to try and emphasize the fact that the world isn't completely black and I'm hopeful we have some leaders behind the scenes in the Congress and regulatory agencies that are taking the day down the road, and that's hopefully something that's going to help us on finding the truth about the worse set of crimes in U.S. history.

JON Which is absolutely imperative—for us, for the families, for the people of the world.

Well, Bill, I want to thank you VERY much for your time today. Your insight has been very valuable into this whole situation. And, is there anything you'd like to promote besides the 28 pages? Or is that it?

BILL That sounds like we're ready to go, I think. That's all I'll leave it with, just the work of the 28-pages folks and the Florida Bulldog outfit. Our current opportunities for finding the truth, and those are things that I hope the judicial system respects and the Congress.

JON Well, thank you very much, Bill, for your time today. And you have a good night.

BILL You too! Nice to talk to you, Jon.

JON Nice to talk to you, too.

The following is a clip from the documentary "In Their Own Words: The Untold Stories of the 9/11 Families."

LORIE If they were good questions, a lot of times we were told it had to do with national security and couldn't tell us. So, if it had to do with the Moussaoui trial, so they couldn't address the question.

MONICA And to get the standard polito-speak from every one of these meetings was frustrating. And inevitably someone would start banging the table. Someone would raise their voice.

BOB I truly lost my temper. I'd just say, "What is this crap that you're talking about?" And we brought up the put options.

Male [TV announcer] Federal officials of the Government, major investigation into whether someone or many people, benefitted financially from the evil done to the country last Tuesday. Not long before the attacks occurred, there were some financial transactions in the stock market that may indicate knowledge of the attack before it began.

MINDY The week prior to 9/11, there were puts on the airlines. And it wasn't just all the airlines, it was on American and United, which meant you were betting that those airlines stock prices would go down.

Female [TV announcer] The trade was called "put" and they involved at least 450,000 shares of American. But what raised the red flag is more than 80 percent of the orders were puts, far outnumbering call options, those betting the stocks would rise. Sources say they've never seen that kind of imbalance before. After the terrorist attack, American Airlines stock price obviously did fall. According to our sources, that translated into well over \$5 million dollars total profit for the person-to-person to bet the stock would fall.

Male [TV announcer] One example, United Airlines, on the Thursday before the attack, more than 2,000 contracts betting that the stock would go down were purchased. Ninety-five more in one day than in three weeks. When the markets reopened, United stocks dropped and prices of contract soared. And someone may have made a lot of money fast.

Male [TV announcer] One hundred and eighty thousand dollars turns into \$2.4 million dollars when that plane hits the World Trade Center.

Female [TV announcer] Altogether, at least seven countries are dissecting suspicious trades that may have netted more than \$100 million dollars in profits.

Male [TV announcer] And there's much more, including an extraordinary high number of bets against Morgan Stanley and Marsh & McLennon, two of the World Trade Center's biggest tenants.

BOB Merrill-Lynch was involved and I said, Merrill-Lynch's stock was 48 the day before 9/11, but I said the next day it was down to 41. This is kind of

fishy. I said, suddenly, you know, you have these two major airlines and their stocks did tremendously, and somebody's making lots of money off of 9/11.

- MINDY And the answer that we got was: "We've investigated it and we find no unusual trading activity."
- Male [TV announcer] Could this be a coincidence?
- Male [TV announcer] This would one of the most extraordinary coincidences in the history of mankind if it was coincidence.
- Male [TV announcer] It is absolutely unprecedented to see cases of insider trading covering the entire world, from Japan to the United States, and North America to Europe.
- MINDY So, we said well, you know what, what would make me feel better is tell the story.
- LORIE Can you follow up on that? Can you tell us—can you be more specific? Can you pull up the trades? Can you show us what really happened?
- MINDY Who did those trades? Based on what research did they have that just those two airlines—and where is the money? And did it get disbursed?
- Female [TV Announcer] Investigators now believe that in this climate even the most secretive banks will hand over information to expose the most dubious kind of insider trading.
- Female [TV Announcer] Sources say U.S. investigators are making headway in tracking down trades made just before the attacks.
- Male [TV announcer] We can directly work backwards from the trade on the floor at the Chicago Board's Options Exchange. That trader is linked to a brokerage firm. That brokerage firm received the order to buy that put option from either someone within around their own brokerage form speculating or from one of the customers.
- PATTY Do we know who performed those trades? Yes. Can we have that information? No.

BOB And he said: "Well this is disinformation." I said: "What are you talking about disinformation? We know this happened," and then he just drops it just like that.

MINDY Well, you're asking me to go on faith that that's the truth. Hard to go on faith when I feel that I've been failed and not told the truth.

LORIE They weren't really forthcoming and truthful with us.

MONICA And you'd leave there as frustrated as you left every other meeting. And, this was meeting after meeting. It didn't matter with who.



Chapter/Episode 20 – Brian McGlinchey – February 6, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Brian McGlinchey (BRIAN)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week we're going to focus specifically on the 28-redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11.

Hi, this is Jon, and I'm here with Brian McGlinchey. Brian, how are you doing today?

BRIAN Oh, great. Thanks so much for having me on. I appreciate it.

JON Oh, not a problem. Thank you for being on.

Okay, so what I'm going to do is I'm going to read your bio.

Brian McGlinchey is the founder and director of 28Pages.org, an information and activism hub for the growing, nonpartisan movement to declassify a 28-page finding on foreign Government support of the 9/11 hijackers. A native of Philadelphia—woo-hoo!—who now lives in San Antonio, McGlinchey studied political science at Bucknell University, was

a U.S. Army officer, and had a career in financial services before becoming a freelance copywriter.

And, I woo-hoed after Philadelphia because that's where I'm from, as well.

BRIAN That's right.

JON And, so, let's go ahead and get into the questions. And I know you were thinking about this one.

What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

BRIAN Like for every other American, it was a terrible day. At the time, I was working in management at USAA, a large financial services company here in San Antonio, in a call center environment—and, speaking of Philadelphia, I had a very good friend working there who also grew up in the Philadelphia area, in Broomall, and he and I would always talk Philadelphia Eagles. And that was a Tuesday morning, and I hadn't seen him that week yet and he came over to my desk with a look on his face and I started to smile because I thought we were going to talk about the disappointing home loss to the Rams that had happened a few days ago. And he cut me off before I could say anything. And he said, "Do you know what's happening?" It's kind of an odd question and I just said, "No." And he said, "Come here." And he took me to a break room where there were televisions up and there was that sight up on the screen of both towers in flames. So, I will always remember that moment. We were in a call center environment and the calls just suddenly evaporated and it was a tough day for everybody.

For a lot of people, one of their priorities was to call their spouse. My mindset was to do the opposite. My wife at the time was a stay-at-home wife, spouse, and I wanted her to live in that pre-9/11 world as long as possible. So, she didn't know yet and I didn't want to tell her. I wanted her to have whatever precious extra minutes of blissful ignorance that day that she could have. But—so that was a tough day. And then, like many people, I think, I stayed up very late that evening watching the news reports and the coverage of it. So that was pretty much the day for me.

JON Well, that's very interesting. My day of 9/11, once I got home from work and they let us go, I watched the news—my eyes were glued to the TV set—and they kept showing the towers falling over and over again (Right) and

it got to me emotionally, and I just turned it off and started watching some movies to try and get my mind off of it (Mm-hmm).

So, what was the first thing that you questioned about 9/11?

BRIAN The first thing I questioned in any real significant way was this issue of this classified 28-pages.

JON And, how did you come across the knowledge of these 28-redacted pages?

BRIAN It was through a—when I saw press conference video last summer of Congressman Thomas Massie, from Kentucky, describing his experience of reading the 28-pages and he did it in such a provocative, attention-getting way, that it just caused me to look into it and start researching more and more about it. So many years had already passed, but I had—for somebody who does keep up with things pretty well, I had not really heard of this 28-page section before, so it really—

JON That's actually surprising to me because of all the different 9/11 coverups, the Saudi coverup, the 28-redacted pages is actually THE coverup that gets the most attention, so—

BRIAN Yeah, I had been aware of the Saudi angle or rumors, all that type of thing that had been percolating out there, but I think that was the first time that I actually knew there was a 28—you know, there's actual documentation somewhere that could point, as Bob Graham says, a strong finger specifically at the country of Saudi Arabia.

JON All right. Could you please give us a basic overview of what the 28-redacted pages are and why they should be declassified.

BRIAN Right—these 28-pages are part of a report of a Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11, specifically into intelligence community activities before and after 9/11. A lot of people, and you even see it in some big media outlets and prominent media platforms, saying that these are in the 9/11 Commission Report, but it's actually not. It's in that report of a Joint Congressional Inquiry that preceded the Commission's work and this report was published in December of 2002. So, it is basically a chapter of that report. That report is hundreds and hundreds of pages, in the vicinity of 800 pages.

Now, throughout that there are lots of sporadic redactions of names in places here and there, maybe a paragraph, and then you come into something that's quite extraordinary as Congressman Stephen Lynch recently said, "This is an extraordinary redaction to suddenly have 28 full pages, an entire chapter, completely redacted." And this chapter deals with specific sources of foreign Government support of the 9/11 hijackers while they were in the United States.

And as far as why this is classified? It's really a matter of transparency of an informed public. If you think about 9/11 and all that it has unleashed, all that has been done in the name of 9/11—the money that's been spent; the lives that have been expended; the lives that have been harmed; damaged policies that we have in the country—the American people deserve to know everything the Government knows about 9/11. And, particular, as we continue to go forward and have policies that are supposed to prevent the next 9/11—an informed public in the Republic that we have should know everything the Government knows.

JON Absolutely, you mentioned the 9/11 Commission, that it was—those 28-redacted pages are not part of the 9/11 Commission. The 9/11 Commission was supposed to start its work from where the Joint Congressional Inquiry left off. We'll get into the 9/11 Commission a little bit later.

Could you please tell us a little bit about your background with regard to politics? Is 28Pages.org your first foray into activism?

BRIAN Yeah, I've always had an interest in politics and history and studied political science in college, but this is definitely my biggest foray into any kind of activism—learning as I go [laughs].

JON And when did you decide to found 28Pages.org?

BRIAN It was last July. Again, I had watched the Thomas Massie press conference, and then delved deeper from there reading more about the topic and as I looked on the web, researching it myself, I found there really is no one-stop source of information on this issue or something that was really helping to focus people's interest and energy into actually taking action on it. So, when I saw that void there, I decided to go ahead and fill it myself. I am a freelance writer, so I had that, I guess, talent, I'll say, to share with the world [laughs] and to share with this movement to help put out a site that had really good information at 28Pages.org on the background of the issue,

details, links to supporting documents, and then we have an ongoing blog there that keeps people up-to-date on developments in the issue and commentary on articles and that type of thing that are out there. Most importantly, I think is the resources that we have there to help people take action (Right). A lot of people might see this story and think: "Oh, man, I wish they would release those 28 pages." Well, we want to help them take that feeling at that moment they're having it and actually do something—which could be as short as three minutes or four minutes to call Congress, and just get your word in that you want them to help declassify it. Or, maybe a couple minutes longer to print out one of our pre-written letters. But, to help people take action. Because, I believe, it's going to take political pressure to do this. I don't think we can necessarily rely on the standard operations of Government or the consciences of people in Government to declassify it. I think they really need that nudge from the people.

JON Well, do you remember when I first contacted you, what my first question was?

BRIAN Yes, I think you were the first person in earth to contact me in this role [laughs].

JON Really? Wow!

BRIAN [Laughs] Well, I think if something happens on the 9/11 world, I think Jon Gold is the first one to detect it and be on top of it and know about it.

JON Well, possibly—but, go ahead.

BRIAN Yeah, I think you had asked if—I think you were curious about, as people would naturally be, who's behind this effort? This 28Pages.org and I think you were curious about my motives and what I was going after. I think, specifically, you were wary of my, I think you said: "You don't want to start a war with Saudi Arabia, do you?" Is that right?

JON Exactly. [laughs] Well, I just want to—over the years I've experienced a lot of bullshit with different people, so I'm a very untrusting soul, unfortunately. You have to earn my trust, so—

BRIAN Exactly—

JON When I—and, the last thing I want to do with regard to exposing Saudi Arabia's role with regard to 9/11, is give an excuse for yet another war. My feelings about 9/11 have always been to—it wasn't an act of war, it was a crime. And you hold individuals responsible for that crime—accountable. You don't hold entire nationalities, ideologies, religions, accountable for the actions of a few. And there's actually a term for that. It's called collective punishment. And it's a war crime and it goes against the Geneva Convention. So, the last thing I want to do is start another war. So, that was really what I'm concerned about, but—

BRIAN Right. If you think about the reaction and what we did in the name of 9/11 after it, and how many multiples of the casualty count of 9/11 have now occurred around the world—yeah, I see what you mean by avoiding a catastrophe.

JON Yeah, absolutely, I mean (Yeah), look at—my God, what we did to Afghanistan and Iraq, especially Iraq, upwards of 1.25 million people were killed; millions were displaced; their infrastructure was destroyed; we were torturing people Abu Ghraib; we were flushing Korans down the toilet; we used the depleted uranium and now there are sick babies being born—it's just absolutely horrible. And, part of the problems that we're having today is that there is no statute of limitations on the anger those kinds of things create. So that's part of the tension of what's going on. Part of the individuals that are in Iraq fighting against the Government and so forth—that's part of the problem.

Another part of the problem has to do with what we and Saudi Arabia have done over the last couple of years with regard to Syria. And, I guess I could quickly get into that.

First of all, we've been operating covertly in Syria for years. If you want to read about that, you can read Seymour Hersh's articles at *The New Yorker*; but there came a time we wanted to take out Assad, and so what happened was under Bandar, Prince Bandar, who happens to be mentioned within those 28-redacted pages, got "rebels" or moderate rebels, or freedom fighters, or terrorists, whatever you want to call them, and sent them into Syria in an effort to take out Assad. And then the U.S. started sending the rebels intelligence, and then they started sending them arms. And then we started sending in rebels from Jordan—by the way, Kuwait and Qatar were all part of this thing—to take out Assad. This was all in an effort to take out Assad. And those rebels that were sent into Syria started to collaborate with

the people who were angry at the U.S. in Iraq. And so that was essentially the formation of ISIS. What's considered to be ISIS.

BRIAN Right, and that's one of the points that former Senator Bob Graham, who as you know, is really leading the charge beyond Capitol Hill, from his position as a former Senator, and who was a co-chair of the intelligence inquiry that produced this, these 28 pages. He's been very forceful in making the point that the suppression of these 28 pages and shielding Saudi Arabia from the consequences of, or accountability, of its involvement in 9/11, he says has enabled the rise of ISIS. Because the behaviors that they had of funding and spreading extremism went unchecked, and given that, they were encouraged to continue the same behavior and the same type of policies helping to lead to the disaster that we have unfolding right now.

JON One of the things I'd like to talk about, briefly, is—I wrote an article recently and the title was: "You Can't Point a Finger at Saudi Arabia and Not Have Five Fingers Pointing Back at the U.S." And, what I mean by that is during the Afghanistan-Russia war, we collaborated with Saudi Arabia and the Pakistani ISI to do essentially what we're doing with the rebels in Syria, to support the Mujahideen. And then, in the 90s, we collaborated with the Saudis on illegal weapons deliveries to Bosnia and Muslims. We used their networks or connections to terrorism to do certain things.

Another thing that we did, during the 90s, there were people like FBI agent Robert Wright, who was actually doing an investigation into terrorist financing and he started to come across people like al-Qadi, who actually proclaims to have a friendship with Dick Cheney. And, his investigation was called Vulgar Betrayal, and it was shut down. They shut it down. And George Tenet developed these ties—

BRIAN That code name of that project became a prophecy, didn't it? Vulgar Betrayal.

JON Yeah, exactly. And he gave a very sad press conference some time in 2002, Robert Wright—it's on my YouTube channel if you want to look it up—Gold9472—and he starts crying, and I feel bad for the guy.

But, anyway, George Tenet developed a relationship with Bandar and, you know, as a result of that, George Tenet told people that were investigating certain things to back off the Saudis a little bit.

Another thing that we did in June '96, CIA agents were told not to track militants in Saudi Arabia in the wake of the Khobar Towers bombing, and the reason was they didn't want to upset the Saudi Government.

So, we've enabled them before 9/11. We collaborated with them, and so on and so forth. And that was before 9/11. And then after 9/11, that protection continued. It got even worse and more aggressive.

So, anyway, I wanted to talk about that a little bit.

BRIAN Right, I think it's a very good point. It's part of the need for transparency, and start to peel that back.

The people who have read the 28 pages, they always speak in round-about ways about what's in there. Another thing that Thomas Massie said was that when these are published there's going to be anger, frustration, and resentment. And, I think, a lot of people might at first think he's talking about a foreign country, Saudi Arabia—I think he's talking quite a bit about, as you said, pointing right back at the United States in terms of what we knew, what we neglected, intelligence failures, intelligence cooperation with other countries that ended up back-firing—all this type of thing. I think that might be what he's referring to when he talks about that.

JON Well, I think one other thing that he's talking about is the fact that, Bandar's named as being—his wife is connected to money of two of the hijackers in San Diego. Bandar is very close with the Bush family. They call him Bandar Bush. And there are many questions about that relationship. And we'll get into that in a minute, but I wanted to ask you—what are some of the revelations you've heard from people about the 28-redacted pages that most interests you?

BRIAN Well, not knowing exactly what's in there, the—Senator Bob Graham, I think, is the most poignant. Maybe because he's no longer in Capitol Hill. He seems to be the one who gets the most specific in implying or talking about what's in there. And, at the January 7 press conference, which you can watch at 28pages.org—people can either watch the press conference in full or read a transcript or read an article called "Must Read Quotes." But he talked very specifically at that press conference, and where other Congress people sometimes back away from mentioning Saudi Arabia, for example, he said, "The 28 pages point a very strong finger at Saudi Arabia as the principle financier of 9/11." And, so, I think what's in there that I'm most

curious about is—a lot of people say, well, we've already heard for years that there's Saudi Arabia connections with 9/11, so what's the big deal? And I guess that's the question that's on my mind. I don't think these—former Senator Graham, Congressman Jones, Lynch, and Massie—I don't think they would be making this effort if whatever is in there wasn't provocative enough to merit that. In other words, it must be pretty damning the next level of detail of what was uncovered as they started to investigate this. Investigate is the key word. [Laughs]

JON [Laughs] Now we get to get into a favorite topic of mine.

How familiar are you with the 9/11 Commission, which absolved the Saudi Arabian Government?

BRIAN I'm growing increasingly familiar with it. As I said, 9/11 was not something I knew a whole lot about beyond what maybe a typical or average plus person might know from an historical point of view. I had a basic understanding, but since deciding to launch 28pages.org, I've been delving deeper into it and am about to finish reading, thanks to listening to your earlier great episode where you interviewed Philip Shenon, the author of *The Commission*, I'm wrapping up that book. So, I am familiar with it. To the extent, you said, absolve the Saudi Arabian Government—I guess that's a word that's in contention with the big press this week, *The New York Times* coverage and the news of the 20th hijacker Zacarias Moussaoui testifying as to some specific Saudi connections that he had—Saudi Arabia was quick to point to the 9/11 Commission Report this week and declare they had absolved them. And they also used that in the court case that is underway pitting the family members and survivors of 9/11, and the insurance companies that backed them, against Saudi Arabia. In that court proceeding, they tried to point to the Commission Report as absolving them.

But this week we've seen depositions and affidavits from 9/11 Commissioners specifically saying, no, that it's wrong to interpret it as absolving them.

JON Well, what they did was they pointed to certain charities (Mm-hmm), but they didn't talk about the Government. There's a specific sentence, and unfortunately, I did not get it for this interview, that shows—it basically says that the Saudi Government had nothing to do with it. And on the release, the day of the release of the 9/11 Report, Lee Hamilton specifically

said that we have found no evidence that the Saudi Government helped to support or had anything to do with 9/11.

Now—

BRIAN Senator Graham had an interesting quote on that topic. At that press conference, a reporter asked: "When you say Saudi Arabia, Senator, are you talking about the Government or are you talking about private actors?" And he said: "Given the nature of the Kingdom, I'm speaking of the kingdom." He said, "In fact, in this litigation when any institution, whether it's a financial institution, a charitable institution, or a religious institution is raised as a possible co-conspirator, the Kingdom throws a blanket of sovereign immunity over every entity so it is a society in which it's difficult to make the kinds of distinctions between public, private religions that we would in the United States."

JON Hmm—well, one of the things about the 9/11 Commission that it's famous for is that it said that, ultimately, it's of little practical significance—the source of the funding for the attacks is of little practical significance. So, the 9/11 Commission does, in fact, absolve the Government of Saudi Arabia and that would include people like Bandar, who was the ambassador, U.S. Ambassador to the United States.

And the reason that the 9/11 Commission absolved Saudi Arabia has to do with what I think are two people, specifically. And, as I said, the 9/11 Commission was supposed to start its work where the Joint Congressional Inquiry left off. (Mm-hmm) And, what they did is they actually brought people over from the Joint Congressional Inquiry—people like Mike Jacobson and Dana Lesemann, who actually helped to author the 28-redacted pages to the 9/11 Commission to continue their work. And one of the things Philip Zelikow did, who was the executive director of the 9/11 Commission, was he blocked Dana Lesemann's access to those 28-redacted pages (Right), and as a result, she went through a back channel to gain access to those pages, and as a result, Philip Zelikow fired her. Another thing that Philip Zelikow did was he blocked half of the interview requests for Saudi investigators. And Dietrich Snell was one of the—I think he was one of the Saudi investigators—he was a staffer on the 9/11 Commission, yeah, on the 9/11 Commission, and he interviewed some of the people that were supposedly involved in the Saudi part of the plot.

And so, what the 9/11 Commission said was is they looked into the allegations of the 28-redacted pages and found, well Philip Zelikow referred to them as "wild accusations" but found they were lacking. And that's interesting to me because—are you familiar with Memoranda for the Records of the 9/11 Commission? (Yes, yeah). Yes, you are? (Yeah) Okay, just so people know, a Memoranda for the Record is basically a description of an interview with a witness, a handwritten description of an interview with a witness, and there are many available from the 9/11 Commission. And some of the individuals that the 9/11 Commission interviewed that had to do with the supposed Saudi part of the plot, it says directly within those MFRs that these people are not trustworthy at all. And I think there are three of them that say that specifically. And, yet, Saudi Arabia was "absolved."

Another thing that they did, Philip Zelikow and Dietrich Snell took part in a "late night editing session" to remove Saudi Government support for the hijackers from the 9/11 Report and they put them, they relegated them into footnotes in the back of the book.

So, that's essentially why the 9/11 Commission "absolved" the Government of Saudi Arabia, because of those two individuals. But, Philip Zelikow is responsible for a hell of a lot more than just that, and he's actually someone that I believe belongs in jail. And that's part—this whole 28-redacted pages story, I think, that is a big story that's being ignored is his part in absolving —

BRIAN But this last week with all the coverage that's been going on, if you—many outlets turning to and quoting him, which is kind of understandable given his title as executive director, but I think a lot of them, pretty much all of them, are negligent that they're not giving the full story or speaking to the controversial nature of Philip Zelikow and the controversial way in which he executed his role. The conflicts of interests that he had going into that job, where he had—was personal friends with Condoleezza Rice, that's a conflict of interest in that he's going to be reviewing her performance leading in to 9/11. The fact that he was on the Bush transition team and on that transition team he was, I believe, instrumental in the decision to lower the status and access of counter-terror Czar Richard Clarke to the President. (Correct)

So, he had a number of things where he was tied in, which would point to that.

And, another thing, during the investigations, frequent phone calls with Bush's political adviser, Karl Rove, which in Philip Shenon's book *The Commission* talks about the staff of the Commission being really disturbed by the fact that their boss was having ongoing contacts with the White House when there should have been a completely impartial external entity.

So, when you had—

JON Oh, but then he told his staffer not take records of those phone calls.

BRIAN Right, right. And we had a White House that was in defense mode of Saudi Arabia, which has been pretty clearly documented and former Navy Secretary and 9/11 Commission member, John Lehman, talked specifically about how he felt that the White House is just blatantly cutting off any avenue of inquiry that was pointing to Saudi Arabia. It is critical that whoever is executive director of that commission take on an adversarial type role and do that, but every indication is that, and with the conflict of interest, is that's not at all what Zelikow did. So, that's something interesting (Well--), a lot of the coverage right now when they're quoting Zelikow as an expert on this.

JON I've said that, that this is being reported on as if it took place within a vacuum. Like the 28-redacted pages and the covering up of Saudi Arabia, but they don't get into the context of how Bush and Cheney fought against the Joint Congressional Inquiry from ever taking place. They don't talk about how they refused to allow Abdussatar Shaikh who was the landlord of two of the hijackers in San Diego, to testify before the Joint Congressional Inquiry. He was actually an FBI informant and they tried to make it difficult for his handler, Steven Butler, to testify before the Joint Congressional Inquiry, but he finally did.

There's SO MUCH context and so many other things that people need to be aware of.

And you talk about Philip Zelikow and his conflicts of interest—he also belonged to the Aspen Strategy Group, who Prince Bandar also belonged to, which is an interesting conflict of interest.

BRIAN He also helped author the doctrine of pre-emptive war for the Bush White House.

JON Which they used for the Iraq War. (Right) And you talk about Karl Rove, Karl Rove first selected Henry Kissinger to be the chairman of the 9/11 Commission and he stepped down after the family members asked him about his business relations with the Bin Laden family (Yeah, right). So, I wonder, gee, would he have been a good person to cover up for Saudi Arabia? Probably.

And then, Karl Rove selected Thomas Kean and so forth, so—he was like, he could be considered an architect of the 9/11 Commission, in a way.

BRIAN Right, I remember Kean was surprised that the call from the White House came from a political advisor and not from the chief of staff or someone in a different role in the White House that it was a political—the first indication that this was going to be highly politicized was the fact that the call to Kean came from a political advisor.

JON Right, and you mentioned John Lehman and during—when Bush and Cheney went to testify before the 9/11 Commission at the White House, together as opposed to being separate, there were no recordings allowed, no transcripts allowed, and they were not under oath, and John Lehman pushed George Bush on the subject with regard to Bandar and Princess Haifa being connected to money of two of the hijackers. And, according to Phil Shenon, Bush "dodged the questions." And, you know, this is—

For that reason, alone, George Bush should be made to stand on—to be put on the stand to take questions in a court of law. (Mm-hmm) Just for that. It's just so absurd.

So, anyway—

BRIAN Our system of Government—that was part of the disappointing execution of the commission was Zelikow's reluctance to put people under oath, to have them sign depositions, to serve subpoenas. It was so soft-touched when in our system of Government and accountability, checks and balances, nobody should be above swearing to tell the truth about what they've done.

JON And, accountability is one of the biggest issues with regard to the 9/11. After the 9/11 attacks, people in Government who should have been held accountable for their, if you want to call it incompetence, if you want to call

it criminality—the great thing about accountability is that it applies to both, incompetence and criminality. People were rewarded and promoted who should not have been. And, one of the things that the family members hoped for with regard to the 9/11 Commission was that they would hold people accountable. And that simply did not happen.

BRIAN Not in the least.

JON Not in the least.

So, anyway, Philip Zelikow, I think belongs in jail [laughs]. I firmly believe that. Anyway—

What will it take to declassify these pages?

BRIAN Well, the short answer and the short route is a simple move of President Obama's signature to just simply declassify it himself. He has that power to do that, and has reportedly twice promised 9/11 Family Members that he would do so.

JON That's right, Kristen Breitweiser and Bill Doyle.

BRIAN Kristen Breitweiser and Bill Doyle. Yeah. Who each lost loved ones in the attacks on two different occasions, separated by more than a year, apparently, assured them that he would do that. It's within his power to do that. That's one route.

I think it's going to take political pressure on Obama. I think it's going to take political pressure through Congress to persuade President Obama to do that.

There is a little known alternative route. So, the President can declassify it, and there are also rules by which either the Senate or the House can declassify it over the President's objection, starting with a proposal from a member of either the House or Senate Intelligence Committee—very long-shot route that's probably not going to come to fruition. But I think the great hope is to have the President do it and it's going to take political pressure and making it increasingly uncomfortable that these pages are being kept secret in the face of so many credible people saying there's no good reason for it.

You've got the Chair and Vice Chair of the 9/11 Commission; you've got Senator Graham who co-chaired that Intelligence Inquiry that produced the 28 pages; you've got Congressional representatives from both parties who read the 28 pages and said it's not a threat to national security, these need to be released.

Hopefully, increasingly, that drumbeat is gonna cause these 28 pages to be declassified.

JON Well, I'm a cynic because I've been doing this for years, (Right) and there was actually an effort in late 2006, the September 11th Advocates, or the Jersey Girls, released a petition calling for the declassification of those 28-redacted pages, along with other pertinent 9/11 information. We got 17,000 signatures for their release. They brought it to Washington D.C. and they were ignored.

So, this effort to get them declassified has been going on for years. And, I just, you mentioned Obama promising the family members that he would release those pages—what do you think about what happened with King Abdullah and him going to visit Saudi Arabia, and the new King being listed as a defendant in a lawsuit brought on by the 9/11 Family Members and all that stuff?

BRIAN Well, the cozier our President is with the King and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it definitely makes you potentially lose hope of getting the 28 pages declassified. I'm sure, and I know, personally, from communications with some of the 9/11 Family Members that seeing that kind of chumminess is really unsettling to those people who lost family members and are in litigation right now with the Kingdom.

JON To me, the whole thing was a big slap in the face to the 9/11 Family Members. The people that he brought with him were people like John McCain who loves the 9/11 Report, which again, "absolves" the Saudi Arabian Government, they brought James A. Baker, whose law firm Baker Botts represented the Saudis against the 9/11 Family Members in a very early lawsuit. He brought Condoleezza Rice, who lied before the 9/11 Commission and had an oil tanker named after her.

I mean it's just a huge slap in the face.

Could you please tell us about the Mandatory Declassification Review that is currently underway?

BRIAN You bet. The Mandatory Declassification Review is a process that is out there pretty much for anybody to request that a classified document be reviewed and considered for release. And it goes through a hierarchy. This process for the 28 pages, which is underway right now, was initiated by an attorney named Tom Julin who is working with Dan Christensen, Anthony Summers and Robbyn Swan. Now, Dan Christensen is, as you know, the investigative journalist at the *Florida Bulldog*, which used to be *Broward Bulldog*, which has been digging deep into the 9/11 cell in Sarasota. And then, Summers and Swan wrote a book on 9/11—I can't remember the name of that book. Do you remember?

JON *The Eleventh Day.*

BRIAN That's right, *The Eleventh Day* and they have collaborated on this. So, this process has begun and now it's at the top level of that process. It's in front of what's called the Interagency Security Classifications Appeal Panel. Now they review this request, review the 28 pages for whether they should be declassified, and then they make a recommendation to the President. Tom Julin, in November, said he was told to expect a decision sometime this winter. I talked to Dan Christensen, he's not so sure it's going to be that quick. And there's no timetable on this and a lot of things where the Government can kind of run the clock out, and go to four corners and just let time tick by.

I'm not really optimistic about this because if you take a look at the panel that comprises this board. Senior level representatives appointed by the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, the National Archives, the officer of the Director of National Intelligence, the National Security Advisor, AND the Director of the CIA can opt to appoint a voting member.

So, this is not a panel of American peers. If you look at that list, I'm sure you're thinking the same thing I am. It's kind of the usual suspects of who would want to keep this classified and who may personally professionally benefit by keeping it classified. So, it's not real sure that, other than maybe the National Archives, the rest of that list, you look at it and you're not really optimistic that those representatives representing their respective

department is going to do the right thing and recommend—even if they do recommend, we're right back to it being a recommendation to the President.

Now, if it did happen to be very extraordinary and, I think, would amp up the pressure on Obama to declassify it, but I think, I'm not really optimistic about that route, which is why we're really encouraging people who want to see these pages released, to get involved. And it doesn't take much time at all to get involved.

The principal avenue of this movement right now is House Resolution 14. It was introduced by Congressman Walter Jones of North Carolina and Stephen Lynch of Massachusetts, a Republican and a Democrat. These have very bipartisan support, both sides of the aisle are represented on this Resolution. It's a resolution that urges the President to declassify the 28 pages. The bill itself is not binding either, but again, it builds that political pressure that we're talking about.

And so, our emphasis at 28pages.org is on having people contact their House Representative and to get them to read the 28 pages and support the resolution, co-sponsor Resolution H.Res 14 to declassify it. And to contact the Senate and help us get a Senator to introduce a resolution in that body along the same lines urging the President to do this.

It's important—it's interesting to note that several years ago there were 46 Senators that co-signed a letter to then-President Bush urging him to declassify the 28 pages, 46. So, we've been there before, and we're hoping to get back there again where you've got that many people. Once you get to 51, now that alternative process I talked about where the Senate could declassify it by itself or the House could declassify it by itself, becomes viable. So, that's why we try to focus people on contacting Congress.

JON Right. Are you hoping that releasing the 28-redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry will lead to opening up doors to other cover-ups concerning 9/11?

BRIAN The—yes, the—in terms of the word coverup, to me one of the ones that I'm most interested in is we mentioned a moment ago, for example, is the Sarasota Cell. Here is a situation where we had 9/11 hijackers who were having frequent contact and physical visits with a wealthy, well-connected Saudi family in Sarasota. That family up and urgently left the country about two weeks before—before 9/11. And when we talk about urgency, we mean

to the extent there were brand new, newly registered vehicles in the driveway, fresh food in the refrigerator and on the counter, clothing still on the racks in the closet, safe doors swinging open in the bedroom. I mean, that's how sudden we're talking about. And this cell was not even disclosed to the—the FBI knew about it and didn't disclose it to Senator Graham and the Inquiry that produced the 28 pages.

By all indications, the 28 pages, I think, are hinging a lot on this San Diego cell, what we know about them. Well, the FBI has been blocking attempts to get access to and understand what they know about this cell in Sarasota. And that's what the *Florida Bulldog* has been so doggedly pursuing is FBI documents on that. At first the FBI said that they checked into it and that they found no connection, that there's basically nothing to it. And then, Dan Christensen asked them for documents about how they reached that conclusion. They said, well, we don't really have any documents, which just—any investigation even of a missing dog is going to have a document, much less this.

Well, now, there's a Freedom of Information lawsuit underway and there's a federal judge who's taking a very skeptical look at the FBI, and its conduct and he's now reviewing what they have coughed up 80,000 pages of documents relating to that cell.

To me, the 28 pages is going to be an interesting and open a door, but I think it's going to cause people to now start looking elsewhere, looking to Sarasota. And there are many other locations that Senator Graham says: We don't know what was missing there. There were other cells in, I think, Falls Church, Virginia, Patterson, New Jersey, and other locations. Well, are there other Saudi connections there as well, potentially.

And it's not just about knowing what the Saudi connections might be, it's also about peeling back and revealing what is the nature of this coverup by the FBI? Why are they so gun-shy about sharing what they—

JON

Well, the FBI, they had their own investigation, the PENTTBOM investigation, and they had meetings, right, they had meetings with the family members and we were told there was no warnings, that the 9/11 attacks were going to come, and nobody had any idea that this was going to happen and one of the questions Kristen Breitweiser asked was: How was it possible that within hours of the attacks, you guys could swoop in on the exact flight schools that these people were training at if you had no idea

that this was going to happen? And they were told that they got lucky. You know, so—

The FBI—look at their anthrax attack investigation (Right), how horrible that was. They're not exactly the most trustworthy organization in the world. And they have a lot to answer for with regard to 9/11 about other issues. You know, again, like I said, Robert Wright was shut down. Why was he shut down?

So, the thing about the 28-redacted pages that's important to the families is they want to bring it in to the courtroom as evidence to use. And every time that 9/11 makes it into a courtroom, we learn a lot of information that we didn't know before (Exactly) that wasn't supplied to us from the 9/11 Commission, the "definitive" account of 9/11.

And, you know, it's interesting, Moussaoui this week, it's being reported about his statement that he gave to lawyers representing the family members about what he knew about Saudi Arabia, people in Saudi Arabia helping to finance the attacks—and I quickly want to say before we talk about Moussaoui is that he was never actually, it was never ruled that he was insane. (Right) He was ruled competent to stand trial.

BRIAN His defense attorneys made the argument in the act of defending him (Right), but that argument was not found compelling and he was deemed competent.

JON Exactly, so people will say that well, he's a crazy nut, and that we shouldn't listen to what he says, but that's not exactly the case.

So, this week he brought up names like Prince Bandar, Turki al-Faisal, the owner or one of the owners of Fox News who just dumped all of his Fox News stock, or some of it. And, what happened at the Moussaoui sentencing phase—it wasn't actually a trial, it was a sentencing phase, because he had pled guilty—we found out by FBI Agent Michael Anticev that, of course, the FBI was well aware that Al-Qaeda had plans to slam, or they called it the idea of terrorists slamming planes into buildings or using them as weapons and so forth. And, we were told repeatedly nobody had any idea and nobody in Government could possibly conceive of this. (Right) And, here we have an FBI agent telling us the exact opposite.

So, a lot can come out in a court of law. And, I would love to see Philip Zelikow be called in to testify, to explain why the 9/11 Commission's Report absolved them, essentially.

But, anyway—(Right)

BRIAN The other interesting angle that could potentially come out of these 28 pages is more perspective, perhaps, on FBI Agent Mark Rossini being told—he was assigned to the 9/11 CIA Unit and was forbidden to share information about the San Diego hijackers with FBI higher-ups (Right), which looks like part of a deadly decision in this whole thing. There might be more perspective on that to the extent this might focus on San Diego.

JON Well, now you just opened up a whole can of worms (Laughs).

The Alec Station incident that he's referring to—Alec Station was the name of the CIA's Bin Laden Unit. Mark Rossini found out that one of the hijackers got a visa to enter the United States and he was assigned, along with Doug Miller, to Alec Station and he wanted to send a cable—it was Doug Miller, I think, that wanted to send the cable, wasn't it? Or was it Mark Rossini?

BRIAN I think so, I believe—

JON Either way.

BRIAN They were both told not to. Yeah, they were working together.

JON Well, one of them wanted to send a cable and they were told by Michael Anne Casey not to send the memo to the FBI and she was directed to tell them that by Tom Wilshire.

But later in the day, Michael Anne Casey sends out a cable within the CIA telling them that the FBI had been notified. Which seems like extremely criminal behavior to me.

But, you're right, when you look at the San Diego hijackers, that opens, that leads to other stories. For instance, the NSA said that they were monitoring about 8 phone calls that the hijackers made from San Diego to the Yemen hub, the Al-Qaeda hub in Yemen. But they couldn't decipher where the calls were coming from. They could only tell where the calls were going to. And

we found out from NSA whistleblower William Binney and confirmed by Thomas Drake, on my show, that the NSA did know the identities of the phone calls of the hijackers, where the calls were coming from, which meant that the NSA knew those terrorists were in the United States and didn't bother to tell the FBI, so that's something else—who knows what could come out of this.

BRIAN Right, and I think it points back to Thomas Massie saying if this comes out, there's going to be anger, frustration, and resentment and I think a lot of that could point at our own intelligence agencies and their conduct.

JON Well, apparently, Thomas Drake from the NSA, I think, testified before the Joint Congressional Inquiry, and there's no record of his testimony, just the fact that he testified. They like destroyed it, according to him. (Right)

Have I already asked you what had been some of the biggest obstacles you've become aware of since starting this fight to release these pages? No, I haven't. [Laughs]

BRIAN I think some of the obstacles are, you know, in the House trying to get H.Res. 14 moving along. It's been a two-step process to this point of first trying to get people in Congress to READ the 28 pages, which they have to ask permission of their intelligence committee to do so, and then go into a quiet sound-proof room where they have two minders watching them. They're not allowed to bring a notebook in there. [Laughs] And so you've got that hurdle.

And, every indication is that very few in Congress have bothered reading the 28 pages, which if you think about it, you've got Congressman Thomas Massie, when he read the 28 pages and got my attention at the press conference—when he described the experience of reading it, he said, he talked about going to the soundproof room. He said: "It was a very disturbing event for me to read this." He said: "I had to stop every two or three pages and rearrange my perception of history and it's that fundamental," he said.

Now, you and I are curious to read what's in the 28 pages. We're citizens, right? We've got all these House Representatives and Senators who are charged with helping to guide the foreign and defense and counter-terror policy of this country who have not bothered reading the 28 pages. The half an hour to read 28 pages. You'd think out of simple human curiosity they'd

want to read the 28 pages, much less their professional duty to read the 28 pages. So, that's kind of an obstacle pushing against that.

Congressman Steven Lynch, one of the leaders on this issue, he recently said at that January 7th press conference that he's going to try a different tack in this session of Congress, which is to basically ask his peers to trust him and his judgment that, you know what? These can be declassified. You don't necessarily need to read it yourself, you should so you can have a deeper understanding of the terror apparatus that we're dealing with, but he's going to try to get people to start co-sponsoring the resolution even if they haven't read it.

I think the other challenges are the fact that—we touched on this in a recent blog post at 28pages.org—is that one of the things that distinguishes this fight is that you've got vocal people on one side arguing, but then there's really no vocal champion arguing on the other side. The forces that are keeping this quiet are behind the scenes, they're hidden. There's a big web of influence that Saudi Arabia has in our—on Capitol Hill with lobbyists, including former Senator Norm Coleman who co-chairs a major Republican Super Pac and who once condemned Saudi Arabia for spreading extremism. He's now a lobbyist for Saudi Arabia.

JON [Laughs]

BRIAN It just goes on and on. The money that Saudi Arabia donates to think tanks that are quoted in the media, and we don't realize the influence that Saudi Arabia and other countries have through these think tanks—

JON Well, I said today, that the cover-up or protecting Saudi Arabia is not just about oil or the fact that they can influence gas prices and so forth. It's about the fact that people in this country love Saudi Arabian money. And also their influence in the region. But people love their money, like the Bush family. (Right)

BRIAN If you've got that far an influence, but—and you're also—another quiet force that is on the other side of this is the intelligence community, as we just talked about, I think, has a very strong interest in keeping this quiet and sealing themselves from embarrassment and accountability, and so, they're very influential. They're very influential on the intelligence committees that deal with this topic. People who end up on the intelligence committees in the House and the Senate, they're most invariably people who "play ball"

for the intelligence committee and who, rather than being over-seers, end up being spokespeople and defenders of intelligence committees instead of adding that layer of accountability that they're supposed to by our system of Government.

JON It's really disgusting, I know. (Laughs)

What do you have to say to people who think releasing the 28-redacted pages is a "limited hangout?"

BRIAN [Laughs] And by that, for our audience, I think limited hangout is a term that was inadvertently coined by President Nixon. I believe he was on the tapes talking about a limited hangout, meaning you have some secret you're keeping—correct me if I'm wrong here, Jon—but you put out just enough to maybe satisfy people's appetite, but in fact, you're holding back on the greater secret. Is that right?

JON Well, some people have said that they're just letting this part of the coverup out to satisfy people's curiosity (Yeah) and so on and so forth. And, I just think, I talked to Lorie van Auken, one of the Jersey Girls about this and she says: "Release the pages." You know? This is just one aspect of the coverup, but it has to be resolved. So, release the pages. And maybe, as we talked about, it will lead to other things.

And, you know, right now there are people out there, the people who say Israel did 9/11, they're piggy backing their little theory that Israel did 9/11 on this push to get these 28-redacted pages released, because supposedly it talks about multiple foreign entities. And I have never, ever once heard anybody related to the Joint Congressional Inquiry, never once from Bob Graham, have I ever heard any indication that these pages talk about Israel. In fact, if you read the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11, they praised Israeli intelligence. And I don't think they would praise Israeli intelligence only to come back and say Israel was in support of the hijackers in any way. (Right, right)

BRIAN And, so for those people who think, based on various documented things like the Israeli art students and the dancing Israelis, that type of things, most people can look up—it's one thing for them to think oh, maybe Israel had foreknowledge or whatever. It's another to conclude, oh, that's in these 28 pages. Like you said, there's been no indication from anybody who's read the 28 pages and talks about it.

I mean, I don't know what's in the 28 pages. I don't know.

JON Right, but and that's the—

BRIAN What you and I both work off of is okay, what do we specifically hear from people who have read the 28 pages? (Exactly) And so there's somebody out there who has read them who hints in this direction. And yes, it does say multiple countries, but that could very well be other Gulf states. So, it's—

JON Well, exactly, I was going to ask you, what countries are your guess. My guesses are the UAE, possibly Turkey, maybe Qatar—I don't know. Those are my guesses. What do you think?

BRIAN I really don't know either.

[Laughter]

I just don't know. I'm thinking Gulf states is what I would lean towards. But, let's get those 28 pages out and we can end all this speculation.

JON Right, exactly.

BRIAN On the 28 pages—there's going to be more speculation after that, but let's get it out there and decide what it means.

JON Yeah, exactly, just let's resolve this one issue. Maybe it will lead to other things, hopefully.

BRIAN Well, yeah, Ray McGovern who was a CIA analyst. He talked about the 28 pages in December, and he thinks they're pretty significant. He says: "there's so many things about the story of 9/11 that need to be put together." He said: "I think these 28 pages are going to start unraveling just like a mummy." He said: "Pull on these 28 pages and you're going to unravel the whole thing." So—

JON Well, we'll see. My thing is arrest Philip Zelikow, put him on the stand. I think if you tug on that thread (Laughs), the whole 9/11 coverup will unravel (Right), but the 28-redacted pages are important.

What can people do to help get these pages released? Just call their Senators?

BRIAN Yeah, go to 28pages.org and on there you'll see a link on the top that says "Take Action." Depending on how much time you have, a quick call to Congress—we've got a little script there. I mean, really, to call Congress and register your opinion by calling, you don't need to be prepared to give a big speech. You just need to tell them to support House Resolution 14 and ask them if they've read the 28 pages. We're trying to put pressure on Congress to read the 28 pages, not only so they feel more confident and interested in declassifying them, but also so they're taking that first step of at least Congress being informed and understanding the dynamics of this so that they can cast an informed vote.

So, going to 28pages.org, calling Congress. If you don't feel like making the phone call, we've got pre-written letters where you can just print it out, fill in your info and mail it off to Congress. Again, these letters and phone calls we always emphasize asking if they've read the 28 pages, have they asked permission to do so, and to support the resolution.

That's the main thing that they can do. It doesn't take much time and it does make an impact. People get skeptical about our ability to sway policy. But it really does matter. Politicians do care. They care about votes. They care about opinions—sometimes too much, but here's a case where we can use their concentration on votes and elections and embarrassment and turn it into something good and turn it to transparency on this issue.

JON Well, I would argue—my feelings are that Congress is bought and paid for, but you know, whatever.

BRIAN Well, that's true but there are—

JON You think I'm the cynic? Go ahead—

BRIAN If you look at the alleged chemical weapon attack in Syria that was going to be used to launch a drive-by cruise missile strike, the thing that turned that back is people calling Congress. There's no doubt. At the time, it was said 90 percent of the calls that were coming in said: "Don't get involved in this." "do not do this," "Do not intervene." And that turned it back. So, I mean, I definitely share and understand the general feeling of frustration, and—

JON Well, I think Russia had a lot to do with that as well. Russian pressure.

BRIAN Yeah, but I think the American public really played a big role in that too.

JON Is there anything else that you would like to promote at this time?

BRIAN No, just people going to 28pages.org and also we've got a presence on social media. If you're on Twitter, please follow us at our tag is @28pages. We're on Facebook at Facebook.com\28pages911. You can just go to 28pages.org and you'll find links to those, as well.

Joining—following us on social media helps us in a couple ways. Number 1, you the listeners will stay informed on what's going on with this issue, which I think is a very interesting issue. And number 2, it's numbers. Politicians and media, they look at numbers and the more followers that we have on Facebook and social media, it starts to get their attention that there's a lot of people that care about this and are interested in it and it's also a way for interested listeners to share and pass this information on, and build awareness of this issue.

JON Right. Well, I want to thank you very much Brian for what you're doing, and I want to thank you for promoting my show the other day. That was very kind of you.

BRIAN Oh yeah, it's nice to be here. It's been an impressive—I'm kind of honored to join what's been a very impressive list of guests that you've been putting together, so I really enjoy the show.

JON I'm doing my absolute best to put forward the best of the best. So, you know—and the fact that we were lied to about 9/11, that's the truth. We were lied to about 9/11, and that's something I'm hoping a lot people come to accept.

Anyway, I want to thank you very much for your time today and good luck with everything.

BRIAN Great, thank you so much.

JON And if you need help, let me know.

BRIAN I will. Thank you.

JON All right, take care.



Chapter/Episode 21 – Malcolm Chaddock – February 24, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Malcolm Chaddock (MAL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week we're going to focus on the lies of the FAA and NORAD with regard to the air response on the morning of 9/11. Truth and accountability is missing so much with regard to 9/11.

Hi, this Jon, and I'm here with Malcolm Chaddock. How are you doing today, Malcolm?

MAL I'm doing great, Jon. Thanks for having me on.

JON Oh, thank you very much for being on today. So, I'm going to read Malcolm's bio.

Shocked into activism by the ACLU's analysis of the Patriot Act II, Mal Chaddock has been involved in social justice issues since 2002, first with Peace Fresno, a group that was infiltrated by the FBI and made

international news. After relocating to Portland, OR Mal helped co-found Oregonians Against the Wars and Individuals for Justice , which is www.individualsforjustice.com and joined the Portland, OR chapter of Veterans For Peace where he currently serves as vice President. Mal has traveled the nation extensively over the last dozen years supporting endeavors for peace, often accompanying Peace Mom Cindy Sheehan on her journeys in the USA.

Cindy Sheehan? Who's that? (Laughs)

MAL [Laughs] Well, gee, I know nobody knows who that is.

JON [Laughs] Let me just quickly finish this.

Most recently he's been active in helping found and support NoNukesNW and RadCast.org as well as Don't Shoot Portland.

Now, for those who don't know, Malcolm and I have been, or have taken part in a couple of Cindy's actions. The first one was Camp Out Now in Washington D.C. in March 2010, where we were part of what we called Peace of the Action—and it was spelled P-E-A-C-E.

And another activity that we took part in together was what was called the Tour de Peace, where Cindy endeavored to ride her bike, her bicycle, across the country. And I got to spend about two weeks on the Tour de Peace, but I got to see some amazing things. I got to meet some amazing people. And it wasn't long after that that I broke my back, but one of the things that the Tour de Peace did was they rerouted their path, I guess, to come to Philadelphia to come visit me while I was in the hospital. And Malcolm was with Cindy at that time.

So, Malcolm and I know each other pretty well, and the reason that I'm having Malcolm on today—I did my very best, or what I've done for this show is I've tried to have the experts on so as to put forward the best of the best information. And, for this subject, I could not get any of the experts that I trusted. I tried to get Paul Thompson; I tried to get *Shoestring* from 9/11 Blogger who says he doesn't do interviews; and I tried very hard to contact John Farmer who was, I think the key investigator for the people on the 9/11 Commission who were investigating the FAA and NORAD's response that morning. He also wrote a book called *The Ground Truth*.

So, I couldn't get any of those people. And then what I was going to do was have my friend Erik Larson on, who was on the third show, to go over what we both knew and so on and so forth, but Erik couldn't pin down a time and I wanted to get this interview over with. It's a very important subject.

So, what I've decided to do is have a show with someone who knows a little bit about the subject but isn't really familiar with all the content regarding the subject, and I wanted to see his reactions, or that person's reactions, as we go through this information.

So, Malcolm has been kind of to be my guinea pig today.

MAL [Laughs] Happily, happily. It should be a fun exercise. I'm looking forward to seeing how it goes.

JON All right, excellent. So, what we're going to do is I'm going to start with the questions.

What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

MAL Well, as I recall, I was living in a portion of Fresno called the Tower District, which had a coffee shop I would walk down to every morning. And there was a woman there who was a school teacher who I would do crosswords with. She would toss me the ones that she couldn't get. And I hadn't even really sat down to the table when this gentleman spoke to her and said, "Did you hear about the plane flying into the World Trade Center? America's under attack!" And then he went into the coffee shop. And I'm looking at her like, okay, um, "You know this guy, right?" And she goes, "Well, a little bit." And I said, "Do you know him to be sane?" And she goes, "Well, yeah." And I said, "Okay, I think I better go home and plug in that TV that hasn't been plugged in for nine months." (Laughs) And it took a while for me to unplug it again, I'll tell ya. That was hell of a shock, you know? Watching all that happen.

And what I thought—I know this is your next question—what did I think about it? Or when did I first begin to suspect there was something wrong with this whole deal? Instantly.

JON Really? On the day of.

MAL Oh, yeah.

JON That's one of the things that I wanted to mention today is the fact that my very first question about 9/11—and I've said this before—was on the day of 9/11, after the Pentagon was hit, I said to my friend, "Where the hell is our military?" And, so, that's apropos for what today's topic is.

MAL Yeah, that's such a—just complete lack of response in any measured fashion. It just started to feel to me like all this preparation that had been done over the years, all of the flight intercepts that had been carried out over the years for under much less threatening circumstances, and yet, this is going on? (Right) There's something wrong here.

JON Well, that's what we were led to believe is that our military is cracker jack people, made up of cracker jack people who go up and intercept planes left and right and are able to monitor the skies. That's what we were led to believe up until the day of 9/11.

MAL I remember specifically ads for the Air Force which actually had that scenario, on television—you've got to scramble sometimes, and they showed the ready crews jumping into their aircraft and being all exciting because they were recruiting. (Right)

So, it wasn't that kind of thing that's never been thought of before or anything like that. It was actually part of the popular culture and out there as an idea, and we all knew that they did these things all the time.

JON Well, okay going back to the 70's (Yeah), there were a multitude of hijackings that took place. And there was actually a hijacking, a simultaneous hijacking—I think it's called the Dawson's Field Hijackings—where three or four planes were simultaneously hijacked. And—

MAL I didn't know about that one. That makes it even a bigger deal.

JON Right, well there's an episode of *All in the Family*—for you young folk, that's a TV show from the 70s—where Archie Bunker goes on TV to talk about gun control. But during that little segment, he talks about the skyjackings and how big a problem it is and stuff like that. And that was during the 70s. You know, and they happened through the 80s.

So, the idea that our FAA or NORAD didn't have an idea of how to respond to this, it's kind of absurd.

MAL It's actually kind of insulting to our intelligence, really.

JON Right, it is.

MAL Hell, yeah.

JON What was the first specific thing that you did question about 9/11?

MAL I think that one of the first things that I questioned about it was just that I remember reading—okay, I'm reaching back in my memory to be as absolutely truthful as I can—to the time—and what I remember was the whole thing about control demolition was sticking out like a sore thumb. And that was just from visuals. I didn't—nobody had to tell me that looked strange. I mean that it looked, well actually, kind of too good. The way that the planes hit and everything. None of it ever made sense to me how the buildings came down.

Now, I realize that that is a point of great contention amongst the people who study this more closely, as to whether it was controlled or not, or whatever—but, just from watching how it went down, I couldn't reconcile everything that I was seeing and it seemed to me that there was more to this than met the eye. Then I remembered also that the building, those buildings had been attacked before, some years prior, by a bombing. And I started thinking that this was more of a continuum than an isolated event.

Those were the impressions that I had at the time.

JON Right. The buildings, everybody knows my stance about the buildings. I'll just repeat them really quick. I don't think you should have to be physicist or a scientist or an architect or an engineer to understand the need for 9/11 justice and it is a highly debated subject. There are people on both sides of the argument who make good arguments, and it's hard to trust—anyway, I don't really want to get into that, but—

MAL Yeah, but I'm with you there. I have questions and concerns, some of which have been adequately answered, but not all. And so, in that area, the real deal is, so why don't we find out.

JON Before we get into—

MAL A real investigation. But, anyway.

JON Right. Before we get into all the other questions, I want to read a statement.

MAL Okay.

JON And, as a matter of fact, because of some of the content matter that will be gone over during this show, I've decided to dedicate this show to 9/11 victims Alan Kleinberg and John Casazza. Alan Kleinberg was married to Mindy Kleinberg and John Casazza was married to Patty Casazza, two Jersey Girls, two September 11th Advocates, the four widows responsible for the creation of the 9/11 Commission. I want to dedicate this to their husbands because of some of the content we're going over today. So, anyway, I want to start off by reading a statement by Mindy Kleinberg, 9/11 victim family member, Mindy Kleinberg, during the first public hearing of the 9/11 Commission. And she starts out like this:

With regard to the 9/11 attacks, it has been said that the intelligence agencies have to be right 100% of the time and the terrorists only have to get lucky once. This explanation for the devastating attacks of September 11th, simple on its face, is wrong in its value. Because the 9/11 terrorists were not just lucky once: they were lucky over and over again.

And, she goes on to talk about:

Prior to 9/11, FAA and Department of Defense Manuals gave clear, comprehensive instructions on how to handle everything from minor emergencies to full blown hijackings. These "protocols" were in place and were practiced regularly for a good reason—with heavily trafficked air space; airliners without radio and transponder contact are collisions and/or calamities waiting to happen.

Those protocols dictate that in the event of an emergency, the FAA is to notify NORAD. Once that notification takes place, it is then the responsibility of NORAD to scramble fighter jets to intercept the errant plane(s). It is a matter of routine procedure for fighter jets to "intercept" commercial airliners in order to regain contact with the pilot.

In fact between June 2000 and September 2001, fighter jets

were scrambled 67 times. If that weren't protection enough, on September 11th, NEADS (or the North East Air Defense System Dept. of NORAD) was several days into a semiannual exercise known as "Vigilant Guardian." This meant that our North East Air Defense system was fully staffed. In short, key officers were manning the operation battle center, "fighter jets were cocked, loaded, and carrying extra gas on board."

Lucky for the terrorists none of this mattered on the morning of September 11th.

Then she goes on to talk about a lot of other things, but she finishes her statement with this. And, it's very profound. It's always stuck with me.

To me luck is something that happens once. When you have this repeated pattern of broken protocols, broken laws, broken communication, one cannot still call it luck. If at some point we don't look to hold the individuals accountable for not doing their jobs properly then how can we ever expect for terrorists not to get lucky again?

And, that is why I am here with all of you today. Because, we must find the answers as to what happened that day so as to ensure that another September 11th can never happen again.

Commissioners, I implore you to answer our questions. You are the Generals in the terrorism fight on our shores. In answering our questions, you have the ability to make this nation a safer place and, in turn, minimize the damage if there is another terrorist attack. And, if there is another terrorist attack, the next time, our systems will be in place and working and luck will not be an issue.

So, that's—I wanted to read that from her. Do you have anything to say about that?

MAL I have—I do, I think it's a very reasoned and respectful statement in light of the fact that so many of the people she was talking to have knowledge that they could have used to address the situation and have not done so.

JON Right. Well, all right. So, the first question.

How many different timelines were given with regard to the air response that morning? Do you know?

MAL Oh, I know that there are like at least three or four. And people argue over the timing by a couple of minutes on some things. So, it's—the answer to that is complex, Jon. Why don't you tell me what you know.

[Laughter]

JON Well, over the years, during the 9/11 Congressional Briefing that was chaired by then Representative Cynthia McKinney, on July 22nd, 2005, in Washington D.C., Paul Thompson said that he had as many as five different timelines that he had collected, that we were told, but I am really only aware of three. And I'm going to go over them, because they are complex. On September 13th, 2001, during the confirmation hearings for then General Myers to become, I think, the head of the Joint Chiefs? This is part of a transcript from that session, and this is Senator Carl Levin.

LEVIN: Was the Defense Department contacted by the FAA or the FBI or any other agency after the first two hijacked aircraft crashed into the World Trade Center, prior to the time that the Pentagon was hit?

MYERS: Sir, I don't know the answer to that question. I can get that for you, for the record.

LEVIN: Thank you. Did the Defense Department take—or was the Defense Department asked to take action against any specific aircraft?

MYERS: Sir, we were . . .

LEVIN: And did you take action against—for instance, there has been statements that the aircraft that crashed in Pennsylvania was shot down. Those stories continue to exist.

MYERS: Mr. Chairman, the armed forces did not shoot down any aircraft. When it became clear what the threat was, we did scramble fighter aircraft, AWACS, radar aircraft and tanker aircraft to begin to establish orbits in case other aircraft showed up in the FAA system that were hijacked. But we

never actually had to use force.

LEVIN: Was that order that you just described given before or after the Pentagon was struck? Do you know?

MYERS: That order, to the best of my knowledge, was after the Pentagon was struck.

So, later in the testimony, basically what he said was the order to scramble was not given until after the Pentagon was struck.

Later in the testimony, Senator Bill Nelson, I think Senator, says:

NELSON: The second World Trade tower was hit shortly after 9am. And the Pentagon was hit approximately 40 minutes later. That's approximately. You would know specifically what the timeline was.

The crash that occurred in Pennsylvania after the Newark westbound flight was turned around 100 degrees and started heading back to Washington was approximately an hour after the World Trade Center's second explosion. You said earlier in your testimony that we had not scrambled any military aircraft until after the Pentagon was hit. And so, my question would be: why?

MYERS: I think I had that right, that it was not until then. I'd have to go back and review the exact timelines.

And then later in the testimony just to give Myers the benefit of the doubt:

LEVIN: The time that we don't have is when the Pentagon was notified, if they were, by the FAA or the FBI or any other agency, relative to any potential threat or any planes having changed direction or anything like that. And that's the same which you will give us because that's...

MYERS: I can answer that. At the time of the first impact on the World Trade Center, we stood up our crisis action team. That was done immediately.

So we stood it up. And we started talking to the federal agencies. The time I do not know is when NORAD responded with fighter aircraft. I don't know that time.

So, there are two times during his testimony he said that planes were not scrambled until after the Pentagon was hit. And then later in the same testimony he said he didn't know.

So, that—it's not an official timeline as to when everything happened, but it's the first indication from anybody as to when fighters were scrambled and so on and so forth.

Do you have anything to say about all that stuff?

MAL Well, my first question would be: "Since when do you ignore two major building strikes and wait until you have a near threat—have a threat on the Pentagon, before you loft fighters?" It's a ridiculous response. I mean—

JON Right.

MAL If that's really the way that it happened, then somebody dropped the ball, not once, but on multiple occasions—opportunities to respond. (Well--) I mean when a strike like that happens, isn't that an immediate signal? It's like the FAA and everybody's reaching out. Why in the world would it take an hour for them to even start thinking about scrambling when they'd already done it 67 times the previous year?

JON Well, the first notification of the hijacking, I believe, was at 8:15 that morning, or 8:20 that morning, I don't recall the exact time.

MAL By 8:40 there should have been jets in the air.

JON And the official account says that none of the planes were within any of the fighter jets that morning, like none of the jets were within distance, or shooting distance, of any of the planes that morning. So—

MAL [Laughs]

JON That's what they said.

MAL Well, that's interesting. [Laughs]

JON Let's continue.

MAL Go on, yeah, go on. [Laughs]

JON All right.

The second timeline—and this is directly from John Farmer's book *The Ground Truth*. I don't have the page numbers, because unfortunately I grabbed this stuff from my Kindle Reader, which doesn't give page numbers.

All right.

Major General Paul Weaver, the commanding general of the Air National Guard, which had responded on the morning of 9/11 under the command of the First Air Force, sought to answer some of these persistent questions. On September 14, 2001, speaking with reporters at the Pentagon, General Weaver, "pulling a chronology from his pocket," offered a detailed sequence of what had occurred on 9/11. He stated that at 8:53 a.m., seven minutes after American Airlines Flight 11 had hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center, "two F-15 fighters from Otis Air Force Base on Cape Cod, Mass., scrambled to chase the second plane that hit the trade center, United Airlines Flight 175, which had taken off from Boston at 8:14 a.m. and had deviated from its course.

It goes on to say:

General Weaver stated that the third flight, American Airlines Flight 77, took off from Dulles International Airport at 8:10 a.m., flew west for forty-five minutes, then turned east. "Whoever was flying it," General Weaver said, "had turned off the transponder," and the plane disappeared from radar. "They came back on the [radar] scope at 9:10 in West Virginia." The Northeast Air Defense Sector, Weaver stated, "scrambled F-16s that were on alert at Langley Air Force Base at 9:35. The crash happened at 9:37."

It goes on to say:

General Weaver added that "no National Guard or other military planes were scrambled to chase the fourth hijacked airliner," United Airlines Flight 93, which took off at 8:40 a.m. from Newark International Airport.

It goes on to say:

It was, however, contradicted that very day by Deputy Defense Secretary (and this is important) Paul Wolfowitz. Appearing on public television's NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, Wolfowitz, when asked whether rules of engagement would have allowed the Air Force to shoot down United 93, said: "I think it was pretty clear at that point that that airliner was not under the pilot's control and that it was heading to do major damage We were already tracking in on that plane that crashed in Pennsylvania," Wolfowitz stated, adding that "it was the heroism of the passengers on board that brought it down but the Air Force was in a position to do so if we had to."

This view—that timely notice had been passed regarding United 93, that the fighters had been scrambled in response, that the President had issued the authorization to shoot the plane down, and that that order had been passed to the pilots, who were tracking United 93—quickly became official orthodoxy. His assertion that by the time United 93 was heading for Washington the fighters were tracking it and the shoot-down authorization had been given, was repeated on September 17 by Vice President Cheney during an appearance on Meet the Press.

So, it goes on to say:

As administration officials struggled in public to explain what had happened and when, personnel from both the Department of Defense and the FAA worked to piece the story together, preparing for a briefing at the White House on September 17.

And I grabbed this next part from HistoryCommons.org:

Bob Kerrey will say during the 9/11 Commission that "it feels like something happened in that briefing that produced almost a necessity to deliver a story that's different than what actually happened on that day [of September 11th]."

So, basically, the FAA and NORAD were going to give a briefing to the White House on September 17th about what happened. And it goes on to say further in John Farmer's book:

The agencies' chronologies had changed by September 18, the day after the White House briefing. On September 18, the FAA generated another timeline; this document was for internal use. The September 18 chronology identified a time for the FAA's notification of the military regarding American 77: 9:24. With regard to the FAA's notification of the hijacking of United 93, the FAA's September 18 chronology indicates "N/A." (I guess that's Not Available) That same day, NORAD issued a press release concerning its actions on 9/11. NORAD's press release also identified 9:24 as the identification time for American 77, and cited that notification as the trigger for the scramble of the Langley fighters.

It goes on to say:

Like the FAA's September 18th document, NORAD's press release of the same date lists "N/A" as the notification time for the United 93 hijacking.

Thus, the Government emerged a day after the White House briefing with a unified account of the actions of the FAA and the military regarding the final two flights, American 77 and United 93. It was, moreover, an account that fit together nicely (and this is important—that fit together nicely) with the account provided publicly by Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz and Vice President Cheney.

MAL Again.

JON [Laughs] So, do you understand what happened? Basically, they had a meeting at the White House on September 17 and the day after they

released the chronology, and this one just happened to coincide with what Wolfowitz and Cheney were saying.

MAL Right. Yeah, no, we're going to go with this, we're going to go with this guys. I know that there's some confusion here, so we need to tighten it up. We're going to go with this story.

[Laughter]

My sarcastic nature.

JON No, it's okay, feel free. Say whatever you want.

It goes on to say:

The Inspector General also considered whether the FAA had been influenced by or coordinated its timeline with the NORAD effort that resulted in the September 18 press release. The report concludes: "Neither DoD/IG's investigation nor our investigation established any direct coordination between the FAA and DoD officials regarding the chronologies." This conclusion conflicts with the Commission staff's interviews, which, as the Inspector General's office was informed, "confirmed that the adequacy of the notification of the military was a 'topic of hot debate' in the days after September 11 between the FAA and the military. Jeff Griffith, the senior air traffic manager on duty at FAA Headquarters on September 11, recalled having heated conversations with General Arnold and others on the subject. He specifically recalled being informed by the military that their position was that no notice had been passed regarding the hijacking of United 93 before it crashed."

MAL Even though you were saying, hey, wait a minute, no, we have an obligation to report and we didn't.

JON Right. Well, basically—

MAL But that's what's happening here is they're basically ignoring the fact that there's this whole chain of command set up and all these policies and procedures that say: "When this happens, then automatically without

question this next thing happens." It doesn't say ask somebody "if"—you know. (Right) And they're ignoring all this chain of notifications that would have taken place at that time and said, but it didn't happen. Even though it's obvious that unless it was, basically unless the system is told not to operate at somewhere along in line of command, it's going to automatically. (Right) And it does it every day. (Except on that day)

This is why all of this stuff just blows my mind so much when I listen—the more—as I go into specifics on the discrepancies between what we have been told and what we are discovering, this is a continuous theme. It's like, well, not only is that a lie, but it's like, it's an insulting lie. (Right)

JON Yeah, of course. It's insulting. One thing that has to be talked about is accountability. So many lies, and the families have made the point several times that these people are still in their positions or have been promoted. Do we still want these people in their positions doing what they do if they were so horrible on 9/11.

MAL Apparently – go ahead.

JON I'm just going to continue reading what he said. (Go, ahead)

There are, in sum, significant reasons to doubt the reliability of both Inspectors General's reports. Neither finds any evidence that the FAA and DoD coordinated their efforts after 9/11 to reconstruct the story. This conclusion is refuted by the e-mail from CONR to NEADS discussed above, which references the sharing of information, by the fact that NEADS provided its logs to the FAA, and by the fact that the agencies emerged on September 18 with identically erroneous notification times for American 77 and United 93.

JON So, basically—

MAL Okay, so there we are.

JON Basically, John Farmer is saying that we should doubt what the Inspector General's report said, and on that subject, I'm going to read a little bit that I actually put together [Laughs].

MAL All right.

JON Let's see, and this is, I think, from my "The Facts Speak for Themselves" article.

On 8/2/2006, the [Washington Post](#) reported that "the Pentagon's initial story of how it reacted to the 2001 terrorist attacks **may have been part of a deliberate effort to mislead the commission and the public**" and that "the 10-member commission, in a secret meeting at the end of its tenure in the summer of 2004, **debated referring the matter to the Justice Department for criminal investigation.**" Later, it was reported that [NORAD's mistakes](#) were due to "inadequate forensic capabilities" and "poor record-keeping."

MAL Okay.

JON I think those results came from the Inspector General.

MAL Did the Inspector General explain what the hell he meant? I mean, poor record-keeping? First of all, the regulations are published. It's not a matter or record-keeping. You make your log entries when you're supposed to. Again, it's—and then, what was the thing he said before the poor record-keeping? That one threw me, because I didn't understand—

JON Inadequate forensic capabilities. They didn't have the ability to forensically look at things, I guess.

MAL You mean they couldn't open the fricken log book and read it? [Hardy Laughter]

JON I don't know.

MAL Well, see, like okay—this is what I remember from when I was in the military, okay? And sure, procedures vary from place-to-place and all that stuff. But in a general sense, you don't do much without logging it. It's part of your procedures. It's a necessary evil and it's something you get chewed on for not doing it. It becomes part of your normal day-to-day life to make sure that you fill out the logs as you go so that you don't end up getting chewed on.

JON Well, especially something as important as the 9/11 attacks.

MAL Well, exactly. The point I'm trying to make is I'm just talking about day-to-day operations. I'm not talking about emergency situations where it's even more important. So, in an office that has a really high pucker factor, stuff like that does not get ignored unless people are as a whole, the whole culture has just gone to hell. And that's possible. I mean, I'm not in those offices. I was in the military 30 years ago, not yesterday. But, still, some things about those institutions tend not to change. When you're talking about an agency that's heavily regulated as far as what you do when this happens is a place like the FAA or NORAD or any other quasi-militarily structured organization, there's this huge amount of stuff that goes on where people are signing that this happened and stamping that that happened on this time and all this lack of forensic ability? What they mean is literally either they couldn't walk in the room and open the log books to read them or the computer equivalent these days, or they never tried and they're not telepathic, that's why they couldn't do it.

JON [Laughs] Well, with regard to the DOD's Inspector General:

On March 7th, 2009, it is reported that Frank Rich of the New York Times believed "that the Defense Department Inspector General's office's investigations over the years may have been cover-ups that were "carried out in response to "orders from above." He said that any report "over the past five or six years during the war in Iraq" may be suspect, and that "there may be a much bigger story here." His suspicions seem to have been confirmed in a report from Fox News' Catherine Herridge that broke on October 7th, 2010. With regard to what is known as Able Danger, "it is made clear that "at least five witnesses questioned by the Defense Department's Inspector General told Fox News that their statements were distorted by investigators in the final IG's report—or it left out key information, backing up assertions that lead hijacker Mohammed Atta was identified a year prior to 9/11."

So, basically, the DOD Inspector General that looked into NORAD's lies, that looked into the story of Able Danger, basically let NORAD off the hook and said that the people at Able Danger were wrong, that they never identified Mohammed Atta. So, we have corrupt people saying, talking

about these lies and the people that are investigating them are also seemingly corrupt.

MAL Mm-hmm, yeah, we do have a problem with that.

JON Yeah—Now, on May 23, 2003, with regard to the 9/11 Commission—and I got this from HistoryCommons (Mm-hmm):

The 9/11 Commission holds a public hearing at which it takes testimony from military officials about the timeline of events on the day of 9/11. The key witness is retired Air Force General Larry Arnold, who commanded NORAD's Continental US Region on the day of 9/11. Under questioning from commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste, Arnold says, "I believe that to be a fact: that 9:24 was the first time that we had been advised of American 77 as a possible hijacked airplane." However, the Commission will later conclude that the military was not notified of the hijacking at this time, although it had been mistakenly advised Flight 11 was inbound to Washington three minutes previously. Arnold adds that if the military was slow in responding to Flight 77, it was because "our focus—you have got to remember that there's a lot of other things going on simultaneously here—was on United 93." However, Flight 93 was not hijacked until a few minutes after 9:24. Arnold adds: "It was our intent to intercept United Flight 93. And in fact, my own staff, we were orbiting now over Washington D.C., by this time, and I was personally anxious to see what 93 was going to do, and our intent was to intercept it." However, the Commission will later conclude that the military did not learn that Flight 93 had been hijacked until around 10:00 a.m. Prior to the hearing, the Commission's staff had been concerned about the inaccuracy of timelines offered by the military. Author Philip Shenon will write: "It seemed all the more remarkable to [Commission staffer John Farmer] that the Pentagon could not establish a clear chronology of how it responded to an attack on the Pentagon building itself. Wouldn't the generals and admirals want to know why their own offices—their own lives—had been put at risk that morning?" Therefore, Farmer thought that the hearing should clear things up, but, according to Shenon, he and his colleagues are "astonished" when they

analyze what Arnold says, although he is not under oath on this day. Shenon will add, "It would later be determined that almost every one of those assertions by General Arnold in May 2003 was flat wrong."

MAL I would sure hate to be a general who was so ill-informed by his staff as this poor man.

[Laughter]

It would seem to me that they all must be incompetent and just have never learned how to do their jobs properly to fail so spectacularly. His daily life must have been hellish.

JON Well, what I think he did is they took the timeline that was established the day after 9/11 and tried to repeat that during the 9/11 Commission. That's what I think they did. And, at that point I think the tapes—they were looking at the tapes, the 9/11 Commission was (Mm-hmm) and they knew that things were not what we were told.

MAL And that's why my sarcastic response because quite honestly the only way those circumstances could have become was if nobody came to work. I mean—

JON [Laughs] Right.

Now, the third timeline is just very simple. During June 2004 testimony, the 9/11 Commission, I believe, the third timeline is introduced and that's the final timeline. (Mm-hmm)

Now, I mentioned earlier Bob Kerrey saying the September 17 meeting it seemed like something happened at that meeting that caused almost a necessity to put forward something different from what the truth was? (Yeah) He actually, when I watched the clip of him saying that, he praised the military and was harping on the FAA. So, I don't quite understand, you know—

MAL What was his position at the time, again?

JON He said that there was a meeting that—

MAL No, I mean, could it be when he was doing this he was working for the 9/11 Commission?

JON Yeah, this is the 9/11 Commission or Bob Kerrey. He said that during the June 2004 testimony from NORAD. I think it took place on June 17th, 2004. June 16th and June 17th, 2004. (Mm-hmm)

So, now, those are all the timelines. Those are three that I'm aware of. The next question in our little lineup here, and that took a long time. What was the protocol for intercepting an errant plane? Do you have any idea? Do you know?

MAL Well, your previous—your statement from the 9/11 widow actually covered it pretty well. When somebody is out of line they try to—my understanding is, and I'm not a pilot, but since you asked, my basic understanding of it is if you wander off flight plan, they immediately try to contact you. If they can't contact you, they immediately scramble somebody to get up there and see what the hell's going on. And that's about how it goes. I mean, I don't think that there's a lot of waiting around, or deciding whether or not he looks like he's flying straight, or whatever. They just send somebody to investigate. It's automatic.

JON Right, well, here's what I got and I think I either got this from the 9/11 Report itself, or from John Farmer's book. I don't remember. I'm sorry.

There were established protocols in place on 9/11 for the interaction of the FAA with the military. Those protocols had been developed in response to the hijackings of the 1970s and 1980s, which typically resulted in hostage negotiations, and although they had been revised at Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's direction to increase his authority over the process, those revisions to the protocols reflected none of the intelligence reporting with respect to the increased domestic hijacking threat or the growing prevalence of suicide terrorist attacks.

The protocols in place called for the officials in the FAA's Washington Operations Center to notify FAA's senior leadership, specifically the FAA "hijack coordinator," who was "the Director of the FAA Office of Civil Aviation Security or his or her designate." The FAA's hijack

coordinator, in turn, was required to make "direct contact" with the National Military Command Center (NMCC) at the Pentagon and "request the military to provide an escort aircraft."

The purpose of the military escort, under the protocols existing on 9/11, was to "follow the flight, report anything unusual, and aid search and rescue in the event of an emergency." Once the official request was received from the FAA, the NMCC was required to seek approval from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) to provide military assistance.

Now, this seems weird to me that they talk about protocols—what they're supposed to do and—they talk about a hijacking coordinator (Mm-hmm), and it seems to me that if a flight goes off path or the radios don't respond, those are reasons enough to send up a fighter jet. You don't need a "hijack coordinator" to do this. Do you know what I mean?

MAL No, that's true. I understand what you're saying. They would just be notified as a matter of course, rather than be part of the decision tree, I think.

JON Right, so that's a good one. I get—

MAL Whether we scramble or not or whatever. That wouldn't—that wouldn't actually be of purview. I just don't—a hijacking coordinator wouldn't necessarily make any kind of decision as to whether to scramble or not. I think that's automatic. The way you described it, he'd be contacted as part of the alert, but don't they scramble anyway?

JON Well, how do you know it's a hijacking? Why do you need a "hijack coordinator?"

MAL Oh, no, that would be just in case. I mean, honestly, they already had to deal with the scenario so many times that putting that out there is part of the notification. It would just be automatic. During the 70s and 80s it happened a lot that they actually needed—it was going on a lot, so you'd be notified even if they didn't have action.

JON Well, a lot of emphasis has been put on the hijacking coordinator and I'm going to get to that in a second. (Okay) But first I want to read a statement

from 9/11 Family Member Patty Casazza, and this took place in November 2007, at an event that I don't remember the name of. I was there. There's a video of it online. You just go look for Bob McIlvaine and Patty Casazza. All right, quote: Oh, Patty Casazza, just so everybody knows, she's one of the Jersey Girls and I think I mentioned that earlier. So, I'm going to read what she said.

"Basically, from the outset, the planes... they didn't follow protocol. There should have, uh... planes sent to accompany the commercial airlines once transponder, which is the identification the FAA uses to track planes.... Once that went off, that's, in itself, reason enough for fighter jets to be sent up into the air, and it's not on.. they're not... their purpose isn't necessarily to shoot down an errant plane, that's the last resort, but they do have the means to... um... they're supposed to go on the side of a plane, rock their wings, that's an indicator that the pilot should turn some type of communication on with these fighter jets, let them know that every thing's okay onboard, that... that... you know, there isn't a hijacking, or a pilot hasn't, you know, gotten sick. Um... All of those things can happen without you shooting down a plane, and those jet fighters could rock their wings, they can actually knock, if there were hijackers actually flying those planes, they could have knocked those people, um... off their feet. So, there were many protocols that were not followed on 9/11. And that's with FOUR commercial jet airliners having been hijacked. I ask you how is that possible? We spend more money in military than more than half the countries totaled in the world. And again, we couldn't get one plane up in time to accompany those four planes that were wildly off course."

MAL Yeah, I agree with her.

JON Right, she—I'm assuming they looked into what the protocols were and it sounds like they did because I've heard that before.

MAL Yeah, I mean, like I said, that thing with the hijacking coordinator. That's like being an on-call guy like a second anesthetist. You get a notification that there's something coming in and you're waiting for chair #1 to indicate that he's available you know? (Right) But you don't have to come in yourself. Or something like that.

I mean it would be along those lines or: Hey, we might have a hijacking. You might want to check in with your secretary. You know? [Laughter]

JON [Laughter] Right. We're sorry, this isn't a laughing matter, but it's so ridiculous.

MAL No, but that's why I hear the humor because honestly Jon, if I had to approach every single thing that you and I deal with on a daily basis on a totally serious level, they'd have already cuffed and stuck me and put me in a little bouncy house.

JON Right, exactly.

All right, so I have some information—

MAL I don't want people to think I'm being flippant, because this doesn't mean anything to me. I would hate to give that impression. The humor is totally a matter of self-preservation.

JON Oh, I hope you're getting angry is what I'm hoping. [Laughs]

MAL Dude, my anger meter has been pegged for about 13 years now.

JON Okay, well, it's going to get worse as we go along, I guarantee you.

MAL [Laughter] Only on the daily fluctuation scale, believe me. [Laughter] Let's go.

JON All right, so let me get into this hijacking coordinator. (Okay)

The hijack coordinator, FAA Office of Civil Aviation Security Director Mike Canavan, and this is from www.historycommons.org, is in Puerto Rico and claims to have missed out on "everything that transpired that day." The 9/11 Commission fails to ask him if he had delegated that task to anyone else while he was gone. Monte Belger will later say simply that "an FAA security person" runs the "hijack net" open communication system during 9/11.

According to Miles Kara, (who was a staffer on the 9/11

Commission, who is somebody who's turned into a 9/11 debunker and what I think is an apologist for the 9/11 Commission, but anyway, according to him . . .) Lynne Osmus was acting HC (that day), but she was out sick on 9/11 so the role was left to Claudio Manno, and it's not clear what he did in that role.

So what I did, is I went to the Memoranda for the Record, which is descriptions of interviews (uh-huh) by the 9/11 Commission of individuals they talked to. And this is a quote from the Claudio Manno MFR (Memoranda for the Record):

"Manno went to ACI's 3rd Floor watch office. He said his role was to support operations with what information he could. ACI was not able to provide any relevant intelligence information on the plot as it was unfolding."

"Manno indicated that they did not conceive that hijackers would use the aircraft as a weapon of mass destruction."

So, I think I picked that quote out because of how many people said that after 9/11. Nobody could conceive of it.

MAL Yeah, I mean, hey, I was a kid during the 70s, but I remember all this stuff, and when they said that it was, it was another one of those snorts of disbelief.

JON Right, nobody conceived of it.

MAL That was the only thing I could form. It was just like: "Are you kidding me? Okay, you're older than I am, I remember this stuff. What happened to you?"

JON Right. And there's been multiple books written that make that scenario. I mean if people write books or people that make TV shows are or have better imaginations than those deemed to protect us, there's a problem there. [Laughs]

MAL Well, absolutely correct. And as a matter of fact, I happen to remember from some of these things that media did have the capability to move the Government in the right direction, or at least shake them up a little bit—do

you remember *Independence Day*, the movie? (Yeah, sure!) They CGI'd the President so well, and none of it was like taken from stock, apparently, they just redid it. And the Department of Defense showed up down at the film studio asking them: How did you do that? [Laughs] (Right) All of a sudden, we're a little worried about this. [Laughs]

JON That's interesting. Well, there was a TV show—oh, geez, what the hell was it called? It was a spin-off from the *X-Files*. Oh, *The Lone Gunman*.

MAL Yeah, I remember that show.

JON And, a few months prior to 9/11, they released the pilot episode, and the pilot episode talks about hijacking a commercial aircraft remotely and crashing it directly in to the World Trade Center. And that was the premise of the whole show.

MAL Well, that's very, very freaky.

JON Yeah, well, it was taped—

MAL Amazing coincidence.

JON It was taped like a year before it was aired. So it was very weird to see that.

MAL Wow, yeah, that's kind of eerie. I mean these ideas are obviously not the province of just one group of people. You can have the same fantasy and be in a completely different world. That's amazing.

JON Well, I don't want to say—

MAL No, I don't think it had a—yeah, I don't either. Just the eerie similarity to the fact that it happened a year later that a plane flew into a building. Remote-control, yeah, I don't think so, but whatever. (Right)

JON It just goes to show how ridiculous the notion is that nobody conceived of it. And there have been multiple people in Government that have made statements that said: Sure, we thought of that. (Of course) So, it's ridiculous.

Anyway, the Lynne Osmus MFR, who was somebody, I think, Miles Karra said was the hijacking coordinator. It says:

"Claudio Manno called her to say an aircraft was off route and headed toward New York City. Osmus was in her basement and didn't hear the call. Mann called back just after the first aircraft struck the WTC. Osmus estimated that it was between Manno's first and second calls to her."

"When asked who the FAA's hijack coordinator was, Osmus indicated that it was Lee Longmire who was ACO 1, but that there was really nothing for him to do. Osmus stated that she does not remember any other plots that day that were confirmed."

So, now we have to go to somebody else's MFR to find out, you know, the hijack coordinator, Lee Longmire, and this is from his MFR. It says:

"Longmire reported that it was primarily his responsibility to coordinate FAA's response to a hijacking, with ACS-1 (Canavan) (who was missing that day in Puerto Rico) working primarily with higher-level Administration officials, including the Secretary of Transportation.

With respect to the military, Longmire indicated that it was standard procedure to pull the military into the communications link as soon as possible so they could monitor the aircraft. (He did not recall any pre-9/11 discussions of assigning the military with any hijacking role other than tracking the aircraft). The linkup from the FAA Command Center was supposed to be with the National Military Command center (NMCC). It was Longmire's expectation that both NMCC and the FBI should have been included in the communications link as soon as the Command Center was stood up. He later learned that this didn't occur, but wasn't sure when the situation was rectified. The FAA Watch was responsible for setting up the communications network. As to the taping of Command Center communications on 9/11, Longmire reported that the center was new and he was not sure if they had the capability."

Now, I don't see any mention of Claudio Manno in the 9/11 Report except for his title, and references to him in the notes. His MFR doesn't say

anything about being the "Hijacker Coordinator" for that day. The 9/11 Report briefly mentions the hijack coordinator when describing what protocol was, but THAT'S IT.

Lee Longmire is mentioned in two notes in the back of the book. And Lynne Osmus isn't mentioned at all—in the 9/11 Report.

So, the hijacking coordinator, the first guy, was missing. The second person who was supposed to take over for them was out sick that day. I think the third person said that the fourth person was the actual hijacking coordinator that day. And it's unclear as to what they did.

Now—

MAL May I ask a question? (Sure! Go ahead) How does this compare to the, if you looked, how does this compare to the MFRs around other investigations of hijackings and stuff? I mean, is there—

JON Well, I don't know—

MAL Does this sound like it's—all I—I guess what I'm getting at is I wonder if there's someone on the record to look and ascertain this, but I'd be pretty sure that most of the time your responses don't look like this.

JON It's hard to understand. When you look at—unfortunately, when you look at most Government investigations that have taken place over the years, most of them seemingly are corrupt, so it's business-as-usual with the 9/11 Commission, unfortunately.

MAL Okay, I can—go ahead, yeah, yeah.

JON Now, I have a quote, and I think I got this from HistoryCommons.

Apparently, there's only one person at FAA headquarters who is authorized to request military assistance. And Ben Sliney, the Command Center's national operations manager, is told that no one can find him (the hijacking coordinator) –

MAL What is his name, again?

JON Ben Sliney.

MAL Slimey?

JON S-L-I-N-as in Nancy-E-Y.

MAL Okay. Okay.

Sliney will later recount: "I said something like, 'That's incredible. There's only one person. There must be someone designated or someone who will assume the responsibility of issuing an order, you know.' We were becoming frustrated in our attempts to get some information. What was the military response?"

So, they apparently couldn't find this hijack coordinator and so they're saying that caused some of the problems with the air response that morning. Ugh! And this story—

MAL If it's true, it's such monumental incompetence as to the unbelievable. I just can't buy it that this many things could go wrong at once. (Right) It's not credible, because they do this every day.

JON Yep, they train for it; they prepare for it; they're gung ho about it. You know how military people are.

MAL Yes! Absolutely. I cannot imagine. I mean, it's one thing when you're talking about manning a guard house, you know, over a space of 30 years—some things might get a little lax. But this is real-time stuff that they DO every day. You know, USE the communication channels. They actually fuel the jets and fly them. It happens all the time. So, why today? This particular day? Why so much failure? (Right) It is literally to me incredible.

JON So much "incompetence" on one day.

Now, I'm going to go over a subject a lot of people might not be aware of. I think you're aware of this. The destruction of tapes of an interview (Yes) by FAA people on the day of 9/11. This is an absolutely amazing story, and I'm going to have to read, so people understand what this is.

MAL Yeah, do that. I couldn't do it justice anyway.

JON All right. This is from the Associated Press on February 18, 2005:

"Air traffic controllers who handled two of the hijacked flights on Sept. 11, 2001, recorded their experiences shortly after the planes crashed into the World Trade Center but a supervisor destroyed the tape, Government investigators said Thursday."

"Sometime between December 2001 and February 2002, an unidentified Federal Aviation Administration quality assurance manager crushed the cassette case in his hand, cut the tape into small pieces and threw them away in multiple trash cans, the report said."

Another report, and this is from, I believe, the New York Times:

"The Inspector General, Kenneth M. Mead, said that the officials' keeping the existence of the tape a secret and the decision by one to destroy it had not served "the interests of the F.A.A., the department or the public" and could foster suspicions among the public."

MAL No, really?

JON Get out!

MAL Yeah, right?

JON Suspicious? [Laughter]

MAL Yeah, it doesn't seem suspicious to me, but—

JON Okay.

"The quality-assurance manager told investigators that he had destroyed the tape because he thought making it was contrary to FAA policy, which calls for written statements, and because he felt that the controllers "were not in the correct frame of mind to have properly consented to the taping" because of the stress of that day, Mr. Mead reported."

"The quality-assurance manager destroyed the tape between December 2001 and February 2002. By that time, he and the center manager had received an email message sent by the FAA instructing officials to safeguard all records and adding, "If a question arises whether or not you should retain data, RETAIN IT."

The Inspector General attributed the tape's destruction to "poor judgment."

"An FAA spokesman, Greg Martin, said that his agency had cooperated with the 9/11 Commission and that was how the tape's existence had become known at the agency's headquarters.

"We believe it would not have added in any way to the information contained in all of the other materials that have already been provided to the investigators and the members of the 9/11 Commission," he said.

Nonetheless, Mr. Martin said that "we have taken appropriate disciplinary action" against the quality-assurance manager. For privacy reasons, he said, he could not say what those actions were or identify any of the employees involved."

And that's from the New York Times, May 6th, 2004.

And I have one more report to go over that has some specifics as to who these people are.

"The Center manager, Mike McCormick, asked six controllers involved to participate in the making of a cassette tape recording, providing their firsthand accounts of the morning's actions interacting with, or tracking, the two hijacked airplanes. McCormick knew that the six would have to prepare written statements, but those writings might not be undertaken until the controllers returned from stress-induced sick leave. He was seeking an immediate "contemporaneous recording" which could assist the controllers later in preparing their written statements. The tape also could assist law enforcement officials who might have an immediate need

for controller information about the hijackings. The DOT/IG considered the manager's taping initiative "prudent under the circumstances."

McCormick coordinated this initiative with the controller's local union President. The local union President agreed to the taping, on the condition that the taping was temporary, and that the tape was to be destroyed once standard written statements were obtained. This agreement was never relayed to the proper authorities."

"After the recording session, the tape was handed to Kevin Delaney, the Center's quality assurance manager. Its existence was entered in the Center's evidence log. However, neither Delaney nor McCormick informed FAA regional or national headquarters authorities of the tape's existence, or of their separate agreement with the union to destroy it. If higher authorities had been aware of the tape, it would have been regarded as an original record requiring five-year retention, the DOT/IG said."

"September 14th. The Center received a regional e-mail directing that all data and records for September 11th be retained and secured. The e-mail stressed, "If a question arises whether or not you should retain the data, RETAIN IT. If any questions, please call." Delaney told DOT/IG investigators he believed the e-mail did not apply to the tape-recorded statements since higher headquarters were unaware of its existence. (Okay . . .) Whether higher authorities were aware or not, whether the tape was a temporary or permanent record, is immaterial, according to experienced criminal investigators."

"December 2001 and February 2002. Sometime during this period Delaney, acting on his own initiative, destroyed the tape by breaking up the plastic housing and cutting the tape into small fragments, depositing the remnants in trash cans throughout the Center. McCormick told DOT/IG investigators if Delaney had asked permission to destroy the tape, he would have granted it.

As a former criminal investigator remarked, "[blind musician] Ray Charles could see that this was a cover-up."

"As a result of the judgments rendered by these managers, no one will know for certain the content of the tape or its intrinsic value, nor be able to compare the audiotaped statements with the controllers' written statements - one of which was prepared three weeks later - for purposes of ensuring completeness.

"Though technical details of the hijacked flights are well known based on radar data and pilot-controller radio communications, what those six controllers recounted in a group setting on September 11, in their own voices, about what transpired that morning, are no longer available to assist any investigation or inform the public."

And, it finally says:

"In late April, McCormick was suspended for 20 days without pay. He appealed the action. Disciplinary action is still under consideration for Delaney, an official at FAA headquarters said."

And that's from *Aviation Today* on May 17th, 2004.

So, we didn't know their names for a while. Finally, we got their names. And I looked at the 9/11 Commission to see if they spoke with these people. I found that they did speak with Delaney, the guy who destroyed the tape. (Yeah?) And this is from his Memoranda for the Record. It says:

"Delaney stated, prior to 9-11, nobody would have anticipated someone hijacking an aircraft and crashing it into a building."

Again, I got that quote because it's one we heard a lot. (Yeah) And this is the second part of what I got from his MFR.

"In subsequent interviews with ZNY employees, Commission staff gathered information that contradicts Delaney's statements. Please see Commission MFRs for Michael McCormick and David LaCates for further information."

So, they're saying that there are contradictory statements to what Delaney is saying, the guy that destroyed the tapes. But I don't know what it's with regard to. I did not look up Michael McCormick and David LaCates' MFRs, I'm sorry to say.

MAL Well, that's okay. It's certainly something to look at next.

JON Yeah, for people interested. (Yeah)

Now, there's one thing I'm going to go over with regard to the FAA. (Mm-hmm) Do you recall that Condoleezza Rice—or do you recall we were told that there were no warnings of any kind?

MAL Oh, I remember her saying it and just yelling at the computer screen.

JON Not just her. After 9/11 there were a multitude of people...

MAL Yeah, yeah, it made me yell every time nearly. [Laughs]

JON Right. Okay, so what I did was is I went—there was a monograph released by the 9/11 Commission (Uh-huh) after the release of the 9/11 Report and I got this directly from HistoryCommons.org. Between April 1st, 2001 and September 10th, 2001: Nearly Half of FAA's Daily Intelligence Summaries Mention Bin Laden or Al-Qaeda and no action is taken. And I'm going to read this entry.

In 2005, it will be revealed that of the FAA's 105 daily intelligence summaries between these dates, 52 mention Bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, or both. Most of the mentions are "in regard to overseas threats." None of the warnings specifically predict something similar to the 9/11 attacks, but five of them mention Al-Qaeda's training for hijackings and two reports concern suicide operations unconnected to aviation. One of the warnings mentions air defense measures being taken in Genoa, Italy, for the July 2001 G-8 summit to protect from a possible air attack by terrorists. However, the New Jersey Star-Ledger is virtually the only newspaper in the U.S. to report this fact. Despite all these warnings, the FAA fails to take any extra security measures. They do not expand the use of in-flight air marshals or tighten airport screening for

weapons. A proposed rule to improve passenger screening and other security measures ordered by Congress in 1996 has held up and is still not in effect by 9/11. The 9/11 Commission's report on these FAA warnings released in 2005 will conclude that FAA officials were more concerned with reducing airline congestion, lessening delays, and easing air carriers' financial problems than preventing a hijacking. The FAA also makes no effort to expand its list of terror suspects, which includes only a dozen names. The former head of the FAA's civil aviation security branch later says he wasn't even aware of TIPOFF, the Government's main watch list, which included the names of two 9/11 hijackers before 9/11. Nor is there any evidence that a senior FAA working group responsible for security ever meets in 2001 to discuss "the high threat period that summer."

So, basically, the FAA got 52 warnings having to do with Bin Laden before 9/11—in a short timeframe. (Hmm) And, on 9/11, seemingly no one was prepared for what happened that day. (Right) The protocols were not followed that day.

MAL And the protocols had been developed, by the way, over literally decades of experience.

JON Decades!

MAL I mean, these are things that people, like I said—I keep on coming back to this. They did it every day. (Right) Some of these things, these other things that tie this person to that person and the whole scenario that you and I have discussed before, not just the air part, just the whole general sweep of it—indicates that there was a whole lot more to it as it went off. But anyway.

JON Right. So, the next question that we have, and I know you won't be able to answer this, but I have something.

Give or take, how many times prior to 9/11 were planes intercepted?

MAL Well, I know what I have read previously, but total? No idea.

JON

No idea. Well, I went to HistoryCommons.org and I got a list of scrambles or top reports of scrambles, so I'm just going to go ahead and read them. (Uh-huh)

A General Accounting Office report published in May 1994 states that "during the past four years, NORAD's alert fighters took off to intercept aircraft (referred to as scrambled) 1,518 times, or an average of 15 times per site per year." Of these incidents, the number of scrambles that are in response to suspected drug smuggling aircraft averages "one per site, or less than 7 percent of all of the alert sites' total activity." The remaining activity, about 93 percent of the total scrambles, "generally involved visually inspecting unidentified aircraft and assisting aircraft in distress."

In the two years from May 15, 1996 to May 14, 1998, NORAD's Western Air Defense Sector (WADS), which is responsible for the "air sovereignty" of the western 63 percent of the continental U.S., scrambles fighters 129 times to identify unknown aircraft that might be a threat. Over the same period, WADS scrambles fighters an additional 42 times against potential and actual drug smugglers.

In 1997, the Southeast Air Defense Sector (SEADS)—another of NORAD's three air defense sectors in the continental US—tracks 427 unidentified aircraft, and fighters intercept these "unknowns" 36 times. The same year, NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS) handles 65 unidentified tracks and WADS handles 104 unidentified tracks, according to Major General Larry Arnold, the commander of the Continental United States NORAD Region on 9/11.

In 1998, SEADS logs more than 400 fighter scrambles.

In 1999, Airman magazine reports that NORAD's fighters on alert at Homestead Air Reserve Base in Florida are scrambled 75 times per year, on average. According to Captain Tom Herring, a full-time alert pilot at the base, this is more scrambles than any other unit in the Air National Guard.

According to the Calgary Herald, in 2000 there are 425

"unknowns," where an aircraft's pilot has not filed or has deviated from a flight plan, or has used the wrong radio frequency, and fighters are scrambled 129 times in response.

Between September 2000 and June 2001, fighters are scrambled 67 times to intercept suspicious aircraft, according to the Associated Press.

Lieutenant General Norton Schwartz, the commander of the Alaskan NORAD Region at the time of the 9/11 attacks, will say that before 9/11, it is "not unusual, and certainly was a well-refined procedure" for NORAD fighters to intercept an aircraft. He will add, though, that intercepting a commercial airliner is "not normal."

So, apparently, we've intercepted a few aircraft before and apparently knew what we were doing.

MAL Yeah, that one air force base in the year did 75? (Right) That's nearly 2 a week. Just that one day. Wow! That's—yeah, we didn't just have some experience with this.

JON Right, exactly.

MAL It's something we do every day. So, why on 9/11 did ALL of that fail? We definitely need that new investigation. Anyway, go on.

JON [Laughs] The next question is: What was NORAD's mission? And, I forget where I got this from? I think it was from John Farmer's book. I don't remember. I wish I had wrote it down.

During the early 1990s, NORAD's mission consequently changes from one of air defense to one of maintaining "air sovereignty," which NORAD defines as "providing surveillance and control of the territorial airspace." The new mission includes intercepting suspicious aircraft, tracking hijacked aircraft, assisting aircraft in distress, and counter-drug operations. As this change takes place, the number of aircraft defending American airspace is reduced. In 1987, there are 52 fighters on alert in the continental United States.

But by December 1999, there are just 14 alert fighters remaining around the continental United States.

So, their mission was to take care of our air space, essentially. The air sovereignty was their mission, so—anyway.

During the 9/11 Commission:

On 6/17/2004, 9/11 Commissioner Jamie Gorelick will question Gen. Myers about NORAD's mission. "In my experience, the military is very clear about its charters, and who is supposed to do what. So, if you go back and you look at the foundational documents for NORAD, they do not say defend us only against a threat coming in from across the ocean, or across our borders. It has two missions, and one of them is control of the airspace above the domestic United States, and aerospace control is defined as providing surveillance and control of the airspace of Canada and the United States. To me that air sovereignty concept means that you have a role which, if you were postured only externally you defined out of the job." [...] "I would like to know, as the second question, is it your job, and if not whose job is it, to make current assessments of a threat, and decide whether you are positioned correctly to carry out a mission, which at least on paper NORAD had." At the end of this exchange, Gen. Myers asks, "Did I answer both questions?" Jamie Gorelick responds, "yes, and no, and my time has expired." According to information collected by Dean Jackson, NORAD's mission at the time, coincided with Jamie Gorelick's understanding of it.

Okay, so, basically, what NORAD did was they told people they were looking outward. That their responsibility was to monitor things coming IN TO the United States, not what was happening WITHIN the United States.

MAL Which is completely a lie. It's just completely wrong. [Laughs] (Right)
Yeah, it's just that, they left out half of what they do. (Right)

JON So, basically, the next question is a quick one and I don't have to do much reading for it, thank God. NORAD told the 9/11 Commission that they were

looking outward. Meaning, they were only monitoring things coming in to the United States. Is this true or not?

So, basically, I looked at one of the MFRs for Colonel Robert Marr who was in charge of NEADS that day. (Mm-hmm) And on his MFR he makes, I think he makes the argument that they were looking outward. And it says:

"Commission staff presented to Marr that the flights that were hijacked on 9/11 were within physical capabilities of the radar NEADS is linked to."

MAL Right.

JON So, that kind of tells them that you're full of crap.

MAL Right, and the fact that they bothered even to write it is like saying: "We know this guy is full of crap."

JON Well, one of the things that Colonel Robert Marr did, and this is presented in the MFR of his. It says:

"Marr conceded that the NORAD presentation to the public of the events of 9/11 does not meet the fidelity of the Commission investigations."

MAL Oh! So, he basically said: "Yes, we are lying and we know that."

JON Right, exactly. Yeah, we're lying, we know it.

MAL Yeah – and

[Laughter]

JON Isn't this unbelievable how ridiculous this is at this point?

MAL Well, yeah, I mean it is ridiculous. And it's—the level of dysfunction necessary—or corruption—necessary to produce this kind of situation, ought to scare the crap out of people. (Right) I mean, it really should. You know, but we live with it every day. I think folks have almost gotten to think of this as normal somehow.

JON Well, that's a problem that this world, this post-9/11 world is becoming the norm. And that's scary to me. It's one of the reasons that I do what I do. I don't want this to be the norm. I don't want all of these wars to be the norm. I don't want kids growing up thinking this is the norm. You know?

MAL I hear you, big time.

JON All right, the next question says: We were told that the military exercises that were taking place that morning gave us a better response time. By all indications, is that true? (Laughs) And did the military exercises cause confusion? Do you know about this?

MAL Well, I know that the military exercises in general can cause confusion because of overlap. But, they're different systems in a way. I mean, the notional control of the gaming and all that is off by itself. The outside—I think that there has to be trackers when you're talking about something that major from the bigger agencies. I mean, Joint Staff has to consult with all these other agencies in order to avoid making horrible things happen, like air crashes and that.

So, there should have been eyes, there should have been eyes out, actually. To me, it would almost seem that if people had been operating with their—if they had been operating according to procedures and according to the way that the—the general way that they operated in a normal day, which was to aggressively pursue their mission, that they would have actually responded more quickly in some ways, or more creatively—because they already had people in the air. I mean, I don't know that that's an easy thing to do. But what I'm saying is I don't discount that as a possibility. I don't necessarily think it would muddle things. It might have helped, in a way, if people had had their eyes on it. I don't know.

JON Well, let's talk about that. I've always said that they said that the military exercises that were taking place that day helped their response, and yet, at the same time, they didn't manage to intercept any of the planes. So, I don't see that.

MAL This is what's interesting. Because on any normal day, they would send them after a target and then observe their flight track and see whether they were on it or not, and say: "Wait a minute! You're not going the right way." My understanding is that there were flights that were sent in the exact opposite direction that they needed to go and such? (Yes) Is that correct?

JON Well, there were planes that were sent over the ocean and they were sent there for a holding pattern, and they stayed there for a while. I don't exactly—again, unfortunately, I'm not an expert on this subject. I wish I was. I know more than a lot of people, but I'm not an expert.

MAL Yeah—

JON It's such a convoluted story, and I was talking to Lorie Van Auken, 9/11 Family Member, Lorie Van Auken about this, it is such a convoluted story to try and understand.

MAL Well, yeah, I think one of the big deals is that it seems like the obfuscators are banking on the fact that people don't really understand how things operate in the military sector (Right), and the frequency, like you said. I mean, you're bringing up these facts on how often it really does happen and that it's a way of life for some people, and they understand it intimately. And the thing that happened on 9/11 really shouldn't be possible.

JON Right. So, let me get into these—

MAL But the general public doesn't know that.

JON Right. I want to get into these military exercises because I think they're very important.

And there were military exercises taking place a little bit before 9/11 in late August and early September and they were called Red Flag Exercises. And this is directly from HistoryCommons.org

"In late August and early September 2001, members of the 121st Fighter Squadron of the District of Columbia Air National Guard (DCANG) participate in the "Red Flag" training exercises in Nevada. They do not return from it until September 8th." [...] "Red Flag is held four times a year at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. It is usually composed of two or three two-week periods." [...] "The timing of the Red Flag exercise may reduce the ability of the DCANG to respond to the 9/11 attacks. The 121st Fighter Squadron is stationed at Andrews Air Force Base, which is located 10 miles southeast of Washington D.C. Most of its pilots are

involved with the unit on only a part-time basis, while flying commercial jet planes in their civilian lives. Therefore, according to author Lynn Spencer, on 9/11 most of the 121st Fighter Squadron's pilots will be "back at their airline jobs, having just returned three days before from two weeks of the large-scale training exercise 'Red Flag' at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas. [The squadron has] only seven pilots available." In addition, some of the pilots will need to have their flight data disks reprogrammed before they can launch. Between 9:05am and 11am on 9/11, Pilot Heather Penney Garcia will reportedly be "busy reprogramming flight data disks, which will still contain all the Nellis data from the Red Flag training exercise they just returned from."

So, that's an indication that maybe those red flags had a little something to do with the response, or lack of response, but the problem—

MAL Okay, but see, the way that the military operates, they are completely aware of who's going where and when, and those duties wouldn't have been that unit's responsibility. It would have been somebody else's. If they had been out of the loop, out of their immediate area due to training and all that, they wouldn't be on call anyway. So their readiness or lack of readiness in this situation wouldn't affect the general readiness overall. They wouldn't have been expected to perform in any capacity at that time except for everybody run for the base, we're going to war.

JON [Laughs] Well, the thing about the military exercises is that there were a multitude of them taking place on 9/11. And the 9/11 report only mentions one of them and it's in a footnote in the back of the book. And the footnote says:

On 9/11, NORAD was scheduled to conduct a military exercise, Vigilant Guardian, which postulated a bomber attack from the former Soviet Union. We investigated whether military preparations for the large-scale exercise compromised the military's response to the real-world terrorist attacks on 9/11. According to General Eberhart, "it took about 30 seconds" to make the adjustment to the real-world situation. Ralph Eberhart testimony, June 17, 2004. We found that the response was, if anything, expedited by the increased number of staff at the sectors and at NORAD

because of the scheduled exercise. See Robert Marr interview (Jan. 23, 2004).

MAL Yeah, it probably would involve in talking to each other and it would, yeah, that makes sense to me. And what didn't happen, doesn't.

JON Well, okay, so the 9/11 Report covers Vigilant Guardian, but it doesn't cover Northern Vigilance. It doesn't cover Global Guardian. It doesn't cover Amalgam Warrior. Which were all taking place that day.

So, the question is: Did the military exercises cause confusion? And I grabbed a lot of this from an article called "Real-World or Exercise:" Did the U.S. Military Mistake the 9/11 Attacks for a Training Scenario? This is from *Shoestring*, and it was written March 22, 2012. He's a contributor to HistoryCommons.org.

From the outset, personnel at NEADS wondered if reports they received about the 9/11 attacks were part of the exercise. Their first notification of the crisis came just before 8:38 a.m. on September 11, when Joseph Cooper, an air traffic controller at the FAA's Boston Center, called NEADS and reported, "We have a hijacked aircraft headed towards New York, and ... we need someone to scramble some F-16s or something up there, help us out." The response of the Technical Sergeant Jeremy Powell, who answered the call, was to ask, "Is this real-world or exercise?" Cooper replied, "No, this is not an exercise, not a test." According to *Vanity Fair*, "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."

...at 9:03 a.m., NEADS received a phone call informing it that a second aircraft had been hijacked, and personnel also saw the live television coverage of the second plane, Flight 175, crashing into the World Trade Center. A minute or two later, recordings of the operations floor reveal, several members of staff discussed these developments among themselves. One of them asked, "Is this explosion part of what we're looking at now on TV?" Someone replied: "Yes. And there's a possible second hijack also--a United Airlines."

Another person then commented, "I think this is a damn input, to be honest." An "input" is a simulations input, as part of a training exercise. Someone else said, "Then this is a damned messed-up input."

At 9:09 a.m., one of the NEADS ID technicians complained, "I hope they cancel the exercise, because this is ridiculous." Then at 9:15 a.m., an off-duty member of staff called in and asked someone in the ID section about the exercise. They said, "I've been watching [the news] for about 10 minutes, and I said, "I wonder if they're, did they suspend the exercise?" The person at NEADS answered, "Not at this time, no, but I think they're going to." He then laughed and added, "I don't know."

At around 9:20 a.m., one of the ID technicians commented, "This was pre-planned, I bet you, for 9 o'clock." A colleague of hers replies, "Oh, I bet you it was."

At 10:08 a.m., Master Sergeant Joe McCain, the mission crew commander technician, responded to Master Sergeant Maureen Dooley, the leader of the ID section, after she provided details of a bomb that was being reported on United Airlines Flight 93, the fourth hijacked plane, which supposedly crashed in Pennsylvania that morning. McCain commented, "If this is an exercise input, this is a good one." (JON: That was at 10:08) (MAL: Oh)

...author Lynn Spencer described that moment, writing: "Marr has participated in enough training missions to know this is something out of the ordinary. Clearly, he thinks, the simex [simulated exercise] is kicking off with a lively, unexpected twist. ... His bet is that his simulations team has started off the exercise by throwing out a 'heart attack card' to see how the troops respond to a first-aid call from a fellow soldier, testing their first responder training."

Major General Larry Arnold, the commander of the Continental United States NORAD Region on September 11, has recalled that when he was informed of the first hijacking, the first thing he thought was: "Is this part of the exercise? Is

this some kind of a screw-up?"

Nasypany has said, "When they told me there was a hijack, my first reaction was, 'Somebody started the exercise early.'" Nasypany knew that the exercise was scheduled to include a simulated hijacking, and so, he recalled, he "actually said out loud, "The hijack's not supposed to be for another hour."

...audio recordings reveal that at around 9:00 a.m. on September 11th, Nasypany joked with his colleagues about what happened when NEADS was alerted to the first hijacking, of American Airlines Flight 11. He said: "And where was I? I was on the shitter!" He continued, "When I heard, it was like, "Oh my God!" He added, "I knew that was an exercise."

...recordings of the operations floor reveal that at 8:57 a.m., around 20 minutes after NEADS was alerted to the first hijacking, Kevin Nasypany was discussing the first plane hitting the World Trade Center with a colleague. He then joked, "Think we put the exercise on hold, what do you think?" and laughed heartily.

...at 8:43 a.m., while NEADS personnel were busy responding to the reported hijacking of Flight 11, James Fox commented, "I've never seen so much real-world stuff happen during an exercise." (Hmmm)

Robert Marr, too, appears to have understood "real-world" to be a term that is used to describe a live-fly exercise event. When he saw personnel on the operations floor gathered around a radar scope after they learned of the first hijacking, Marr sent Dawne Deskins to find out what was happening. After Deskins then learned about the hijacking, she returned to the NEADS battle cab and reportedly told Marr: "It's a hijacking, and this is real life, not part of the exercise." According to the account of Lynn Spencer, which was presumably based on an interview with Marr, Marr then thought: "This is an interesting start to the exercise. This 'real-world' mixed in with today's simex will keep them on their toes."

JON So, those are all of the accounts that I collected from that article that indicated that there was some confusion about the exercises that day. What do you think?

MAL I think that within the units participating in the exercises there was probably quite a bit of confusion between the two. But it seems like they were at least attempting to get a handle on which it was, which is what you're supposed to do. (Right) We always—but I guess the confusion seems to be apparent. That still shouldn't have stopped them from flying.

JON Well, what happened was General Ralph Eberhart told the 9/11 Commission that:

The situation that you're referring to, I think, at most cost us
30 seconds –

And the situation he was referring to was that first quote about real-world or exercise, was this real-world or exercise? But, as you could see throughout the attacks there were other quotes about whether or not this was an exercise. So, Ralph Eberhart really only addressed one of those seeming confusions.

MAL Yeah, and I get that. What he said was what we just talked about, what you described showed that somebody sent a communication and the person who received it confirmed the status of it and that should have dictated what came next. It looks like—some of what you said, some of the same people who got the response then went on thinking it was an exercise anyway, which really confuses me.

JON Exactly. Now, look at the 9/11 Commission and what they investigated. They only mentioned one of the exercises that day. See, to me, whatever the 9/11 Commission omits becomes an area of interest. So—

MAL I could see how that would—yes, yes, that would follow. [Laughs]

JON So, anyway, I'm going to read a little paragraph from Richard Clarke's book *Against All Enemies*. (All right) And this is apparently at 9:28:

According to his own account, during a video conference with top officials that he is directing, counterterrorism "tsar"

Richard Clarke asks acting Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Richard Myers, "I assume NORAD has scrambled fighters and AWACS. How many? Where?" Myers, who is at the Pentagon, replies, "Not a pretty picture, Dick. We are in the middle of Vigilant Warrior, a NORAD exercise, but... Otis has launched two birds toward New York. Langley is trying to get two up now [toward Washington]. The AWACS are at Tinker and not on alert." Vigilant Warrior may be a mistaken reference to either the on-going war game Vigilant Guardian, or perhaps another exercise called Amalgam Warrior.

So there's Richard Clarke on the telephone—according to him, on the teleconference with Myers and Myers says, "Not a pretty picture, Dick. We're in the middle Vigilant Warrior, a NORAD exercise." Now, doesn't that seem like the war games might have caused a problem? Based on what Clarke is saying Myers said.

MAL Well, I think that it's possible. I'm not being an Air Force guy, I don't really know how they station these outfits. But, once again, when you have a training schedule, you're supposed to allocate for your real-world mission regardless. When you're an operational unit, you have an operational responsibility. You're supposed to. They may not have and this may be what he's referring to, they may not have scheduled sufficient resources to actually respond to what would have normally been a normal day's activity. (Right) Which would have been a dreadful mistake, and somebody needs to answer for that. (Yep)

So whatever excuses that they keep giving that you're reading to me these one at a time, each one of them has this kind of element to it where you could buy that on the one time, oops. But under the circumstances (Laughs) and in this context, it doesn't wash.

JON Well, that's what Mindy Kleinberg said in her statement that I read. You know, one time (Sure) but how many times? (Yeah)

I'm going to read—Cynthia McKinney actually tried to get answers about these military exercises on two separate accounts.

MAL Bless her heart.

JON I'm going to read both accounts.

On February 25th, 2005, then Rep. Cynthia McKinney asked Donald Rumsfeld about the exercises that were taking place on 9/11, but did not get an answer on that day.

On March 10th, 2005, Rep. McKinney asked Donald Rumsfeld, and Gen. Richard Myers about the exercises again. The first question asked by Rep. McKinney was, "Whether or not the activities of the 4 wargames going on on Sept. 11th actually impaired our ability to respond to the attacks." Gen. Myers responded with, "The answer to the question is, no, did not impair our response. In fact, Gen. Eberhart who was in the command of the North American Aerospace Defense Command as he testified in front of the 9/11 Commission... I believe...I believe he told them that it enhanced our ability to respond." Then Rep. McKinney asked, "Who was in charge of managing those wargames?" and was cut off by Rep. Duncan Hunter. Gen. Myers never gave a name, but he did say, "North American Aerospace Defense Command was responsible." She was promised an answer in writing and as far as I know, she never received it. (Mm-hmm)

So, all right, so the next question is: What are injects or SIMS and did they affect our response that morning? And what I got was an article from *Shoestring* "Let's Get Rid of This Goddamn Sim': How NORAD Radar Screens Displayed False Tracks All Through the 9/11 Attacks. And this was written on August 12, 2010. There's only two paragraphs, so that's good.

...at 9:30 a.m. that morning a member of staff on the NEADS operations floor complained about simulated material that was appearing on the NEADS radar screens. He said: "You know what, let's get rid of this goddamn sim. Turn your sim switches off. Let's get rid of that crap." Four minutes later, Technical Sergeant Jeffrey Richmond gave an instruction to the NEADS surveillance technicians, "All surveillance, turn off your sim switches." (A "sim switch" presumably allows a technician to either display or turn off any simulated material on their radar screen)

At 10:12 a.m., an officer at the NORAD operations center, "Captain Taylor," called NEADS and spoke to Captain Brian

Nagel, the chief of live exercises there. After introducing himself, Taylor said, "What we need you to do right now is to terminate all exercise inputs coming into Cheyenne Mountain." Nagel gave Taylor an extension number and asked him to call it to get the exercise inputs stopped. Taylor replied, "I'll do that." "Inputs," according to an article in *Vanity Fair*, are simulated scenarios that are put into play by a simulations team during training exercises.

So, all throughout 9/11 there were fake blips and injects and simulations on their radar screens. What do you think about that?

MAL Well, I think that if you're talking about an operational unit mixing emotional and real-world at the same time, if they haven't set it up so they can just look at the display and tell that it's a sim, then I don't know what they've been doing all these years. (Laughs) I mean, honestly, it's such a no-brainer, but hey, maybe they didn't do that. Okay, because you're asking the non-experts so we can speculate like crazy.

JON Yeah, exactly.

MAL I mean what reason is there for that to be possible? Think about that. Why in the world would you allow your inputs to be so indistinguishable? (Right) Exercise from real-world. When you're talking about actually putting people in the air and actually keeping people from crashing. (Right) What the hell is that? Maybe there's good explanation for something like that, but I don't know what it is.

JON I don't know what it is either. Okay.

What time was a CAP (combat air patrol) formed over New York City? Do you know?

MAL Well, it depends. Sometimes CAPs are continuous depending upon threat levels. I know a little—I know that much about it. Not a whole hell of a lot more. But you can have CAP patrols up for weeks on end if your tensions are high. So, what was the alert level at the time? What were they supposed to be doing?

JON Well:

According to the 9/11 Commission, the two fighters launched from Otis Air Force Base arrive over Manhattan at 9:25 a.m., after exiting their holding pattern off the Long Island coast at 9:13 a.m. They then establish a combat air patrol (CAP) over New York. The commission bases this conclusion on its analysis of FAA radar data and interviews with the two Otis pilots, Daniel Nash and Timothy Duffy.

Now, there are conflicting accounts about this.

According to the accounts of numerous witnesses on the ground near the World Trade Center, military fighter jets are first noticed flying over Manhattan either shortly before or soon after the second collapse, at 10:28 a.m. Some witnesses recall fighters arriving just before this collapse:

Emergency medical technicians Dulce McCorvey and Michael D'Angelo hear fighters flying over Manhattan at unspecified times after the first tower's collapse.

Lieutenant Sean O'Malley and firefighters Pete Giudetti and Dan Potter notice jet fighters flying overhead soon before the second collapse.

Other witnesses say the fighters arrive soon after this collapse (the second collapse):

Deputy Fire Chief Robert Browne, police officer Peter Moog, and emergency medical technicians Richard Zarrillo and Jason Katz notice fighters overhead immediately after, or fairly soon after, the second tower's collapse.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, the Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik, and Office of Emergency Management Director Richard Sheirer are heading north together after leaving their temporary command post on Barclay Street. In some accounts, all three of them recollect hearing the first military jets overhead soon after the second tower's collapse.

However, according to another account, Giuliani hears the first jet slightly earlier, at around 10:20 a.m. And, in his

private testimony before the 9/11 Commission, Kerik claims to have heard a fighter jet coming when he was heading to the temporary command post on Barclay Street, i.e. shortly before 9:50 a.m.

Now, I have two pieces of, I guess, evidence [Laughs]. If you listen to Howard Stern's broadcast that morning, he's talking to different people throughout the city on their phones. (Uh-huh) And if you listen to his recording that morning, you'll hear that fighters don't arrive until after the first tower collapses. And then, I don't recommend this movie, promoting this movie at all because it talks a lot about speculative bullshit, but there's a movie out there called *9/11 EyeWitness*, which has footage of the buildings that morning as things progressed. And you did not hear fighter jets over the skies of New York City until after the first tower collapsed, which coincides with Howard Stern's show that morning. So, that's about 10:09, I guess, that fighters arrived over the skies of New York City. Compare that to the 9:25 timeline of the 9/11 Commission, and it's a huge discrepancy. That's like a 45-minute discrepancy.

MAL Wow. Well I couldn't begin to explain that. What does the hard data say? People's recollections and stuff as an aggregate are indicative of but aren't really evidence.

JON Well, as I showed some people's accounts showed fighter jets, according to them, didn't arrive until either after the first tower collapsed or after the second tower collapsed, which was long after the 9:25 assumed timeline by the 9/11 Commission. So—

MAL I can't explain that. It's definitely something that needs explaining.

JON It's just a huge discrepancy.

MAL It is. It's gigantic. You could drive a truck through it. Somebody needs to fix that. [Laughs]

JON Right, exactly. All right, let's continue along.

When were shoot down orders issued, and how were they received by fighter pilots? Do you know? Do you know anything about it?

MAL Well, they were usually issued after contact had been made and after they'd attempted to communicate and that kind of thing. Usually, I think there's an assessment period before you just blaze things down, and then you've got to get separate authorization. You don't arrive on the scene usually with shoot-down orders.

JON Well, shoot-down orders are like the last resort kind of thing.

MAL Yeah, it's the last thing that happens. You go, you look, you try to communicate, you know, etc. And that doesn't—even if they don't communicate with you, that doesn't mean shoot them down. That just means that you've got a situation you don't know what it is yet. If something gets dangerous about what's going on, then you might start talking about shooting down. But it's not the first thing that pops in—it's not like a traffic stop in Albuquerque.

JON Right, exactly.

According to Major Daniel Nash, pilot of one of the two fighters first scrambled on 9/11 at 8:52 a.m., their fighters over New York City are never given shootdown orders by the military that day.

...at 10:18 a.m., according to White House logs, Cheney calls Bush, who is on board Air Force One, and speaks with him for two minutes. White House press secretary Ari Fleischer notes that at 10:20 a.m., Bush informs him that he has authorized the shootdown of aircraft, if necessary. However, as the Commission will later note, "Among the sources that reflect other important events that morning there is no documentary evidence for this call, although the relevant sources are incomplete." Reportedly, some members of the Commission's staff will not believe this call between Bush and Cheney ever took place. Cheney phones Bush at 10:18. According to the 9/11 Commission, it is in fact during that call that Bush authorizes the military to shoot down threatening aircraft.

At 10:31 a.m., according to the 9/11 Commission, NORAD Commander Major General Larry Arnold instructs his staff to broadcast the following message over a NORAD chat log:

"10:31 Vice President [Cheney] has cleared us to intercept tracks of interest and shoot them down if they do not respond, per CONR CC [General Arnold]." NEADS first learns of the shutdown order from this message. However, NEADS does not pass the order to the fighter pilots in New York City and Washington. NEADS leaders later say they do not pass it on because they are unsure how the pilots should proceed with this guidance.

"Cheney testified to the 9/11 Commission that he spoke with President Bush before giving an order to shoot down a hijacked civilian airliner that appeared headed toward Washington. (The plane was United Flight 93, which crashed in a Pennsylvania field after a brave revolt by the passengers) But a source close to the commission, who declined to be identified revealing sensitive information, says that none of the staffers who worked on this aspect of the investigation believed Cheney's version of events.

(Huh) Oh, this is from a report from MSNBC:

A draft of the report conveyed their skepticism. But when top White House officials, including chief of staff Andy Card and the then White House counsel Alberto Gonzales, reviewed the draft, they became extremely agitated. After a prolonged battle, the report was toned down. The factual narrative, closely read, offers no evidence that Cheney sought initial authorization from the President. The point is not a small one. Legally, Cheney was required to get permission from his commander in chief, who was traveling (but reachable) at the time. If the public ever found out that Cheney gave the order on his own, it would have strongly fed the view that he was the real power behind the throne."

And that is from MSNBC, and the article is called "The Shot Heard Round the World" and that took place on February, 27th, 2006.

(Hmm)

Let's see—Okay:

"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.

Apparently.

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 a notion that only the passengers' counterattack against their hijackers prevented an inevitable shootdown of United 93."

And all of that is from an article called "9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes" from *Vanity Fair*, August 2006.

So, basically, there's a question about when or if Dick Cheney even talked to Bush, and gave directions to shoot down airliners that day. The Vice President has no power, okay? His power is to break ties in the senate and to take over in the event that the President is killed. He has no power other than that. (Mm-hmm) So, there's a big question if he gave a shoot-down authorization without the President's authority, he overstepped his bounds that day.

MAL It places an interesting chain of responsibility shift, doesn't it? (Yep)
Because, you know actually, under that structure anybody who obeyed the order would be in at least in questionable territory.

JON Right.

Now, how did—the next question: How did the 9/11 Commission deal with the lies they were being told by both the FAA and NORAD? And, let's see—I believe I grabbed this from HistoryCommons:

In the spring of 2004 "after finding that FAA and US military officials have made a string of false statements to them about the air defense on the day of the attacks and have withheld key documents for months, the 9/11 Commission's staff proposes a criminal investigation by the Justice Department into those officials."

"The proposal is contained in a memo sent by the Commission team investigating the day of the attacks to Philip Zelikow, the Commission's executive director. However, nothing much is done with the memo for months. A similar proposal will then be submitted to the very last meeting of the 9/11 Commissioners, who decide to refer the matter not to the Justice Department, but to the Inspector General of the Pentagon and FAA. Whereas the Justice Department could bring criminal charges for perjury, if it found they were warranted, the inspectors general cannot."

"According to John Azzarello, a Commission staffer behind the proposal, Zelikow fails to act on the proposal for weeks. Azzarello will say that Zelikow, who has friends at the Pentagon, "just buried that memo." Azzarello's account will be backed by Commission team leader John Farmer. However, Zelikow will say that Azzarello was not party to all the discussions about what to do and that the memo was delayed by other Commission staffers, not him. Zelikow's version will receive backing from the Commission's lawyer, Daniel Marcus."

So, there's a conflicting account there about when things were acted upon and so forth, but the end result is they did not refer it to the Justice

Department where they could be held accountable. They sent it to a corrupt, as we already pointed out, Inspector General where they would be let off the hook, which they were.

MAL Yeah, it's obvious—it's an obvious cover-up maneuver. And, once again, this and all the other several hundred little red flags, have been ignored by this Commission. And some of them even say themselves: "Look, we would loved to have ran that down, but nobody will help us."

JON Well . . . you mean commissioners?

MAL Yeah, that's probably just a convenient excuse, but the fact is there were people, agencies, that stonewalled the Commission. So even if they had had all the right intentions from top to bottom, they still didn't have everything they needed.

JON Well, you just brought up a good point that they were stonewalled. At some point the 9/11 Commission—well they were given the powers to subpoena but they rarely used it. I think they only used it for the FAA and NORAD. Now, in late October, early November—and this is from HistoryCommons:

Following the discovery that NORAD is withholding extremely important evidence from the 9/11 Commission, John Farmer, the leader of the Commission team investigating the day of 9/11, and the Commission's Executive Director Philip Zelikow discuss subpoenaing the Pentagon. In the first meeting, Zelikow seems to support Farmer's demand that a subpoena be issued, but is "hard to read" according to Farmer. Farmer then returns to New York, where he is based for his work on the Commission. According to Farmer, he receives an urgent phone call from Daniel Marcus, the Commission's counsel, telling him Zelikow is trying to derail the subpoena and that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is to meet with the commissioners to dissuade them. Such a meeting will actually be held one day before the Commission votes on the subpoena. In Farmer's account, Marcus says: "You'd better get down here. It's all unraveling. Philip is undoing this." (Philip Zelikow) Marcus will later say he does not recall this call, but will say that Zelikow, who was close to members of Rumsfeld's staff, would even "flaunt" his good relations with Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence Stephen Cambone.

Zelikow will later make a successful last-ditch bid to prevent a subpoena being issued on the White House. According to Farmer, he returns to Washington and together with Dana Hyde, one of his staffers, confronts Zelikow. Hyde complains, "We can't do our job if you frustrate us." Farmer adds: "I thought you were supporting this subpoena. Now I hear otherwise. What's going on?" He demands he be allowed to address the commissioners on the subpoena, but Zelikow replies: "I represent the staff. I will represent your views." According to author Philip Shenon, Zelikow's face "turn[s] the crimson color that the staff in Washington ha[ve] seen before in moments of his most extreme rage." Zelikow then says, "It's beyond our pay grade at this point." Farmer disagrees and storms out of Zelikow's office. Zelikow will confirm that there was a difference of opinion with Farmer on the matter: "We did have concerns about timing and tactics. Tension was building to a breaking point." However, Zelikow will say he did not necessarily oppose a subpoena, as he shared Farmer's concerns about the Pentagon's truthfulness. Marcus will back Zelikow, saying that he thinks Zelikow did not try to derail the subpoena because of his friendship with Cambone or for any other reason.

So there are conflicting accounts about the subpoena (Mm-hmm).
Now, Lee Hamilton, are you familiar with him?

MAL I don't know much about him. I know the name. That's about all and I'm not sure why I do.

JON He's someone who should not have been anywhere near the 9/11 Commission. He was good friends with Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld. He helped to cover up the Iran-Contra Affair. He helped cover-up the October surprise inquiry thing that happened.

And this is how Lee Hamilton dealt with the subpoenas:

November 5th

Lee Hamilton, vice chairman of the 9/11 Commission, makes an 11th-hour visit to the Pentagon in an attempt to avert a subpoena some on the Commission want to file on the

Defense Department over documents NORAD is withholding from the 9/11 Commission. At the Pentagon, Hamilton meets Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, and Undersecretary for Intelligence Stephen Cambone. Hamilton takes with him Slade Gorton, a Republican member of the Commission who is inclined towards issuing the subpoena. It is unclear who initiated and arranged the meeting; some staffers who want the subpoena issued will accuse Philip Zelikow, the Commission's executive director, of setting it up as a part of a wider effort to thwart the subpoena. However, Zelikow will later say he does not recall having anything to do with the meeting.

At the meeting, Rumsfeld is, according to author Philip Shenon, "charming and agreeable" and insists he is unaware of the problems between the Commission and NORAD. He vows to resolve the issues and promises that any evidence that has been withheld until now will be turned over immediately. Therefore, he says, there is no need for a subpoena. Hamilton, who was initially rejected for the vice chairmanship of the Commission because of his links to Rumsfeld and other Republicans and who sometimes takes the current administration's side in internal Commission debates, thinks this is the end of the matter. "I've known Don Rumsfeld for 20, 30 years," he tells the other commissioners. "When he said, 'I'm going to get that information for you,' I took him at his word." Gorton's attitude is different. "I was outraged with NORAD and the way they had operated." Thinking false statements NORAD officials provided to the Commission may have been made knowingly, he will add, "Even if it wasn't intentional, it was just so grossly negligent and incompetent." The Commission will vote to issue the subpoena the next day, with Hamilton against and Gorton for it.

So, Lee Hamilton—it seems that Philip Zelikow and Lee Hamilton tried to save the day with regard to the subpoena, but there are conflicting accounts about that.

MAL Yeah, most of the conflicts sound like: "I forgot. So—[Laughter] I don't think—there's not much weight to those." [Laughs]

JON

Right, exactly.

So, the next question is: What are some quotes about the FAA and NORAD's response that morning from people like Thomas Kean and John Farmer? And I just want to point out that Senator Mark Dayton, he confronted Thomas Kean, Lee Hamilton on one occasion, Philip Zelikow on another occasion. I think he confronted Donald Rumsfeld and Richard Myers on another occasion. On four separate occasions, Senator Mark Dayton questioned people from the military and from the 9/11 Commission about NORAD's lies. And there's a transcript of the first time he did it that's available at 911Truth.org and I just want to point that out for people because it's a lot of stuff to read through.

So, we're just going to read through these quotes. Here are some excerpts from Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton's book: *Without Precedent*.

"There were also discrepancies between things NORAD was telling us about their performance on the morning of September 11—things that the agency had stated publicly after 9/11—and the story told by the limited tapes and documents the commission had received." These were puzzling and disturbing developments, and they account in part for some of the more bizarre and inaccurate conspiracy theories about 9/11." [...] "Farmer believed that NORAD was delivering incomplete records with the knowledge that the commission had a fixed end date that could be waited out." [...] "Throughout the course of our inquiry, the topic that invited the most skepticism—and thus the most conspiracy theorizing—was the performance of the FAA and NORAD on the day of September 11th, 2001." [...] "Fog of war could explain why some people were confused on the day of 9/11, but it could not explain why all of the after—action reports, accident investigations, and public testimony by FAA and NORAD officials advanced an account of 9/11 that was untrue."

John Farmer, Jr., senior counsel to the Commission stated that the Commission "discovered that . . . what Government and military officials had told Congress, the Commission, the media, and the public about who knew what when — was

almost entirely, and inexplicably, untrue." Farmer continues: "At some level of the Government, at some point in time . . . there was a decision not to tell the truth about what happened The (NORAD) tapes told a radically different story from what had been told to us and the public." Thomas Kean, the head of the 9/11 Commission, concurred: "We to this day don't know why NORAD told us what they told us, it was just so far from the truth."

Ken Merchant, NORAD's joint exercise design manager, will tell the 9/11 Commission in 2003 that he cannot "remember a time in the last 33 years when NORAD has not run a hijack exercise."

MAL Ga-a-d.

JON So, there are some quotes. What do you have to say about that?

MAL Well, I find it amazing that with so many people in official capacity saying these things that nothing's been done about them. (Right) It's a complete mind-blower. I mean, pre-supposing any ability of the people within these agencies to actually respond properly at this point. I mean, there's so much regulatory capture within the industrial regulation agencies. The Pentagon pretty much does what it wants. Look at all that money they spent on a fighter that the pilots continue to say is absolutely worthless. Things like—it's—

JON Is it infuriating for you?

MAL Yeah, well of course, it's infuriating. So many things are. If we, once again, it seems like if these things—I'm losing my—I'm actually losing my ability to string words together at this point, because it—I'm trying to say the same thing differently.

JON Right, okay, I get you.

MAL You know?

JON Well, let me read these two statements from the September 11th Advocates, the Jersey Girls. When the Monograph was released about the FAA receiving 52 warnings, this is the statement that they released. And this is

the September 11th Advocates Statement re: 9/11 Commission's Declassified Monograph on FAA Failures and it was released on February 11th, 2005.

September 11th was neither an intelligence failure nor was it a failure of imagination. It was nonfeasance on behalf of a whole host of Government agencies, including the FAA.

Of the 105 warnings issued, 52 warnings regarding al Qaeda were given to the FAA by the intelligence community in a six month period from April 2001 to September 2001. According to the 9/11 Commission's final report, there were eight information circulars put out by the FAA between July 2, and September 10, 2001. Five of these information circulars targeted overseas threats, while the remaining three targeted domestic threats.

The 52 threats regarding al Qaeda were not received by the FAA in a vacuum. From March 2001 to September 2001, according to the Joint Inquiry of Congress, our Intelligence Community received at least 41 specific threats of a possible domestic attack by al Qaeda. Additionally, the FAA was also made aware of the August 16, 2001 arrest of Zaccarias Moussouai. Finally, the FAA attended a high level meeting on July 5, 2001 where the domestic threat posed by al Qaeda was discussed by all relevant intelligence agencies.

According to the newly released FAA monograph, in the spring of 2001 the FAA knew that if "the intent of the hijacker is not to exchange hostages for prisoners, but to commit suicide in a spectacular explosion, a domestic hijacking would probably be preferable."

The aforementioned statement is yet another indicator of how widely known it was in the national security community that al Qaeda was interested in using planes as missiles. Yet, as the historic record also widely indicates, former National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice publicly stated that she didn't think that anyone could imagine that planes could be used as missiles.

MAL

And certainly more screaming here. Sorry.

JON

Furthermore, Ms. Rice also testified, under oath, before the 9/11 Commission, that the August 6th, 2001 PDB, "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in the U.S.," contained purely "historical" threat information. The revelation of the 52 warnings given to the FAA during this same time period would seem to indicate that Ms. Rice perjured herself during her testimony.

Moreover, Ms. Rice also testified that there was nothing more the U.S. Government could have done during the summer of 2001 to thwart the attacks of 9/11. Yet, the newly released 9/11 Monograph states that the federal air marshal program was specifically deleted from all domestic flights during the summer of 2001 as a result of cost cutting by the airlines. Certainly, placing air marshals on domestic flights was well within the purview of Ms. Rice's own responsibilities and tasking as National Security Advisor. Why has she not been held accountable? Additionally, why has no one in the airline community been held accountable?

An FAA spokesperson asserts that the FAA didn't have specific information regarding means or methods that would have enabled them to tailor any counter measures. This statement clearly contradicts the reality detailed in this report. Stepping up security in the face of terror warnings is not a new concept for America's Government agencies. The FAA testified before the 9/11 Commission that during the millennium an unknown terror plot caused them to ratchet up their security procedures. With 52 warnings, why was this not done in 2001?

The American public must not be lulled into a false sense of security. While Government reports might allege that the myriad of Government agencies, individuals, and institutions that failed our nation on 9/11 have been fixed post-9/11, the disturbing fact remains that after all the failures of 9/11 have been revealed, far too many of the same individuals who were unable to react appropriately to clear and abundant warnings, are still in their positions today.

Notably missing from this monograph is any information pertaining to NORAD's failure to timely scramble jets, which leads us to wonder what else is being withheld from the public.

JON And that was from the September 11th Advocates

Kristen Breitweiser
Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken

MAL Mm-hmm.

JON Now, in 2006, August 2006, when it was revealed that the 9/11 Commission considered referring NORAD to the Justice Department for a criminal investigation. There was a statement released by the September 11th Advocates Friday, August 4, 2006. And it says:

Mandate of the 9/11 Commission

The 9/11 Independent Commission was established by law to "... ascertain, evaluate, and report on the evidence developed by all relevant Governmental agencies regarding the facts and circumstances surrounding the attacks... to make a full and complete accounting of the circumstances surrounding the attacks, and the extent of the United States' preparedness for, and immediate response to, the attacks..."

Recent stories in the Washington Post, the New York Times, as well as the release of the transcripts of the NORAD tapes in *Vanity Fair*, clearly show that the 9/11 Commission failed in its duties.

According to current reports, the Commission knew that it had been deceived by NORAD. In May 2003, representatives of NORAD testified, in full regalia, before the 9/11 Commission equipped with an easel and visual aids to highlight NORAD's timeline for the day of 9/11. In June

2004, NORAD testified again, changing its previous testimony. The new timeline blamed the lack of military response on late notification by the FAA. The Commissioners never determined or explained why there was a discrepancy between the two sets of testimonies. Governor Kean is quoted in the Washington Post article as saying "we, to this day don't know why NORAD told us what they told us, it was just so far from the truth ... It's one of those loose ends that never got tied."

The fact that the Commission did not see fit to tie up all loose ends in their final report or to hold those who came before them accountable for lying and/or making misleading statements puts into question the veracity of the entire Commission's report. Individuals who came before the Commission to testify, after NORAD's appearance, had no reason to state the truth. It was abundantly clear that there would be no repercussions for any misrepresentations.

Furthermore, the lack of tenacity and curiosity, by the Commissioners themselves, to determine why NORAD had deceived them is unconscionable. Knowing full well that the lack of military response was such a critical failure, begs the question of whether that same lack of tenacity and curiosity was applied to other critical areas of the 9/11 investigation.

We fought to establish the 9/11 Independent Commission because we believed that American citizens would be better served if our nation's vulnerabilities were uncovered and then fixed.

Unfortunately, once again the failure to fully and properly investigate all areas, not follow all leads and not address the need for accountability, whether it be bureaucrats lying at a hearing or personnel with questionable performance of assigned duties, continues to leave this Nation and its citizens vulnerable and at risk.

The 9/11 Commission was derelict in its duties. What we needed from them was a thorough investigation into the

events of September 11th. Inexcusably, five years later, we still do.

And that was written by:

Patty Casazza
Monica Gabrielle
Mindy Kleinberg
Lorie Van Auken

JON So, Malcolm, based on everything we went through, do you think we have a definitive story about the air response that morning?

MAL Hah! Not even close.

JON Not even close. (Yeah) So—we were lied to about 9/11. This is just another example of how we were lied to about 9/11. And I'm sorry that I could not get an expert to go over this. I did the best that I could and Malcolm—I want to thank Malcolm for being my guinea pig today.

MAL You're welcome.

JON Is there anything you'd like to say about all this?

MAL Well, I think that what you've been saying all along, has been true all along, and that is that we need a new investigation into all of this—an independent investigation with subpoena powers and the ability to file charges with a real live, independent investigative body instead of these put-up jobs we keep getting handed.

I believe the first try for the chairman was Kissinger, was it?

JON Yep, yes it was.

MAL Yeah, yeah and people screamed so loud that they said okay, okay, okay, we were just kidding. We'll put in this other guy you don't know who's almost as bad. [Laughs]

JON Right. It was also reported that Kean could be easily controlled by the White House. So—

The whole 9/11 Commission was just horrible. And it was a big slap in the face to the families, to everybody who lost someone that day, to everybody who was affected by that day, to everybody who died as a result of how that day has been used.

It's just horrible.

MAL Yeah.

JON Anyway, is there anything that you would like to promote?

MAL Well, let's see. There's quite a few things coming up on the national scene. One of the ones that springs to mind is the March Convergence in D.C. I believe that United National Antiwar Coalition and all its many, many groups has gotten behind this and there's going to be quite a presence as I understand it.

JON Are you talking about the Spring Rising?

MAL Yes, I am. I saw that that was coming on and that Answer and quite a few of the larger coalition groups are all piling in. So it should be a pretty big weekend at the very worst.

JON Yep, it was started again by Cindy and everybody's jumping on board and I can't go and it breaks my heart, because I broke my back and because I have to sit here, and it would just be so much trouble to get me down there. And I can't go. And it makes me so mad.

MAL I hear you. Well, what you're doing there is important, Jon. Like I said, persistence of the questions and the variety in and the depth of them. I mean there's so many different ways to come at this thing and say: Look, there's another hole. Look! There's another one. Holy cats! Can you believe these people actually said this thing could float? [Laughs] (Yep) There's too many holes. It's ridiculous. (Yep) We need to do something. But, the overall picture right now is pretty bleak on the "do something" score if you're talking about trying to reign in this national, this empire-level stuff. Where we have powers is in our own communities these days. And we need it there.

JON It's a very rough situation, and I focus on 9/11, but I focus on other issues as well, like Fukushima, which apparently has a new leak.

MAL Yes, as a matter of fact—thanks for bringing that up. That's something people ought to be aware of. There's some—apparently, fairly credible looking news coming out right now and I expect it will be more confirmed as time goes on, that they have a new criticality in one of the sunken cores. One of the reactor cores that melted has managed to conglomerate a large enough chunk that it has started a nuclear reaction again—or at least that is what is being said. The—

JON Well, I know that the West Coast is being hit with a lot of radiation from Fukushima.

MAL Yeah, it is, but we've had some very—there's a lot of things going on and Fukushima is one of them. This re-criticality is significant, but there are other incidents that have taken place just in recent history that we're struggling to explain.

For example, in September of 2014, there was a wild fire in central Oregon that raised the background levels in the Willamette Valley because of the smoky haze and the particulates in it to five times the alert level for several days, and we're now trying to determine what that was. The thing is that just a couple months later, or a few months later—I'm a little foggy on the exact dates yet—there was another such incident in Bakersfield and their readings were several hundred times the alert level, and we don't know why.

So, nuclear things are happening all around us. The fact that nuclear plants give off a certain background level every time they're refueled, or just as they operate, is something that most people don't know. It's called permissible levels, but there is no safe level, so you just have a little less danger here and a little—but there's always some.

JON Well, the reason I brought up Fukushima was because during Tour de Peace, you know, Cindy would give her talk and then I would give my talk about 9/11 and then Malcolm would start talking about Fukushima, which was a big topic at the time—

MAL And still is, really.

JON It still is. That's why I brought it up.

MAL So, as an anti-nuclear person and somebody who has been watching Fukushima for some time, I think I'd like to bring up this event that's happening on March 11th. It's a—the website is: Fukushima2015.com It's the fourth anniversary, actually in London, but there are events taking place all over the world, and if you check around you can see that it also has links for our friends in the USA, and then you can go to your city and see if you can join one of these events. Because, as you know, and we mentioned briefly, the plant Fukushima Daiichi has started another criticality, or we believe so at this time, that the monitoring and the outflow from the second reactor, Reactor #2, where the core has melted through had this huge increase in readings, so it becomes even more important now than it has been, which was hugely, to keep this on our radar.

So, I'm encouraging people to get out there and learn what they can about the situation there and join in on calling the world's attention to the need to do something about monitoring environmentally water and food so that we know what's happening to us. And, also, to talk about solutions.

JON Excellent! Okay, Malcolm, well I want to thank you very much for taking the time today to go over this stuff, and I hope you learned something.

MAL I did. I know I did. I learned that the rabbit hole is even deeper than I thought, and I already knew it was pretty deep. [Laughs]

JON Yep, yes it is.

Well, thank you very much, Malcolm. And have a good day, and I wish you good luck with everything you try to do in the future.

MAL You too, Jon. It was a good day. Thanks.

JON All right, thanks, Malcolm.

MAL Bye, bye.

JON This show is dedicated to 9/11 victims Alan Kleinberg and John Casazza.



Chapter/Episode 22 – Andy Worthington – March 3, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Andy Worthington (ANDY)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week we're going to talk about the inhumanity of Guantanamo Bay. We're also going to talk about how there can be no justice found at the Military Commission. Not for the 9/11 Families or anyone affected by that day. This might be harsh, but in my opinion, anyone who says justice can be found at GITMO, is either lying or just plain ignorant.

Hi, this is Jon and I'm here with Andy Worthington. Andy, how are you doing tonight?

ANDY I'm good, Jon. How are you?

JON I'm doing the best I can.

ANDY Good.

JON What I'm going to do is I'm going to read your bio for everyone and then we'll get started.

Andy Worthington is a freelance investigative journalist, activist, author, photographer, film-maker and singer-songwriter. He is the co-founder of the "Close Guantánamo" campaign, the director of "We Stand with Shaker," calling for the immediate release from Guantánamo of Shaker Aamer, the last British resident in the prison, and the author of *The Guantánamo Files: The Stories of the 774 Detainees in America's Illegal Prison* (published by Pluto Press, distributed by Macmillan in the US, and is available on Amazon) and of two other books: *Stonehenge: Celebration and Subversion* and *The Battle of the Beanfield*. He is also the co-director (with Polly Nash) of the documentary film, "Outside the Law: Stories from Guantánamo." He has written for *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*, and is currently writing for *Al-Jazeera*. He has also worked with the United Nations, WikiLeaks and Reprieve.

Would you like me to re-read that?

ANDY It's fine, Jon, don't worry. [Laughs] It was close enough.

JON Are you sure? (Yeah, yeah) Okay, great.

All right, so we'll get to the questions. The first question is: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

ANDY Well, I was working at home and doing some writing and then my wife was suddenly shouting at me: "Andy! Andy! You better come and see what's happening." And then, so then, like everyone else, I came down and watched the TV and saw these terrible things happening. So, that was my experience of it. I mean, I was obviously a long way from it and—but as shocked as everybody was, really.

JON Right, so it was a complete shock to you. Okay. It was to most people, as well.

The next question is: What was the first thing you questioned about 9/11, if anything?

ANDY Okay, my memories of that time, Jon, it's such a long time ago now, but my memories of it—I remember thinking quite soon after it, as I think many

people did outside the United States—I'm not sure what the feeling was within the U.S.—that this appeared, although this was an attack on a huge scale and with an intention of it really making an impact. And we didn't know what was going on. I remember feeling that this was some sort of attack on the United States, or some element of its foreign policy that I didn't know about at the time. But it felt that that's what it was, and that it was somebody who objected strenuously to some aspect of U.S. policy in one of the many countries abroad where there was perceived interference from them in a military presence.

It's funny, actually, thinking back to what we knew and what we didn't know at the time and who it may have been because we're now so used to the terrorist narrative and the terrorist agenda that we've had pushed for 13 years now, but it still holds to remember a time that didn't exist, I suppose.

JON Right. Well, you and I have had discussions in the past about questions that I have—trying to convince you of this, that, and the other thing and I'm just curious, do you question more today, like the legitimacy of the 9/11 Commission, perhaps?

ANDY Well, I don't necessarily believe that they were hired to get to the whole truth, but, I still believe the narrative that I first—fundamentally the book that I recommend people to read to discuss the build-up to 9/11, or one of the books, is *The Looming Tower* by Lawrence Wright, which I think lays out very clearly how the main problem in the run-up to 9/11, which was a terrorist attack, was that the FBI and the CIA were not communicating with each other and that clues that both sides should have been sharing—they weren't. But there are many reasons why I am—I cannot attribute incompetence to the Bush Administration while being able to manage to do something that was an inside job themselves.

I also have been pretty persuaded over the years by people close to Dick Cheney talking about how he fundamentally changed after those attacks. How he became a noticeably colder and harder person. This is people who count themselves among his friends, and that's never really seemed to me somebody who could be put on.

So, I still am afraid I have to disagree with you, Jon. We have to agree to differ (Laughs) that my understanding of this is that the people who were in charge, I think, were dangerous people to have in charge. They were going

to horribly overreact, which they did, and they were going to use it as an opportunity to push their own agendas.

One of the things that I remember being shocked by was reading Jane Mayer's book a few years ago about how British intelligence people happen to be in the Pentagon on the day of the 9/11 attacks, and how absolutely shocked they were that all these people were running around going: "Great! Now we can invade Iraq." And they were just in deep shock thinking: "Iraq? [Laughs] What the hell does Iraq have to do with it?" [Laughs] (Right, I remember) Just one example of the kind of, you know, the kind of—and, of course, later on these British intelligence people, if they were in their jobs, would be swept up in the Tony Blair-driven drive to join the United States in their absolutely illegal and unjustified attack on Iraq, which you know, as we now see, Jon, has been a disaster in almost any way it could have been.

JON All right, we'll have to agree to disagree—I don't want to get into a debate with you. But what I DO recommend is that you listen to the first 21 shows that I've had.

ANDY [Laughs] Okay, Jon.

JON When was GITMO opened and what was its purpose?

ANDY Okay, well, Guantanamo opened on January the 11th 2002, so exactly four months after 9/11. Its purpose was as a place where the existing laws and treaties governing the treatment of prisoners could be bypassed by the United States with—and of course, the only reason that you would want to bypass the protections on prisoners is so that you could do things to them that you're not allowed to do. So, I think it's reasonable to conclude that not only was it intended to bypass all of these laws and treaties governing the treatment of prisoners, that was done so that these people could be tortured or subject to other forms of abuse that are not allowed.

And actually, if we look back on the history of the period, Jon, what we see is that, you know, it opened on January 11th, 2002, lawyers, from the beginning tried to hold the Bush Administration to the existing standards of how you treat prisoners. But it took almost two and a half years to get to the Supreme Court where the Supreme Court said that they had habeas corpus rights and that lawyers had to be allowed in to see them.

And it took until June 2006, in another Supreme Court ruling—*Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*—for the Supreme Court to point out to the Bush Administration that it didn't matter how you tried to dress people up who were your captives, all of them were entitled to the baseline protections of Common Article Three of the Geneva Conventions, which prohibit torture and other forms of abuse.

So, we are in the situation looking back on people needing to understand that for a four-and-a-half-year period, the United States, the Government of the United States, claimed that it didn't have to treat people that it was depriving of their liberty in a humane manner. That's the bottom line of it. That's really pretty disgusting. (Yes) But, as we've also seen, Jon, of course, no one's been held accountable for that.

JON No, no one has been held accountable—with regard to A LOT of things. And—

ANDY [Laughs] Yeah, absolutely

JON Didn't they refer to them as enemy combatants, which therefore, they weren't qualified for the Geneva Conventions and so forth?

ANDY Well, yeah, they claimed that there was a category of unprivileged belligerence, another version of it, who didn't have the protections and that's why I feel it's so important to keep pointing out that eventually when the Supreme Court handed down a ruling on this pointed out to this administration that there IS no category of person that has no right. Everybody has the right not to be tortured or treated otherwise in an abusive manner. And the Bush administration had deliberately decided that this wasn't the case and had come up with slippery legal decisions about why they should be entitled to do this. Which was not acceptable. But it was something that they insisted on for all of this time.

And, when we look at why they were doing that, what they were trying to do, again, I think it's quite shocking really—I think the most prevalent aspect of what they were trying to do involves an intelligence policy called the Mosaic Theory, which is that if you have a whole bunch of people who appear to know nothing, or not nothing, but who appear to not know very much, then the theory is that if you keep on interrogating these people, you get them to provide little bits and pieces of information that which when you put them together with little bits and pieces of information from all

these other people, will build up to some coherent whole, that will enable you to make some kind of intelligence breakthrough.

I think it's completely unfounded as a theory. But it also, I think, enables people, hopefully, to see the potential scale of things which wasn't fully realized. But if you take the Mosaic Theory to its logical conclusion, they could have rammed it up everybody they found in Afghanistan and enabling countries, on the theory that they were Muslims who may have some kind of knowledge that will help them to understand what the threat that they faced was. But, as it turned out, it was a much smaller number of people. But they had this notion that any small amount of information could be useful. And that to get that, they were perfectly willing to try and justify holding people for years to decades, possibly forever. It's really, just really quite extraordinary, if you think a trained interrogator, for example, trained to build a rapport with a suspect and to try and get information in that manner wouldn't recognize any of this as being even at all practical or useful.

JON Well, it's common knowledge that torture does not work as a means of getting information. And, from what I understand, a lot of the torture that took place was to get information that helped the Bush Administration make their case for war in a lot of cases. And, it wasn't accurate. And I remember hearing stories about how Khalid Sheikh Mohammed would "make up stories" to get them to stop torturing him.

ANDY Right. Well, I think, it was more particularly Abu Zubaydah who did that. I'm not, I mean, I think the feeling with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed is that he gave them less. Abu Zubaydah gave them a lot more. But, certainly, what you're saying is absolutely true. You can get information out of people using torture, but you don't get accurate information. Or, to be strictly correct about it, you MAY get some accurate information, but you will also get untold inaccurate information. You then have to spend time following up all the leads to try and find out what's real and what isn't. (Right)

I remember years ago reading, the FBI's director, actually, who spoke to a journalist and who was quoted in an article in, I think, *Vanity Fair* saying that, basically, the FBI had its resources given over for a huge amount, for a significant amount of time to a whole succession of wild-goose chases, which were all the results of the lies that poor, old Abu Zubaydah was coming out with while he was being tortured. It was a complete waste of time. But they were told to follow-up all of these red-hot leads that had

come from the guy who was giving up this useful information and none of it was.

JON But wasn't it reported that Abu Zubaydah did not have the connections to Al-Qaeda that we were originally led to believe?

ANDY Oh, absolutely, Jon. Yeah, this is something that steadily emerged over the years. I think it was in 2009, if I recall correctly, that the Government was first filing illegal documents walking back from the claims that had been made. The grandiose claims that had been made in the early days.

When—I'm not entirely sure who was lying and exaggerating and distorting and to what effect. I certainly know that it was reported that Bush was told that Abu Zubaydah was significant. Then it was told by, I think, George Tenet that he wasn't and didn't want to lose face.

And, I know that FBI operatives are on record as saying that even before he was apprehended, people should have known who he was, that he was connected to a training camp, but not one that had anything to do with Al-Qaeda. And that he was not somebody who would be trusted with any detailed information about anything sensitive because, as they said, the guy was always on the phone. I think that's almost a verbatim quote. He obviously used his cell phone a lot. He was obviously a bit of a blabber-mouth. It's not really what you want if you're dealing with sensitive—major terrorist operations are clearly only going to work if you have the smallest number of people involved.

So—and on we go, really, Jon. The stories, they build up to how it should have been apparent that he really wasn't who he said he was. They said he was number 3 in Al-Qaeda. They ended up, eventually, as I say in this legal document in 2009 saying, okay, he wasn't Al-Qaeda. He probably didn't know anything about 9/11 before it happened, and on and on. Walking back from almost everything. But then trying to claim that he was in charge of some militia after the 9/11 attacks, after the U.S. invasion, which somehow was engaged in U.S. forces.

I don't think there's a thread of truth in that either. I think as a facilitator what Abu Zubaydah did was that he helped a lot of people out in Afghanistan. And he helped a lot of people across the board—men, women, and children—civilians as well as combatants. I don't see that that makes him anything that he's been dressed up to be. But, of course, this is a guy

who, as we understand from the limited information that has been able to be offered by his lawyers who are technically prohibited from mentioning a word about him, have said that this is a guy who regularly suffers seizures, that he is pretty destroyed by what's happened to him. And it has never been the person that they said he was.

JON Right. What are some of the reported tortures that have taken place at GITMO? Besides the forced feeding, and so forth, what were—we found out recently about the rectal feeding—that's all considered torture in my book. But what are some of the reported tortures that have taken place?

ANDY Yeah, well, the rectal feeding, which is a specific CIA thing at some point—I mean, that was disgusting, wasn't it? (Yeah) I mean, I've been studying this for years. You've been reading about all this for years. That was one new fact that emerged where I just felt really sick, to be honest.

JON I honestly didn't know that you could do that.

ANDY What? Feel sick.

JON Yeah, I didn't know that you could feed someone rectally.

ANDY Oh, no, well I think it takes a particularly sadistic kind of mind to contemplate in the first place. Do you know what I mean? (Yeah) This is the thing, Jon, there's been certain aspects of the torture program, perhaps certain aspects of the CIA program, that involve very, very clinical attempts to break people mentally. Lots of which was derived from the military fear psychologists who were working for the Government with the CIA, trying to do things in an extremely controlled manner.

Then there are obviously other aspects of it where people who were inclined to sadism or were allowed to unleash their inner sadist were given much more leeway about the kind of things that they should get up to to do to people.

I think it runs the whole gamut of all of these things, the things that took place. And it still, I think it should shock people to realize how across the board it was—in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in the Black Sites, in Guantanamo—the different forms of torture and abuse that took place.

But you asked me specifically about Guantanamo? In Guantanamo, in the fall of 2002, the authorities had discovered that one of the men that they held was allegedly the elusive 20th hijacker from the 9/11 attacks, that he wasn't being cooperative, so Donald Rumsfeld authorized a program of specific techniques to be used on him. And he then went through a period of months and months where he was subjected to 20-hour interrogations on a daily basis. So, he was allowed very little sleep, was constantly woken up should he fall asleep during these 20hr interrogations. When he was just, you know, just humiliated in all kinds of ways and threatened in other kinds of ways. So, he was threatened with the rape of his female relatives. He was threatened with being taken to another country where terrible things would happen to him. He was humiliated through having women's underwear put on his head. Been made to bark like a dog. Having pictures of naked women hung around his neck. I would be—I can't remember now, specifically Jon, but I would imagine there were female personnel who were also interfering with him, because when they worked out that certain men were very susceptible to any kind of sexual issues then they would prey on them for this.

The other kind of stuff that was introduced was just a—because the program that was tailored for him, elements of this were ones that then spread throughout Guantanamo, essentially. I don't think they applied to everybody. I know that one person who spoke on the record about it said that it was one in six of the prisoners, which was about the height of the number of prisoners there, so it would be over a hundred people who were subjected to this kind of isolation and forced nudity, extreme heat, extreme cold, very loud music, white noise, what they called the frequent flyer program where they moved prisoners from cell-to-cell every few hours so they couldn't sleep—all of these kinds of things.

JON Weren't some of the individuals who were brought to Guantanamo people who were picked up or handed over by, I guess, the Pakistanis or the Afghans, just to get a terrorist. Here's a terrorist! And Then the U.S. would pay them money for these people?

ANDY Yeah, sure. Well, I mean they were paying—the average figure seems to be about \$5,000 a head, which is being paid in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which is a huge amount of money in those parts of the world. They were—we've got to remember, they wanted Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. So, the shorthand for the War on Terror and the prisoners that they've held at Guantanamo till this day is that they're all terrorists. That is what the

Republicans try and persuade the American public is going on. If you actually bother to spend a minute actually looking at the details of what's going on at Guantanamo, you'll find out that only a very, very small numbers of those men, a few percent, have ever actually been accused of terrorism.

Most of what constitutes terrorism is that these hapless guys from the middle east went to a training camp that was partly sponsored by Osama bin Laden and every few months he would turn up and deliver a stirring speech to them, and they would see him from a distance. And this is supposed to constitute terrorism. They were clearly, all of these people who were at these training camps, for example—if they were there, because it may have been lied about that they actually went to the camp. But even if they were—pretty much all of these people were there in a military context. They were fighting the northern alliance who were also Muslims in an interim Muslim civil war in Afghanistan that was going on in its own dreadful manner until suddenly 9/11 took place, and then the U.S. invaded and then suddenly everybody who was in Afghanistan at that moment—6th, 7th of October, 2001—suddenly, became an enemy of the United States. And not only—not actually even an enemy in a military context, but they all became effectively terrorists if they happened to fall into U.S. hands or were sold to them.

So, you know, I wouldn't like to say, Jon, the exact numbers of them that were soldiers and the exact numbers that were completely innocent people in the wrong place at the wrong time. There were, I think, it's fair to say, hundreds of people in Guantanamo—I would say a couple of hundred is perhaps accurate. Those people who had absolutely nothing to do with anything.

There were numerous house raids in Pakistan in the first half of 2002, based on what I can only describe as tragically inept intelligence. If that was the case, it may just have been that the Pakistanis were trying to keep the Americans sweet, so they were just coming up with all kinds of rubbish as to where the terrorists were hiding out. And, all manner of Muslim gentlemen who were there as office workers and teachers and all kinds of things were swept up and sent to Guantanamo.

JON

That is just so infuriating—

ANDY There were people who were missionaries and humanitarian aid workers, for example—but yeah, sorry. Go on, Jon.

JON I was just going to say—that's so infuriating to me. People look at Afghanistan as the "good war," but I still, for the crime of 9/11, don't see how you can hold an entire country accountable for the actions of a few. (No--) And, within the last two years, I think, Joe Biden referred to the Taliban as our friends, actually. (Laughs—Right)

But, anyway—

ANDY Well, yeah—the only thing that would have been acceptable at the time, I think, was the United States and its coalition partners—I think the legality of it all is still a bit shady—but let's say that we accept the notion that some response in that part of the world was acceptable. Then it would have been to go after Al-Qaeda, and then even stretching it, what the U.S. was determined to do was also to topple the Taliban Government. But, there is a great book by Anand Gopal, which I recommend for people to read. It's heartbreaking. It's a book called *No Good Men Among the Living: America, the Taliban, and the War through Afghan Eyes*.

Anand spent several years as a reporter in Afghanistan and he's looking at what happened in Afghanistan, and how tragically inept everything was. And once you—from his perspective—I mean, when I met him he explained it very succinctly. He said, it is almost unbelievable how the United States snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. He said, look, by early 2002, they actually achieved what they wanted. Most of Al-Qaeda was captured, dead, or scattered and the Taliban Government had been toppled. And, yet, what happens? The United States stayed. And what did they do when they stayed? They had no idea what they were doing. So they're still tooled up and angry and they had no idea who to trust and they were played by one disreputable warlord after another and just mired themselves in a disaster of their own making.

And, the last group of prisoners who arrived in Guantanamo, mostly Afghans, in the late 2002 and most of 2003 when they stopped sending people there for the most part, were just Afghan nobodies that one after the other were caught up in some feud in Afghanistan where the United States had been used to play the role of jailer. It was absolutely disgraceful. And when you think that what happened then is if they stop sending people to Afghanistan well they start piling them up in Bagram—thousands of them.

The same incompetence was displayed across the board. And, my God, what a way to lose hearts and minds and to be repeatedly imprisoning the wrong people. And not just that, but imprisoning them without any form of due process for over a decade, of course, in Guantanamo—but, it was typical in Bagram for people to be held for 18 months or two years before anybody bothered to even give them a character review to find out whether or not they had the right people or not.

JON Well, that's one of the points—

ANDY I mean, you couldn't create a better template for losing hearts and minds.
[Laughs]

JON That's one of the things that I bring up a lot is the fact that if our leaders honestly thought that our actions in that region would not stir up anger out of people or would not create thoughts of retaliation against the United States. They're absolutely morons. (Yeah) It's a perpetual war. When you kill somebody, you have a family, their family who suddenly hates the United States and wants to retaliate. It's a never-ending process.

And one of the things that was a surprise to me—at one time there was a poll taken that showed 92 percent of Afghans had never even heard of 9/11. (Right) So, I mean, it's just absurd.

ANDY Yeah, yeah, it absolutely is, Jon. But it's funny, because we could look back at other disastrous military adventures and some of the same contours would be there. What the hell was Vietnam about? (Right) Unwinnable wars that really shouldn't have been embarked upon, over and over again.

But, I really do wholeheartedly recommend Anand Gopal's book. It is heartbreaking. It is genuinely heartbreaking. I would be surprised if people aren't in tears reading it, because it's so well-expressed. The losing when you should have won. I mean, the limited aims of it were working, and then it was all turned away. And here we are, a decade later—more than a decade later, still not able to disentangle from this thing properly.

JON Well, the Taliban's back in power.

ANDY They would be because historically there were two things going on here. One, is that Afghanistan is the playground of Pakistan and that's not something that's going to be easily addressed.

The other thing is that a lot of these people are actually Afghans—it's actually their country. The problem with the neo-colonial projects—and believe me, I've looked at this one in terms of Iraq, particularly, but also Afghanistan with the British involvement. And I've watched what our leaders in Britain have said about this. They behave exactly like the colonial masters of the past, which they obviously think these people are sub-human compared to them. They don't imagine for a minute if the situation was reversed and a foreign, hostile invader came and invaded the UK, you know, promising all kinds of wonderful things, but actually being a foreign invader, occupying this land. Of course, people would rise up. (Yeah--) Of course people would be saying: "I'm not stopping until you guys are out of my country." Sorry, that's it. How dare you?! It's the persistent colonial mentality.

JON Right. And I try to make that comparison to people in the United States. What would YOU do if the United States was invaded by Canada? Would you just sit here and take it? (Laughs) Or would you rise up and, you know, you would rise up and you would be considered a terrorist in the eyes of Canada. If you're looking at Afghanistan, the United States looks at them, the people that rise up, as terrorists. We would be no different if someone invaded (Yeah) this country. (Yeah)

So, how many people have died at GITMO?

ANDY Ten people have died over the years—nine, I think. Sorry, nine people have died at Guantanamo.

JON Do you know what kind of causes?

ANDY Well, I know there was a case where one man who tragically had, he had been a huge supporter of the anti-Taliban movement in Afghanistan. He had helped to free from jail, from a Taliban jail, a handful of people, including somebody who was very prominent in the anti-Taliban post-U.S. invasion Government. He had helped these guys escape from a Taliban jail. The Taliban were then after him. He'd run away to Iran for quite some time. When he came back, thinking that it might be safe for him to do so after the U.S.-led invasion, he was then, through a terrible error or through being betrayed by somebody, ended up in U.S. custody and, the shocking thing is that over and over again, he told them what the story was and they refused

to believe him. And he died of cancer in Guantanamo. He was quite an old man, in Christmas 2007—2006, 2007.

And what I did was that I found out that Carlotta Gall of *The New York Times* had met his son sometime before that and had come across the story. So, I got in touch with Carlotta and we then wrote a front-page story for *The New York Times*, which was published in February 2008. Within an hour, somebody in the Bush Administration was on to *The New York Times* saying you shouldn't have employed this guy. (Laughs) Because then they apologized publicly for giving me a by-line on the front page because "I had a point of view." [Laughs]

JON Well, I don't know how familiar you are with The New York Times and how well they work together with the Government, but (Yeah) it's funny. I mean, it's absurd, sad—

ANDY It's a kind of badge of honor. The story happened and it's out there and people can find it, Jon. It was a very powerful story. He's the only one I know who died of natural causes. So, the other eight guys all, allegedly, died by committing suicide. Now, did they? Well, they're obviously a number of question marks about—I think once you start to look at it something very, very dark is going on at Guantanamo, which is completely comprehensible given the incredibly dark history of what's gone on in that place. People who—

JON I don't doubt that people would want to commit suicide in Guantanamo, but if they ALL committed suicide, it kind of becomes suspect.

ANDY Yeah, well, I mean, it may be that some of these cases are straight-forward, Jon. All I know is that over the years there have been suggestions that not all of those people who did commit suicide, did actually commit suicide. And actually, a lot of them were people who were strenuously resisting their oppression within the prison.

So, that already in itself starts to become a little bit suspicious—would these guys really give up? I mean, one of the guys who allegedly committed suicide, I met a former prisoner told me: "Oh, yeah, this guy he was very upset about the way they treated him. He couldn't stand the molestation, essentially. All the kind of sexual stuff that they did profoundly depressed him." And I thought, yeah, here's this older guy who was just humiliated to the point where he couldn't stand it anymore. But the ones who were kind

of younger and feistier, really? Really? They took their own life? They looked like they were devoted to fighting this oppression.

And I would recommend for people who are interested to read *Murder at Camp Delta* by Joseph Hickman that came out just six weeks ago. Joseph Hickman was a former staff sergeant at Guantanamo. He was in charge of the guard towers on the night that three prisoners allegedly died by committing suicide simultaneously.

JON They did that in one night? Oh, my goodness!

ANDY Yeah, they did. And, Joe Hickman, within the—in a guard tower and looking at the movement of people and from that basis couldn't accept the official story that these guys had killed themselves because it just didn't all add up. But, I really recommend people who want to know more to go and look at that story. Find out more about it. It's Joseph Hickman.

When the book—I mean, actually, five years ago Scott Horton wrote an article first about this in *Harper's* magazine. It's taken five years for the book to come out. There was some coverage when it came out. *Democracy Now!* did a feature on it. It's worth it for people to look at. The explanations—the official explanations are really not satisfactory. That's an understatement, but it's worth people exploring this.

JON I can relate to that with regard to 9/11—anyway.

ANDY Well, there you go, Jon. [Laughs]

JON How many people had been cleared to leave, but are still being held there?

ANDY There are 122 men still held at Guantanamo. So, that's way down from the 779 who've been held there in total. Over 500 of them were released by President Bush; the rest of them released under President Obama.

Of the 122 men still held, 55 of those 122 have been told by the U.S. Administration, by the authorities, mostly five years ago after an exhaustive high-level review process in the first year of Obama's first presidency that the U.S. no longer wants to hold them, and that arrangements would be made for them to be leaving. And they're all still there.

Why is that, you may ask? (Laughs) And it's a good question. And there are two reasons in particular. One is that, although President Obama has released a considerable number of people from Guantanamo, he ran up against opposition from Congress beginning really in about 2010, when legislation was passed that created a bunch of hoops and hurdles for him to have to overcome to release prisoners. Now, he always had the power to do that but he lacked the political will to engage in a fight with Republicans, so he sat on his hands for a few years. After the prisoners went on a huge hunger strike that got the world suddenly remembering that Guantanamo was still there and still a terrible place, he got a lot of criticism at all levels from all kinds of people and organizations and Governments and bodies, and so he promised to get off his hands and start doing something. And he has been releasing prisoners, while Congress is still trying to stop him from doing so.

So, that's been difficult. But the other reason is that most of these men are from Yemen. And if it's almost impossible to get out of Guantanamo for most people, then it's almost, almost, almost impossible to get out of Guantanamo if you're from the Yemen, if not actually impossible.

From the Bush administration times onwards and throughout the Obama administration—or I should say, since there was an Underwear Bomb plot at Christmas 2009, the entire U.S. establishment has been extremely unwilling to repatriate anyone from Yemen. Fearing the security situation is so fragile in the country in the presence of Al-Qaeda, they are so dangerous that they can't release anybody.

Now, I think that kind of blanket ban on releasing people is completely unacceptable. It constitutes a kind of guilt by nationality. And, as I've said, on my visits to the U.S. imagine if a Californian is released from a prison in the United States on the mainland and goes on to commit some sort of crime, and then a bunch of lawmakers get together and say: "What we need to do now to prevent anyone from California ever being released from prison again." That is a really, really far-right wing view of what would be possible for the prison system and the justice system. (Well—)

And, yet, when it comes to Guantanamo, this is apparently regarded as acceptable.

JON

Well, what I've told people, with regard to the crime of 9/11, I've said that you can't blame entire nationalities, ideologies, or religions for the actions

of a few. And it turns out that there's actually a term for that. It's called Collective Punishment (Yeah, yeah) and it's a war crime and it's against the Geneva Conventions.

ANDY Yeah, well and Collective Punishment is exactly right, and that is what is happening with the guys from Yemen. The only good thing that's happened recently is that actually a handful of these guys have been found new homes in other countries. You know, because for years, no one from Yemen was being released. So, while the Obama administration is refusing to push for releasing them to their home country, they have been working to find other countries for them to be sent to. Which has meant that some of them at least getting out there. Because otherwise they were collectively feeling that this Collective Punishment that you described was certainly being inflicted on them.

JON Right. Before I read the next question, I have a statement that was written by the September 11th Advocates. It was released on November 19, 2009, and it's in regard to AG Eric Holder's announcement on moving the 9/11 trials to New York City. And, if you don't mind, I'd like to read this little statement? (Yeah)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2009

We are encouraged by Attorney General Eric Holder's announcement that the trial of alleged 9/11 mastermind, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, and four additional detainees, Walid Muhammed Salih Mubarak Bin Attash, Ramzi Bin Al Shibh, Ali Abdul-Aziz Ali, and Mustafa Ahmed Al Hawsawi, would be moved to our Federal Court system in New York City.

Unfortunately, this has evoked a knee-jerk reaction that has been brought to an almost feverish pitch by the media pundits and the politicians. This response seems to be agenda driven rhetoric unsupported by facts.

Fear mongering is a tactic that is often used by those in power to hide wrongdoing. Perhaps those responsible for ordering torture have something to hide. Could those people be creating this frenzy?

With the apparent desire to try these suspects in the military commission system, one would think that the success rate of prosecutions would be higher than that of the Federal Courts,' but that is not the case. To date, the military commissions system has had a very low success rate and has only brought one 9/11 terrorist case to completion. On the other hand, the American Justice System has been used to try terrorists 214 times since September 2001, with a success rate of 91% --195 people were convicted.

The one 9/11 related case that was brought to completion in the military commissions system, U.S. v. Hamdan (Bin Laden's driver), brought Hamdan only a 66-month sentence. He was sent back to Yemen in January 2009. Where was the outrage then?

In fact, having accused September 11th alleged terrorists on American soil, in Federal Court, is not precedent setting. The alleged 20th hijacker, Zacharias Moussaoui, was held in a Virginia detention center and was later sentenced in Federal Court, also located in Virginia. Where was the outcry at that time?

During the course of that hearing, we fortunately did not experience a terrorist incident. Admittedly, an attempted attack could occur whether we try these suspects in America or Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Does that mean we should not try them at all?

It should also be noted that the military commissions system allows for secret proceedings where tainted evidence and hearsay could be used. Thus, any resulting verdict could lack credibility. For those who fear an attack because trials are being held on American soil, isn't it just as likely that a verdict lacking credibility could provoke an attack?

Additionally, we believe the decision to try these men in our Federal Courts is less about giving detainees the same privileges as American citizens and more about America being a nation that conducts itself according to the rule of

law. As a matter of practicality, in order to protect our citizens and soldiers around the world, it is best that we not devolve into barbarians seeking revenge. Retaliation then becomes an even greater risk.

It is time that we actually look at the facts and stop reacting from a place of fear.

Now, if you don't know, the September 11th Advocates are also known as the Jersey Girls, the four women responsible for the creation of the 9/11 Commission.

Do you have anything to say about that statement?

ANDY I thought that was a great statement. I say, yeah.

JON Yeah, I thought it wonderful, but the reason that I had brought it up, beside from the fact that family members are saying there's no justice to be found at GITMO (Yeah, yeah—)

My next question was: Do the military trials still permit hearsay evidence or have they done away with that?

ANDY Well, you know, the problem with the military commissions, it's funny, the only thing I could take exception to in that whole statement that you read was an alleged 9/11 trial and reaching completion in a military commission—there was a man named Salim Hamdan, who was a Yemeni guy who had, although he had been introduced to Osama bin Laden, he took a \$200 advanced paid job as one of seven drivers for Osama bin Laden. This was the lowliest level from which you could be operating. He had no knowledge of 9/11 or any kind of operational capacity. The analogies were made at the time, actually, I don't recall after World War II anybody trying to put Hitler's driver, Hitler's chauffeur in the dock.

So, Salim Hamdan was absolutely not involved in anything, in any way, that could be described as a war crime. He just drove a car occasionally to somebody who was perceived as a very bad man.

But, the problem with the military commission is that the job of the prosecutor is to hide all knowledge of torture from being exposed by the defense teams. And the job of the defense teams, trying to do their job

properly, is to expose all the evidence to light so that a fair judgment can be reached.

It means that what's happening in the high-profile cases in the military commissions is they're kind of stuck endlessly in the pre-trial hearings where the two sides are bouncing arguments between themselves, which can't really be resolved. Almost all the cases that have been resolved in the military commissions—and there aren't many of them—only two have actually gone to trial. The favorite route, when the United States can do it, is to reach plea deals. Because then they only have the uncomfortable business of having to deal with a proper core proceedings and evidence. And they just get somebody to sign a piece of paper saying: "I did whatever you said it was and you tell me that I can go home quite soon." Which is what's been happening in a number of cases.

It's a disgustingly broken system. It's a great shame that the Obama administration didn't stick to their words on holding the trials in New York City. Eric Holder stood up and made that statement and was then humiliated by his boss when Obama backed down when a bunch of, I think, opportunistic people decided to portray the Government as weak on national security, endangering people by proposing that these terrorists should be tried on the U.S. mainland.

JON I just saw that a conviction took place, I think, in New York City for a terrorist. There was no outcry then.

ANDY No, no, there's not. The problem is there is an interest that certain people have in the Republican party, on Fox News, all these kind of people, to stir things up when the word Guantanamo is mentioned. Guantanamo is a different kind of terrorist to any other kind of terrorist that must make people shake in their boots.

Now, I know that part of the reason for this is that there are certain forces within the U.S. society who like having a bunch of people held at Guantanamo without charge or trial or caught up in these interminable pre-trial hearings that may never get anywhere, who are effectively all in the same boat. They're held without due process by the United States, possibly forever, and there are people who like that. They like that power. They like the vengeance that comes with it because they think these are the guys who did it, and they like sending a message to the American people and to the world of: "We are the toughest people that you're ever going to encounter.

Don't think there's anybody tougher than us, because look at what we do. We don't need these pansy rules that we used to have. Now we say that these are bad guys. We put them away and we hold them there forever."

JON See, now, I've always thought the reasons that they didn't want these in federal court was not only because of torture but because of other information that could come out publicly—because it's a public setting. You have to face cross-examination. You have to provide evidence. You have to go through all these things. I mean there are many questions about Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. He had ties to the Pakistani ISI, I never hear about that. Which seems to be a theme—

ANDY Oh, yeah (Yeah) I mean, who knows, Jon, to be honest, but I don't think that's the main reason. I think that it's to keep people scared. And it's people trying to keep the American people scared, and also trying to say that they're the big protector. When in fact what they're doing is they're reveling in the ability to imprison people they portray as bad guys without any proof, without any form of due process whatsoever.

There are other aspects of the story obviously that could be of interest were it to come to trial. But I actually think that if they, if tomorrow they said, actually, forget it. We're canning the military commissions, we're moving these guys to federal court. There wouldn't be that much transparency. All that would happen is the prosecutors would come up with a minimum of random information that could be regarded as untainted, establishing that these are the people who did what they said they did and boy, the all-American jury would convict.

I honestly think that would happen. Because in so many other terrorism cases, Jon, we haven't actually seen the exposure of the truth. We've seen people going through the motions. I mean, it's not a very judicial process that isn't necessarily fair. Depending on what's being dealt with, people don't get dealt with fairly.

JON Oh, there are many problems with our federal courts.

ANDY Yeah, I mean, it's too late to undo the torture that took place. And I don't know whether—I don't know what is the best solution in these cases. What interests me more is that we haven't had a thorough repudiation of torture. We haven't had the required message sent out to the American people and to

the American establishment that it was wrong. That people high up who ordered it are prosecuted. There's no other way.

JON That's one of the problems, the biggest problem. One of the biggest problems in this country is a lack of accountability in Government. (Yes) And a Government that is not accountable, as we have learned, is an extremely dangerous Government.

ANDY Yeah, absolutely, yeah.

JON Do you know any of the defense lawyers for the 9/11 Five? And what have they told you about how legitimate the legal proceedings are?

ANDY Well, I have met a few of them over the years, Jon, but they aren't really allowed to talk about anything. [Laughs] This is the kind of main point that, I think, a lot of people would be very shocked to discover.

Now, when it comes to Guantanamo, it took lawyers two-and-a-half years to three years to get in the prison to meet people they were going to represent. And what happens when a lawyer meets a prisoner? From the very beginning it's been the same. They take handwritten notes of their discussions with the prisoner and then every word is presumptively classified. What they then have to do is they have to submit them to a Pentagon review process where somebody working in this office somewhere decides whether these notes can be unclassified or whether they must remain classified.

And over the years what we've seen is that actually a lot of information has come out about Guantanamo through this process that a proper fascist state wouldn't be allowing any of that out. But the residue or the—maybe it's more than the residue—the elements of the checks and balances that exist within the U.S. system have [AUDIOBAD] that over the years. A lot of disturbing information about Guantanamo has come out through things that are unclassified.

The important thing to remember about the high-value detainees—so these are the 14 guys who have spent years, in most cases in CIA black sites, before they got to Guantanamo in September 2006, is that not a single word any of these guys have ever uttered to their lawyers have been unclassified. Not a word. Everything has been remained classified. (Laughs)

And why would that be? Well, that would be because these were the guys who were tortured, you know? It's obviously deeply infuriating for the lawyers who are involved in trying to represent these people because, you know, there you go, there's an example of how the system remains rigged or broken or however you choose to describe it, but it's not a fair system.

JON Well, there are so many examples—you know, I monitor the news. And I monitor what goes on at Guantanamo Bay. And it seems like every other week there's some new kind of scandal taking place at Guantanamo (Yeah--) with regard to the military commissions. (Yeah) I remember when the lawyers—(Yeah, because they were, you know, yeah--) the lawyers were saying that they were being bugged by the CIA (Yeah) and so forth, and I just heard that they were trying to force the judges to live on the base and to get these trials underway, to force them to get the trial—

ANDY Which is funny because they then derailed the whole thing. [Laughs] (Right, exactly) I mean, obviously Jon, yeah, I mean, you're somebody that's paying attention. I've been paying attention. Obviously, I started researching and writing about this in 2006. In 2007, when I started writing about it full time as a journalist, the military commissions had just stumbled into life again. And, without exception, they had been a dark farce from the beginning.

It's funny, in a way that's humiliating for the United States establishment that they cannot ever present something coherent to the world. But they do, they stumble from one disaster to another. And over and over again something comes out from left field that they didn't expect that just yet again, you know, it's humiliating. They are not fit for purpose. They should be scrapped and the seven men who are currently being prosecuted, the only people who are ever going to be prosecuted, I believe, which includes the five men allegedly responsible for 9/11 attacks, need to be moved to the U.S. mainland, federal court trials need to be set up for them, and bring it on.

JON There are many family members who would love you for what you just said, Now—

ANDY They have been denied justice for such a long time, Jon. The fact is that this could all have been avoided if the Bush Administration had not decided to turn America into a torture nation, if these people had been apprehended and had been treated in a humane manner—which apart from anything else,

what we KNOW about some of these guys is that they were happily talking to the FBI who weren't torturing them before they were taken off by the CIA and tortured. All of this would have been wrapped up a long time ago.

JON One thing I wanted bring up—a lot of people question the statements of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed or the admission of guilt with regard to 9/11, and as a matter of fact, before he was captured he was interviewed by somebody by the name of Yosri Fouda and some people question that interview and that's fine, but when Obama came into office and said that he was going to close Guantanamo, that meant that the military commissions were over, essentially. And what they did as a result of that, if I remember correctly, is they actually released a document that showed some of the evidence that they had against Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. Are you familiar with any of that?

ANDY Yeah, yeah, yeah—

JON They talked about some computers—

ANDY They didn't say they weren't going to close down the military commissions. He actually froze them for a while to review them and then made the unwise decision (You're right--) to proceed with both federal court trials AND military commission trials, which was Eric Holder's announcement, when they should have just had federal court trials, I think, but you know. And they released him information that was, I mean, they released information from the combatant's status review tribunals that they had to hold for these guys to make them eligible for military commissions. The way the law was set up, you couldn't be put on trial in a military commission before it was decided through a tribunal that you were an enemy combatant. So, they had these tribunals for the high-level detainees, where Khalid Sheikh Mohammed claimed responsibility for everything. I mean, the joke at the time that I remember was where's the bit that says he was on the grassy knoll, because he basically claimed responsibility for everything that had ever happened, which was clearly ridiculous.

JON Exactly. Well, the thing was—what I'm trying to say to people is that he confessed to Yosri Fouda, they had evidence against him and I've seen some of the evidence (Yeah), so that's one of the reasons I don't entirely take Khalid Sheikh Mohammed out of the 9/11 equation. (Yeah) So—

ANDY Well, you also have to—

JON But the 9/11 Report—what I was going to say about the 9/11 Report—

ANDY You know the Ramzi Yousef connection...

JON I'm sorry?

ANDY You've got the Ramzi Yousef connection, I mean, he's (KSM) his nephew, so you know (Right), there's some story, whether it involves other players of course is a different matter. I entirely agree.

I mean, I'd love to see it, Jon. I'd love to see the military commissions canned, federal court trials taking place—I think it would be a straightforward matter to convince an all-American jury that these are the bad guys. But, it may be that it would be an opportunity for things to emerge. It would certainly be an opportunity to be created for all of these other possibilities to be aired in the media, if not in a courtroom. It would open it up. Because the thing about Guantanamo all along has been this is some funny shuttered little place, out of site out of mind. It doesn't fulfill the requirement of any kind of transparency. It just really doesn't. And a federal court trial, while hopefully providing some kind of closure for the people who lost their family members on September 11th, would also, I think, enable us to start to air some of these issues.

JON Well, that's the thing—

ANDY Because you're right, who is Khalid Sheikh Mohammed? Who did he know? What's the connection? How come he's related to Ramzi Yousef? What was that about in 1993 World Trade Center plot? Off we go. I mean, we could go scurry in all kinds of directions finding interesting things.

JON Well, that's the whole point. That's why the families for years have wanted this in the courtrooms and that's one of the reasons right now they're fighting to get Saudi Arabia into the courtroom. Because when you get 9/11 in the courtroom, you find out things that you did not find out from the 9/11 Commission or the Joint Congressional Inquiry and so on and so forth. So, that's—the federal courts are not perfect, but they're not as controlled as the military commissions, obviously.

ANDY Right, yeah, absolutely.

JON Now, recently, it was reported—and this is just something, a personal question. Recently, it was reported that the 9/11 Five showed up to proceedings showing Palestinian colors to support Gaza. Now, where did they manage to get these colors? It just seems an awful lot like propaganda to me.

ANDY Yeah, it sounds like it to me, Jon. I actually hadn't come across that story, so I don't know. I mean, it is theoretically possible that they would have asked their lawyers to find them something. But I can't imagine if it was actually something that politically charged that they would have complied with it. I think it's a different matter from when Binyam Mohamed, who was a British resident who, he was released in 2009, he was briefly charged in the military commissions. He asked his lawyer, Clive Stafford Smith, the founder of Reprieve, for something orange for when he took part in his military commissions hearing. He wanted it, he didn't want—they wanted him to look like a normal civilian and he wanted to make a point that he was a prisoner in this darkly iconic place and he wanted orange. So, you know, they—Clive—and he was saying: "Go and get me a Dutch football shirt, because the Dutch wear orange." [Laughs] (Right) He spent a lot of time trying to be able to make his statement, but of course, that wasn't anything that was politically contentious that was related to anything other than Guantanamo itself, wearing orange.

JON Wasn't there a time that—I'm sorry, go ahead.

ANDY No, no, no, go ahead, Jon.

JON Wasn't there a time when there was an actual propaganda film made by professional film makers shown at the military commissions about 9/11 and so forth?

ANDY Oh, I'm sure there would have been—an American propaganda film about it?

JON Yes, I believe so.

ANDY Well, I remember stuff like that was shown at the trial of José Padilla, which was one of two U.S. citizens who was ever held as an enemy combatant on U.S. soil and tortured. A guy who—the most that seems to be possible to be said of him was that he had traveled to Afghanistan and had put his name down to go to a training camp, but he was tied in to a

completely fictitious dirty bomb plot. And, asked that he was liberated from the military brig in which he'd been tortured, and was put into the federal court system because George Bush wouldn't try and defend torturing an American on American soil without due process. He had this trial where the jury, I believe, were wearing stars and stripes outfits on July the fourth (Right) and they were shown these huge propaganda films about Osama bin Laden. When, it had nothing to do with José Padilla —there was no suggestion that he had ever met Osama bin Laden.

JON Yeah, that's the story I remember. (Yeah) Okay, that's just so—it just seems like kangaroo courts are going on, literally, kangaroo courts.

ANDY Yeah, but you remember what happened with John Walker Lindh, as well, the American Taliban. (Yeah) A man against whom there was no evidence that he never took up arms against a fellow American. Well, David Hicks for that matter, the Australian who's finally had his military conviction overturned. He was an adventurer who converted to Islam. He later turned against that, but he was in Afghanistan after the U.S.-led invasion and when they picked him up they wanted to make an example of him. There was no suggestion that he had ever engaged in combat, had ever done any harm to any American.

JON Well, I don't know if you've heard or not, but it was recently announced that ISIS is in every state of the United States right now. So, I wonder how many—

ANDY Is that right? [Laughs]

JON Yeah, it was just announced, I forget by who—I think it was by the FBI—

ANDY Are you sure this isn't inept people searching the Internet and discovering the song by Bob Dylan? [Laughs]

JON No, this was real. Somebody just said that in every state ISIS exists. And I can't imagine a protester or somebody being arrested and called ISIS. I can see that coming, but you know, we'll see.

ANDY Right, yeah, yeah. We'll see how War on Terror Version 2 pans out, Jon, because I know that is happening here in the UK. Just as it was running out of speed, they're back with a new version.

JON Exactly, and unfortunately, ISIS was essentially created by our allies and us, and by our actions in the middle east. As I said, there's no statute of limitations on killing a child, on torturing somebody, on sodomizing somebody, on flushing Korans down the toilet, of having Blackwater hunt you for sport. There's no statute of limitations on the anger these things create. So, of course, there's going to be people in the middle east that are pissed off at us.

ANDY Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Absolutely, I agree with you, Jon.

JON Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait—they were sending rebels into to Syria. We were sending them intelligence. Then we started sending them arms. Then we started sending in rebels of our own from Jordan. And, this whole mess turned into ISIS, essentially.

ANDY Yeah, no, absolutely, Jon, absolutely, yeah. It's depressing to watch it. (Yep) Because in that sense, although Guantanamo clearly acts as a recruiter, which you know, on those occasions that President Obama speaks so eloquently about Guantanamo, he recognizes it. To that extent, Guantanamo is kind of doing two things. One is that it's a legacy of something that was established by the Bush administration, which is certainly how Obama theorizes it in a lot of ways. He has never sent someone new there despite the cry to do that every time a terrorist suspect is seized. But those people who are holding on to Guantanamo somewhere that it's essential for America's safety and are really, really celebrating that, really pushing for it. Those people are obviously sending out a message to people who are engaged in activities now.

But, a lot of the things that are happening, the terrible stuff that you've been talking about that's happening out in the middle east now in a lot of ways seems unconnected. So you have this iconic beacon that is Guantanamo in some ways, in an important sense, but the rest of it is blowback for things that followed on from 9/11 in another way. I mean, how bad was the fallout from the illegal invasion of Iraq that led so much to the situation that we're in now.

Which, in some ways, those are the two, who were paying attention were aware of at the time. I remember, at the time, when these idiots dismantled the entire Baathist Separatists, put all the Baathists out of jobs. Say, wait a minute, you just destroyed any structures a civil society had. Plus, all these

guys are going to be really pissed off with you. And yet these were the people who were the soldiers. This isn't going to go well.

And, sure enough, that's the position that we're in now that we're looking at ISIS that this is some movement that involves a lot of these people who were dispossessed as a result of the U.S.-led invasion. So, it's horrible, horrible, to be going round and round in these circles of monstrosity that, you know, wait a minute, we have to go back in because of something we created in the first place?

JON Well, what I think is funny is how it's portrayed in America, because Obama "ended the Iraq war," even though we still had 15,000 people there. We have the largest base there. We had military contractors still there, and so on and so forth. And now they're acting as if: "Now we're six months into this new war, as if it's completely unconnected." (Yeah) It's just absurd to me.

ANDY Yeah, I know, it's so horrible, isn't it?

JON Well, my last question to you, and I think this is pretty obvious, do you consider the military commissions to be real justice?

ANDY No, absolutely not at all, Jon. They—I mean, I think I've said quite a lot about them in our previous (Yes) questions, but they should never have been resuscitated by Dick Cheney, who seemed to be the main driver of them. They limped on for a few years until the Supreme Court delivered an absolutely devastating ruling on them. And then Bush got Congress to bring them back to life with invented war crimes—the invented war crimes of providing material support to terrorism and conspiracy, which criminal—they're crimes that can be prosecuted in federal court, but they're not war crimes. And people told them, high-level people said: "This isn't going to work." The same when Obama resuscitated them—this isn't going to work. Members of Obama's own administration, high-level lawyers said: "We don't think, particularly providing material support to terrorism is going to stand up on appeal."

And that's what's been happening. I don't know how closely people have been watching, because it's not enough of the mainstream narrative in the United States. But, four of the military commissions, a handful of rulings, have been overturned precisely on this basis. They were told that providing material support to terrorism is not a war crime. It wasn't a war crime when

the legislation was passed. And it isn't a war crime. It's not recognized as one. Congress invented it, essentially. And it's been falling on appeal.

So the whole thing is unraveling, terribly. But, like I say, I don't genuinely think that the majority of Americans have any idea about this. Every now and then, they'll be tiny bits of coverage in the media as another one of these rulings bites the dust. Most recently it was David Hicks. But I don't think people are really seeing the extent to which this entire system has been judged to be a sham. (Well that's, you know--) And every time they have one of those 9/11 pre-trial hearings where some other farce happens—it really is, it's actually embarrassing. I think it should be embarrassing to the American people, Jon.

JON It certainly is to me, but unfortunately, the corporate media in this country does not cover things as they should. (No) Which was one of the reasons I tried to get you on board with saying: "We were lied to about 9/11," because you have a voice and when the corporate media doesn't work, you have to rely on those with a voice to tell people what's going on. And that's what you've done with Guantanamo and I thank you very much for everything you've written over the years. It's been very helpful to me, at least.

ANDY Well thank you.

JON And the military commissions, I just want to say, are a huge slap in the face to the 9/11 Family Members (Yeah, yeah) It's not justice. It's not justice. There can never be real justice at Guantanamo Bay. And I feel so sorry for all of the families and I hope that things change and that we get 9/11 into a real courtroom.

ANDY Yeah, no, absolutely.

JON Is there anything you would like to promote at this time?

ANDY Well, I just hope people have been listening to this. I hope that they have, they're trying to understand all the facts about Guantanamo, not the lies and distortions that they have been told over the years. Obviously, I would very much love people to come to my website <http://www.AndyWorthington.co.uk> where there are thousands of article that I've written over the last eight years about Guantanamo, to join up with the Close Guantanamo campaign—that's <http://www.CloseGuantanamo.org>

that I established a few years ago with my lawyer friend, Tom Wilner, who argued the Guantanamo cases in the Supreme Court.

And my most recently established campaign, which is We Stand with Shaker, for Shaker Aamer, which is spelled Shaker, but Shaker Aamer is the last British resident in Guantanamo. He appeared to be held solely because he is basically a big mouth, been combative. He's resisted the injustice of the War on Terror from the word go, and they're afraid that he'd embarrass them if released. He's been cleared for release in 2007 and in 2009. He's still there. <http://www.WeStandWithShaker.org> it's that website. We've been encouraging people to send in photos of themselves holding up signs that say; I Stand With Shaker. If people want to do that, that would be great.

And it's just, if you get it, if you understand that not only the commissions we were talking about are a betrayal of justice, but that holding people indefinitely without charge or trial is not only fundamentally un-American, it flies in the face of justice—

JON It's inhuman.

ANDY Well, we are in both of our countries, Jon, brought up to believe that we respect the rule of law, and the kind of number one thing that you have to do is that you can't throw people in prison without a trial, unless it's war time and you're holding them officially as soldiers protected by the Geneva Conventions, which isn't what's happening here.

It's a danger for all of us that hey, it's 13 years of alleged Muslim terrorists, but you know, who would it be next? If you allow these people to imprison people without charge or trial, it could be some other group of people next. It's fundamentally wrong and it shouldn't happen.

And, really, although I have researched the stories of these individual people in our countries to be concerned on a human basis of some of the people whose stories I've come across, fundamentally, it isn't just about these individuals—although that is important, because as we've been told that they are not humans, that they should not be thought of as human beings—but it is those principles that are at stake and that's why I'm still here working to stop indefinite detention without charge or trial from carrying on, because it's a threat to everything that we hold dear.

JON Well, I thank you very much—and I just wanted to point out to people with regard to the 9/11 Five, that there is no justice. There can be no justice. I can't say anything more than that—at Guantanamo and that's—I wanted to show people that when we're told that there's justice in Guantanamo Bay that that is a lie. That's one of the lies of 9/11, as far as I'm concerned, But I wanted (Yeah, yeah) people to know that.

All right, Andy, I want to thank you very much for your time tonight. It was a pleasure talking with you.

ANDY Yes, thank you, Jon, yeah.

JON I wish you luck in all your future endeavors.

ANDY Yes, same to you. Thanks.

JON And, keep up the good work, please.

ANDY Okay, Jon. Cheers! Goodnight.

JON All right, take care, Andy.



Chapter/Episode 23 – Senator Bob Graham – March 21, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Senator Bob Graham (GRAHAM)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week we're going to talk about the 28-redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry, the Inquiry itself, Saudi Arabia, the 9/11 Commission, and a multitude of other issues.

Hi, this is Jon and I'm here with Senator Bob Graham. Senator, how are you doing today?

GRAHAM Very well. We're driving from north to south Florida and it's a beautiful day in the Sunshine State.

JON Excellent. Before we begin, I just want to thank your daughter for the help in getting this interview together. Her help was invaluable. I also want to thank Brian McGlinchey of 28pages.org for getting me her contact information. And, I also want to say thank you to you for taking the time today and that it's an honor to have you on my show.

GRAHAM Well, thank you very much. I'm looking forward to this conversation.

JON Excellent. OK, I'm going to read your bio for everyone.

Senator Bob Graham is the former two-term governor of Florida and served for 18 years in the United States Senate. This, combined with 12 years in the Florida legislature, for a total of 38 years of public service. As governor and Senator, Bob Graham was a centrist committed to bringing his colleagues together behind programs that serve the broadest public interest. He was recognized by the people of Florida when he received an 83 percent approval ranking as he concluded eight years as Governor. Bob Graham retired from public service in January 2005, following his Presidential campaign in 2003. He has written four books, including a nonfiction book *Intelligence Matters*, a novel *Keys to the Kingdom*, drawing on his experiences as chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and *America the Owner's Manual: A Guide to Effective Citizenship*, written while he was a senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Since leaving the Senate in 2005, Graham has been chair of the Congressional Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction, a member of the Congressional Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission, and co-chair of the Presidential Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Florida and Harvard Law School, he established the Center for Public Service at the University of Florida to enhance civic engagement and prepare the next generation of public and civic leaders. Graham and the former Adele Khoury have been married for 55 years. Congratulations. They have four daughters and the oldest of which, Gwen Graham, was elected to the U.S. Congress in 2014. Senator Graham has 11 grandchildren.

Congratulations on that, as well. And on that subject, I'd just like to say I recently became an uncle to my little niece Maya who was born on March 11th. So, welcome to the world, Maya.

GRAHAM Congratulations!

JON Thank you very much.

OK, so I'm going to get into the questions. What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

GRAHAM With Porter Goss and Senator Jon Kyl, I had just returned from a trip visiting a number of places identified by the CIA as being hot spots for terrorism. The last of those was Pakistan where we were hosted by the Pakistani central intelligence, which is referred to as ISI. The head of ISI was a General Ahmed. He was particularly gracious. We extended an invitation to him to reciprocate, should he be in Washington. It turned out that he was in Washington on September the 11th 2001. We were having breakfast with Porter Goss, Chair of the House Intelligence Committee's office, talking about motivations behind Al-Qaeda when we got the first notification of an airplane hitting one of the World Trade Centers. A few minutes later, a second airplane hitting the other World Trade Center tower. At that point we knew that it wasn't just coincidental accidents. And, for the first time in many decades, the U.S. Capitol was cleared, and we all sought refuge while the rest of September the 11th was playing out.

JON That's very interesting and it's a little funny to me because I've kind of known your story for several years now on the day of 9/11, but it's very interesting to hear it from your perspective.

What was the first thing that you questioned about the attacks?

GRAHAM Well, I guess the first question was what we were talking about when the attacks were occurring, which was: "What is it that motivates Al-Qaeda to the level and violence of its activities?" General Ahmed, who had had a long experience with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, said that most people live in three phases of life. They have memories of the past, dreams of a future, but their primary concentration is on what's happening today. In the case of Al-Qaeda, the past and the present are irrelevant. The only thing that counts is the future. And, therefore, they are unhinged from the kinds of mores and cultural considerations that operate for most human beings. September the 11th was a tragic example of that philosophy.

JON Right.

I have a quote from an article entitled "Further Delay in U.S. Congressional Investigation into September 11th Attacks" from WSWS.org and it's dated March 6, 2002, and the quote is: "Graham and Goss rebuts calls for an inquiry in the weeks immediately following September 11. Siding with White House suggestions that Congressional hearings into the greatest security failure in U.S. history would detract from the efforts to prevent future terrorist attacks and conduct a war in Afghanistan."

Is this true? Because I could not find any references to substantiate that claim.

GRAHAM Yes, we did not want to take any actions with our inquiry that would have increased the vulnerability of the United States to a second or third attack. The White House requested, therefore, that we defer the initiation of our inquiry until they felt that the potential of a further attack had passed. We agreed to that and used that period in the fall of 2001, to prepare for the inquiry which would begin early in 2002.

JON Now, from what I understand, both Bush and Cheney asked Tom Daschle not to investigate the attacks at all. So, you're saying that in early 2002, when you started—when did the Congressional inquiry start? I'm sorry.

GRAHAM I believe our first hearings were held in February of 2002.

JON OK. So, you're saying that in February 2002, the White House gave the go ahead?

GRAHAM No, we weren't under the direction of the White House, but the White House had made a request that in light of the potential of further attacks and that the people who were involved in trying to ferret that possibility out and respond, if in fact it occurred, were some of the same people that we would want to be involved in our inquiry and that they felt that there could be a conflict having the inquiry going on during that immediate post-9/11 period.

We felt that was a reasonable request. We also recognized that we were going to need some time to put together our staff, begin securing documents, identifying future witnesses. And that the inquiry would not be adversely affected by delaying it until about 2002.

JON OK. I have always found it odd, and several other people have always found it odd, that the administration did not want the Congress to investigate the attacks. If anybody—

GRAHAM On that, the issue of the White House asking Tom Daschle not to initiate the inquiry, I am not aware that that, in fact, occurred, but I can say that Tom Daschle and the other Congressional leaders were very supportive of our inquiry and gave us full assistance throughout.

JON OK, just so everybody knows there's a video of Tom Daschle saying as such on my YouTube channel which is Gold9472.

OK, the next question. Obviously, you are familiar with the story about Randy Glass—I've heard you talk about it before—giving your office a warning in the months prior to 9/11. Could you please tell us about this?

GRAHAM Frankly, I am not aware as of March 2015, about the Randy Glass issue. If it were, in fact, been brought to my attention at the time, apparently, it wasn't considered to be a significant part of our inquiry responsibility.

JON OK, it's just one of those things that people have always questioned and so I wanted to get your point of view on the subject.

OK. Now, could you tell us what the 28-redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry are?

GRAHAM No, because they are classified and therefore (Laughs) we are limited in discussion. What's been publicly said, and I would concur, those—that chapter refers primarily to the issue of who financed 9/11. And it points a very strong finger of suspicion at Saudi Arabia.

JON OK, I'm sorry, I didn't mean for you to tell us what's in it. I just wanted you to tell everybody what they are.

Just so everybody knows, the Joint Congressional Inquiry report was released with 28-redacted pages and, as Senator Graham has just pointed out, some of the information within those pages talks about Saudi support, Saudi Government support I guess, for the hijackers and—

GRAHAM Actually, I might say, that issue goes to one of the remaining areas of lack of consensus and that is, did the 19 hijackers operate alone? Or, did they have support from some external source? The official position of the United States executive, including the intelligence community and the FBI, the White House, is that they acted alone. It is the position of the leadership of both the Congressional inquiry and the 9/11 citizen's commission that it was highly implausible that the 19 hijackers, given their lack of linguistic familiarity and the fact that most of them had never been to the United States before they came for the purpose of 9/11, that they could have carried out such a complex plot over a long period of time, maintaining

their anonymity, being able to practice to the point that they carried out the plot with such devastating effect.

JON From what I've heard, there are more than one country, or there is more than one country listed, within the 28-redacted pages. Can you at least confirm that much or no?

GRAHAM No.

JON OK. My next question, and I have heard you say that the claims regarding then head of the Pakistani ISI, Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed, ordering Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to wire transfer \$100,000 to Mohammed Atta, are unsubstantiated. Many people—

GRAHAM I can say that our inquiry did not reach that conclusion.

JON OK, so you're saying that your inquiry looked into those allegations? Or, no?

GRAHAM They were part of our general inquiry. I'm not saying that we conclusively said that it didn't happen, but we did say we could not, based on the information that we were able to develop, state that Ahmed had been involved in some relationship with the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.

JON Many people were hoping that this would be referenced in the 28-redacted pages, and it sounds like based on what you've said, it's not. As someone who has looked into this issue a lot, I can say that it seems like, based on all the available information that's out there, the likelihood that it did happen—it seems more likely that it did happen than didn't. I can't prove it, unfortunately, but it's one of those things that has been neglected. I have never heard anyone in Government explain why these allegations are incorrect. And the 9/11 Report did not address them, but there was a document found within the—from the 9/11 Commission that said something to the effect that the Pakistani ISI did not send money to Mohammed Atta, but before that sentence and after that sentence there are many redactions and their names are not even mentioned.

So, it's just one of those things. I know the families were very interested in that and so forth.

During the Joint Congressional Inquiry there was a leak about NSA intercepts. Can you tell us about this incident?

GRAHAM I'm not certain what intercepts are being referenced.

JON I think the intercepts were: "Tomorrow is zero hour" and "the match begins tomorrow." They were supposedly intercepted, I think, a day or two before 9/11 and weren't intercepted until a day or two—or translated until a day or two just after 9/11.

GRAHAM The NSA collects, no doubt, thousands of intercepts daily. And there was some evidence that the traffic increased in the days immediately before 9/11. But collecting an intercept that refers to some undefined event that may occur in the near future is not by any means conclusive evidence. What we—our goal, frankly, was to stay on the core issues. There were a lot of interesting, intriguing subplots, but we tried to avoid following those to the detriment of our ability to answer the basic questions.

JON Right. Well, there was an incident where there was a leak. I believe it is in June of 2002, and I believe that it was found that it was Richard Shelby that actually leaked this. And I thought I read a quote from you from 2007, saying that it was an attempt by Dick Cheney and the White House to undermine the inquiry to, I think maybe you said, to shut it down or try and shut it down, or something to that effect.

GRAHAM When you said that "it was," what is the "it" in that sentence?

JON The leak. There was a leak in June of 2002, from the Joint Congressional Inquiry of two NSA intercepts and it was found—

GRAHAM There was no question Vice President Cheney was closely monitoring what we were doing and was not happy that we were having the inquiry at all. And he did at one point over an issue similar to the one you have just discussed—I'm not certain if it was precisely that—indicate that his disapproval of what was going on and that if that continued, that the administration might stop its assistance to the inquiry. We did not change our actions or our plan of inquiry. The administration, frankly, was off and on in terms of its level of support. There were some areas where it was forthcoming. There were other areas where it was very closed. And the fact that the 28 pages were censured is an example of that non-cooperation.

JON Another example would be the FBI trying to prevent or preventing Abdussattar Shaikh from testifying before the Joint Congressional Inquiry. Correct?

GRAHAM Yes, that was the man who in San Diego, who had at one in the same time been a paid agent of the FBI with the mission of monitoring particularly Saudi students in the southern California area to determine if any of them were engaged in any plot that might lead to future terrorism. While he had that assignment, he also opened his home to tenants, primarily young Saudi males, and two of his tenants ended up being two of the hijackers. So, he had the anomalous situation of a paid FBI agent, being the landlord of two of the future hijackers. We very much wanted to talk to that man. We thought he had a peculiar access to the hijackers and information on the actions of the FBI. But the FBI went to great lengths, including refusing to serve a subpoena, which it alone could serve because at that point the man was in protective custody, and they were the only entity who knew of where he was and could provide access to it. That was a low point of our inquiry.

JON Right. Why do you think the Bush and Obama administrations would have an interest in protecting elements within Saudi Arabia?

GRAHAM That is another of the unanswered questions of 9/11. Why has the United States Government gone to such lengths to cover up the involvement with Saudi Arabia? You can speculate that it may have to do with the special relationship that has existed between the United States and Saudi Arabia since World War II, which Saudi Arabia has committed to provide us a reliable source of petroleum and we have committed to provide them a defense umbrella.

It may have to do with the volatile situation in the Middle East in which Saudi Arabia at least has presented itself as being a reliable U.S. ally. In the Bush administration, it may have had ties to the long relationship between the House of Saud and the Bush family.

Which are—or what other rationale there may have been for the cover up it has, in my opinion, denied the American people the full truth of one of the most horrific events in modern American history, has denied justice to the families who suffered grievous losses during 9/11, and has adversely affected our national security by giving to Saudi Arabia the not unreasonable conclusion that Saudi Arabia is immune from any sanction for its actions and, therefore, can continue to do the things that it has been

doing, which are continuing to support Al-Qaeda and to be a significant factor in the formation and resources made available to ISIS.

JON Well, from what I've read, and I think I've read an article from you that actually mentioned that Bandar is mentioned within the 28-redacted pages. There's an allegation that the wife of Prince Bandar gave money to two of the hijackers. As we all know, the Bush family has very close ties to Prince Bandar (Right), that could be a reason.

GRAHAM That is—that's not a 28-page issue. That has been made public. What transpired is there was a Saudi agent who had been assigned to Southern California. His name was Bayoumi. His job was to monitor Saudi students to assure that they were not plotting some activities adverse to the interests of the Royal Family.

When two of the hijackers came to San Diego, at Bayoumi's request, Bayoumi's income suddenly went up, and one of the sources of that increase in his income were payments that were being made from a charity administered by the wife of the Saudi ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar, allegedly for assistance to Saudis who had a medical problem, or for some other reason were in distress and needed assistance. Money that, supposedly, was going for that purpose, suddenly ended up in the bank account of Bayoumi's wife with the implication that Bayoumi and his wife had become the conduit for funds to those two hijackers while they were living in San Diego.

JON So, you're saying that the Bandar issue is not within the 28-redacted pages.

GRAHAM I can't say the I—I can just say that the instance that you cited relative to Bandar's wife and the payments that ended up under the control of Bayoumi's wife. That is, that is a known set of facts. In fact, it's included in my book *Intelligence Matters*.

JON Right, I remember. Now, isn't it true that a lot of people in this country benefit from Saudi Arabian money?

GRAHAM Well, I don't—

JON Like, for instance, there was a recent sale of \$63 billion worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia. And the Bush family as an example.

GRAHAM All right, I mean, the answer to your question is Saudi Arabia is a very wealthy country and has many dealings with the United States Government under that commitment that we made back during the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt. We made commitments to provide them with security against external attack. So, that's not a new departure.

The situation that I referred to relates specifically to support for two of the 19 hijackers, which came through a charity administered by Mrs. Bandar to Mrs. Bayoumi and then with the inference that she was a pass-through to get the money to the two hijackers.

JON OK, this is a general question. In my opinion, covering up for anyone involved in the murder of 2,976 people is a crime and people should be held accountable for it. Do you agree with that assessment?

GRAHAM Well, I happen to be a lawyer, but a non-practicing lawyer. I would suggest you might ask that question of the current or incoming attorney general. That would be at that level that a decision as to the criminal culpability of people who have covered up. Whether they are criminally responsible or not, I'll leave to others, but I will state, based on what I know, that they have dis-served the United States by denying us, the American people, the ability to understand and, therefore, fully participate in decisions evolving out of 9/11. They have denied the families of those almost 3,000 Americans who were killed on September 11 the ability to receive any compensation from co-conspirators, and the American national security has been weakened by the failure to let the American people and the world know what Saudi Arabia did around 9/11 and subsequent to 9/11.

JON Well, one of the reasons that people are fighting for the release of the 28-redacted pages is so that the families can use them in a court of law. Now, one of the problems with that, and I'm going to get into that, there's a problem with that and I'm going to get into that after the next question.

What is your opinion on how individuals like FBI agent Robert Wright were blocked from doing investigations into Saudi Arabia prior to 9/11? And this seems to have been a theme within the different alphabet agencies.

GRAHAM Yeah, the attention recently has been on the 28 pages. They are very dramatic, tangible, and now, some 13 years which they have been withheld is a particularly egregious act, but the 28 pages are by no means the totality of the instances in which Saudi Arabia acts have been covered up by U.S.

officials. And, so the situation that you cite, I will have to say I'm not intimately familiar with that, but that would be another example of the U.S. deference to Saudi Arabia to the disadvantage of the American people.

JON Well, just so everyone knows, FBI Agent Robert Wright started an investigation in the 90s and he called it Vulgar Betrayal. He investigated people like Yasin al Qadi, who says that he is a friend of Dick Cheney's, but whatever. Anyway, he was blocked and shut down from doing his job. And that happened a lot throughout the 90s. Like, George Tenet was very good friends with Prince Bandar, and George Tenet would have meetings with Prince Bandar that his subordinates weren't aware of. They didn't know what they talked about. And, in fact, they were told to kind of back off of the Saudis with regard to investigating terrorism, and so on and so forth. So, there was a common theme. It happened prior to 9/11 and it also happened after 9/11. This covering up for Saudi Arabia.

GRAHAM If I could just give another instance (Sure!), which is fairly recently. Three of the hijackers did their basic flight training near Sarasota Florida. There were allegations by, among others, the people in the neighborhood and people who were involved in the security for this community that those three hijackers, including Atta incidentally, had a continuing and close relationship with a prominent Saudi family living in the Sarasota community.

A few days before 9/11, the Saudi family left their Sarasota home in what was referred to as urgent conditions, i.e. new car in the front parking lot, food on the table, clothes in the washer, and returned to Saudi Arabia. Again, the inference is that someone tipped them off as to what was about to happen. The FBI has gone to extreme lengths to conceal what they should have learned about the relationship between the hijackers and the prominent family. The FBI initially said they had no information about that case.

During a Freedom of Information Act hearing before a federal judge they finally, months later, admitted that they had over 80,000 pages of materials relating to the Sarasota investigation, which the judge demanded be brought to his office, and for the last several months he has been reviewing those pages to make a determination as to which deserve to be released to the American people.

JON Now, just so everybody knows the *Florida Bulldog*, I believe, is the one that's leading the charge for this FOIA request, correct?

GRAHAM A very outstanding investigative journalist, Dan Christiansen, has—he wrote the first story around the time of the 10th Anniversary of 9/11 and has been dogged—no pun intended—in his efforts since that time.

JON Right. That's a very important story. I highly recommend that people go to the *Florida Bulldog*, which was previously known as the *Broward Bulldog*. And go read the stories of Dan Christensen about this issue.

Now, it has been reported that when Bush came into office one of the first things he did was to tell the different alphabet agencies to "back off" the Saudis and the Bin Ladens. That under the Bill Clinton administration it was "slow go," but under Bush it was "no go." In your opinion, do you think this could have contributed to the success of the 9/11 attacks?

GRAHAM Well, if that was—if that's true, and if that directive resulted in less than aggressive pursuit of the many leads that, had they been followed, would have resulted in blowing up a plot before the plot blew up America, it would be a very serious charge.

JON Well, I remember that FBI agent John O'Neill was complaining a lot about the obstructionism. He called it the Saudi obstructionism under the Bush administration. And, unfortunately, he resigned from the FBI, went to work as security for the World Trade Center, and died on 9/11.

GRAHAM I mean there's no question that the Bush administration covered up for the Saudis (Right), whether the President himself or someone on his behalf told the alphabet—intelligence community agencies that they should go lax on the Saudis, I don't know, but their actions were certainly consistent with such a directive.

JON OK. Now, we spoke about how the families want the 28-redacted pages released so they can use them in a court of law. The next question is going to be information intensive. So, let me just read the question.

The 9/11 Commission essentially absolved the Government of Saudi Arabia and individuals like Princess Haifa with regard to the 9/11 attacks. They said they looked into the allegations of the 28-redacted pages and found that they were lacking. What is your opinion of this?

GRAHAM That's a question that you should be asking of someone who was a part of the Citizens 9/11 Commission. Their wording of that statement about the Saudis was very artful parsing of phrases and then, apparently, in a footnote they—the 9/11 Commission—somewhat reversed itself and said nothing else that said elsewhere should be interpreted as giving Saudi Arabia absolution from responsibility for 9/11. (Well, okay—) So, that has somewhat muddled the issue. And my position has been let's let the 28 pages be released and then we will have a real debate about whether the evidence that supports what is in those 28 pages is conclusive.

The interesting thing to me is that our final report was well over 800 pages, so the 28 pages were just a relatively small part of the whole. And there's been, to my knowledge, no questions raised that the balance of the report that has been made public was less than a full, impartial professional investigation and well-formed conclusions. So, why would the 28 pages which—I don't think the 28 pages were withheld because somebody thought that they were not fully substantiated. I think they were withheld because somebody—then and now—doesn't want those facts to be made broadly available.

JON OK, now, what I'm going to do—and the reason that it's a problem is because the Saudis are pointing to the 9/11 Commission in defense of what's supposedly in the 28 redacted pages. Now, there is a sentence within the 9/11 Report that does absolve the Government of Saudi Arabia and there was also a monograph that was released on terrorist financing and there's a quote in that monograph and it says.

"Despite persistent public speculation there is no evidence that the hijackers who initially settled in San Diego, Mihdhar and Hazmi, received funding from Saudi citizens, Omar al Bayoumi and Osama Bassnan, or that Saudi Princess Haifa al Faisal provided funds to the hijackers either directly or indirectly."

Now, would—do you have a response to that or—

GRAHAM Well, we found to the contrary. We found that there was the passage of funds that were allegedly for charitable purposes to Mrs. Bayoumi without any pretense of it being for a charitable purpose. But heavy inference that it was given the timing of the sudden increase in Mrs. Bayoumi's monthly

income that it was not for her purposes, that it was to assist the hijackers. There also was the case of Mr. Bayoumi, who was an employee of a Saudi company in a position that was referred to as a ghost, i.e. he was on the payroll, but he never showed up for work. And in the same bus that the two hijackers came to San Diego, Bayoumi's allowances that he received as part of his compensation increased by approximately eight times. Again, raising the inference that he was a conduit of these additional funds to support the hijackers in San Diego.

JON Well, let me explain—are you familiar with the author Phil Shenon?

GRAHAM Yes, I know, I mean, I know of Mr. Shenon.

JON He wrote a book and in that book he said that Philip Zelikow, who is the Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission who, essentially, had more sway than any of the 9/11 Commissioners as far as who would be questioned, what questions would be asked, and so on and so forth. He blocked half of the Saudi investigative requests during the time of the 9/11 Commission. He fired Dana Lesemann (RIP) who worked on the Joint Congressional Inquiry and helped to author the 28-redacted pages, when she tried to go through a back channel to gain access to those 28-redacted pages, because Philip Zelikow was making it difficult for her to get to them.

Late in the 9/11 Commission, Philip Zelikow and Dietrich Snell took part in a "late night editing session" to remove Saudi support for the hijackers from the 9/11 Report and relegated them to footnotes in the back of the book against the wishes of the staffers who worked on this. Do you have anything to say about that?

GRAHAM I have read that. Mr. Gold, I'm trying to respond to questions from what I know and indicate when I am just a reader of what third parties have said. What I know is written in the book *Intelligence Matters* and in the novel *Keys to the Kingdom*. I have no inside knowledge of what happened in the Citizens 9/11 Commission and have a high regard for the members of that commission. We just, apparently, came to a significantly different conclusion as to the financial support that Saudi Arabia provided before and immediately during the 9/11 tragedy.

JON OK. Many people believe that the likes of Philip Zelikow and Dietrich Snell should be held accountable for things that they did during the time of the 9/11 Commission. So that's why I brought that up.

There was a family member who wanted me to ask you this question. Are there any valid reasons anymore like protecting sources and methods to keep the 28-redacted pages redacted?

GRAHAM No. And there were no valid reasons at the time they were initially redacted. Both Senator Richard Shelby, Republican of Alabama, and myself, Democrat from Florida, who had been directly involved in the preparation of the 28 pages, said publicly at the time that we did not believe there was any reason that those pages should have been withheld. And what was true in the summer of 2003, when it was announced that they were going to be withheld, continues to be true in the spring of 2015.

JON Well, then they should be released as far as I'm concerned. And, just so you know, with regard to the 9/11 Commission, the National Archives has only released about 35 percent of the documents from the 9/11 Commission and a lot of the documents that they have released are greatly redacted. So, we're still fighting for that information as well.

GRAHAM: And that surprises me because I have been told, and I have not independently confirmed this, that the 9/11 Commission, the citizens commission, that its materials have all gone to the archives, have been digitized, and are available on the Internet. This is the first time I had heard that that was not the case.

JON No, that's not the case. And, as a matter of fact, Prince Bandar—there's something called a memoranda for the record and it's basically a description of the interviews that took place for different witnesses during the time of the 9/11 Commission. Prince Bandar's memoranda for the record is still classified. And there are many instances like that.

Now, my feelings have always been that an individual—

GRAHAM Let me—now that you phrased it the way you did, I would—I'm not surprised that there are parts of the 9/11 Commission, which are in the National Archives, that have continued to be classified, but I believe the totality of what they accumulated is in the National Archives, some of which is classified. The rest is available to the public. The report of the Congressional inquiry has not been delivered to the National Archives and is being held by the Senate as the custodian of those documents.

JON Well, okay. From what I understand, several of the documents have yet to be released. I can't name what those specific documents are, but I know that there are some that still need to be released.

Now, one thing I forgot to mention, when Bush and Cheney testified before the 9/11 Commission—not under oath, with no transcripts, and all that stuff—according to John Lehman, he said that during their meeting with Bush and Cheney he asked George Bush, specifically, about the allegations of Princess Haifa and Bush "dodged the questions." [Laughs] Do you have anything to say about that?

GRAHAM No, again, I'm—I feel pretty confident and obligated to say what I know the truth to be or and indicate when I think I know what the truth is, but I'm not going to get involved in commenting on matters of which I have no personal knowledge.

JON Okay. My last question—actually, there are two more questions. My feelings have always been that individuals responsible for 9/11 need to be held accountable. Not everyone that believes in a certain ideology, religion, or everyone from a particular country—there's actually a term for doing that, and it's called collective punishment. And it's a war crime and it's against the Geneva Conventions. Do you agree with that assessment? Or, do you think that the U.S. should do something like go to war with Saudi Arabia?

GRAHAM No, I don't think we should go to war with Saudi Arabia, but I think we should demand some appropriate recognition by Saudi Arabia of what, in fact, it did and compensation to Americans who suffered as a result of the Saudi acts.

There's some interesting parallels here. The Lockerbie case of, I guess, the late 1980s, where Libya was alleged to have been involved in the bombing that resulted in the murder of the passengers and crew on that Pan Am flight. Eventually, after denying responsibility, finally accepted it and made compensation.

Going all the way back to the Civil War, the British who had indicated they were going to be neutral, but in fact assisted the Confederacy in building naval ships after the war at the insistence of the U.S. Government, accepted responsibility and, again, paid compensation.

So, there are precedents when a foreign Government is a co-conspirator in actions against the United States and its people. Saudi Arabia should similarly be challenged to accept its responsibility and compensate.

JON I do agree wholeheartedly with what you said. I also believe that the United States needs to take responsibility for their actions over the years as far as enabling and/or collaborating with the Saudis.

Is there anything--

GRAHAM That's again, I mean, I think the place where that responsibility should lay is with the American people in the political process. If they believe that there were individuals who acted disingenuously to the detriment of the American people, they should be punished politically. Now, because this has gone on so long, many of the people who had—the American people had full information might have been the subjects of that punishment, have left the scene and no longer are susceptible to things like being voted out of office, or being impeached, or other sanctions that would be available. That's just another part of the lack of justice that has come from this cover-up of Saudi involvement.

JON Right, I agree. And, you know, unfortunately, with regard to 9/11 there are a number of different cover-ups and there needs to be—there's been a great lack of accountability in Government. And as we've learned over the last 14 years, a Government that is not accountable is a very dangerous Government.

GRAHAM And that's what our wise forefathers recognized from their experience with King George III and, therefore, our Government was set up with checks and balances so that, ideally, no one individual or branch of Government could become oppressive. We've seen some breakdowns in that system. In the case of 9/11 and specifically the U.S. Saudi involvement in 9/11.

JON Is there anything that you would like to promote at this time, like JASTA and so forth?

GRAHAM Yes. The families of the victims of 9/11 have been attempting for several years to seek justice in the federal courts through litigation, which would essentially name the Saudi Government and various Saudi entities as being co-conspirators. They have been dismissed under this doctrine of sovereign immunity that says you cannot sue the head of another state. The federal

courts have now re-interpreted that doctrine in the context of 9/11 and have said that it is inept in applicable or at least does not represent the blanket shield that it has been thus far.

So, the litigants are back at it. Their case would be more easily heard and disposed of if the Congress were to bring greater clarity to the rules relating to citizen's suits against foreign Governments, alleged involvement in terrorism. The U.S. Senate passed such a bill at the end of the last session. I believe they passed it unanimously. But it did not, was not taken up in the House, so the whole process is now starting again in this Congress, and I hope that before the end of 2016, that the Congress will have found this to be an area in which there can be bipartisan agreement. Let's make it fair and equitable for Americans who have been injured by the complicity of foreign Governments and terrorist action to get some recompense for their grievous losses.

JON Right, absolutely. Also, H.Res.14, now, it's called. We need to promote that, which is—could you explain that to us?

GRAHAM Is that the resolution asking the President to release the 28 pages?

JON Correct.

GRAHAM Yes. Several members of the House—I think now it's up to 20 or 30—have come together in a bipartisan spirit behind their resolution to request the President to release the 28 pages. I'm hopeful that that resolution will pass and pass expeditiously. Again, I see no reason why this shouldn't be the basis of strong bipartisan agreement and bring this thing directly before the President, who is the person who can make the decision to let the American people see what their Government and other Governments did during the period before 9/11 and what has transpired since then, and the effort to keep to keep that information away from the American people.

JON Right. The H.Res 14—

GRAHAM —if I could, to your audience, that they could directly participate in this by writing a letter, or sending an e-mail, or placing a call to their Congressmen and Senators in support of the Congressional expression of its opinion that the President should release this information to the public.

JON Well, Obama told two family members, Kristen Breitweiser and Bill Doyle, that he would release these pages and they haven't heard from them. So, hopefully—

GRAHAM Well, I was just going to say there are a number of arrows pointed at this target of release, this Congressional action is one, the President has asked the head of the intelligence community, General Clapper, to do a review of the 28 pages and recommend whether he thinks they should be released. There's a separate administrative process underway as it relates to the materials coming out of the Sarasota case.

So, there are a number of initiatives which have the potential of breaking this log jam and allowing the American people to better understand what happened and what their Government has done in their name.

JON Absolutely. I would just like to promote 28pages.org, which has a number of helpful tools to send letters to your Representatives with regard to H.Res. 14 and so forth.

Senator Graham, I want to thank you very much for your time today. It's been a privilege to talk with you.

GRAHAM Well, Mr. Gold, we've not had the opportunity to meet, but I know you have a reputation of being a very serious scholar and student of 9/11 events and, particularly, this issue of a Government cover-up, and the questions that you've asked today indicate that that reputation is well deserved. So, I appreciate the chance to have participated in this discussion with you.

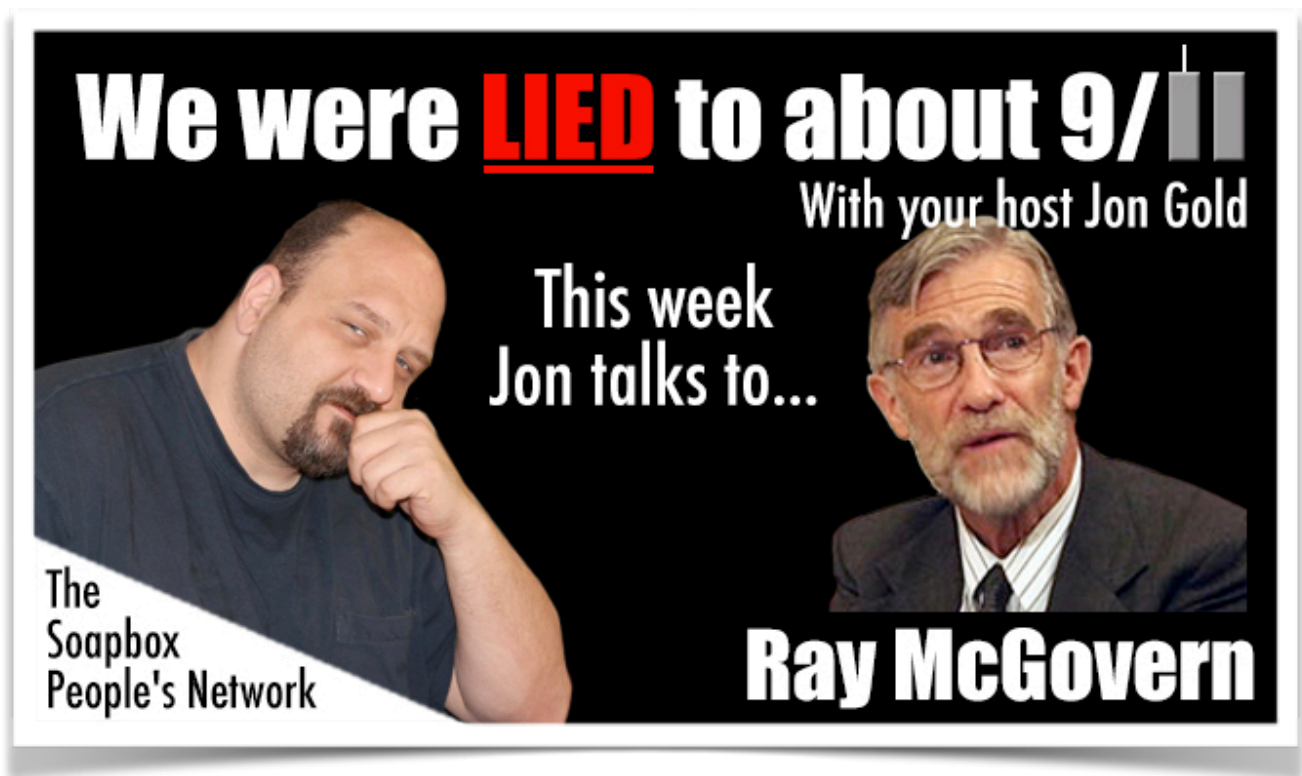
JON Well, thank you very much, sir. And I hope you have a pleasant rest of the day in Florida and enjoy all those grandchildren that you got.

GRAHAM [Laughs] Thank you. Thank you very much. I will.

JON All right, sir. Have a good day.

GRAHAM Okay, good-bye, same to you.

JON Bye, bye.



Chapter/Episode 24 – Ray McGovern – March 24, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Ray McGovern (RAY)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network.

This week, we're going to talk about some of the different indications that our Government was WELL AWARE that the attacks were coming.

Hi, this is Jon and I'm here with Ray McGovern. Ray, how are you doing today?

RAY I'm doing fine, Jon. How are you?

JON I'm doing well. Okay. What I'm going to do is I'm going to read your bio for everyone. This is kind of lengthy, so bare with me.

Ray McGovern leads the "Speaking Truth to Power" section of Tell the Word, an expression of the ecumenical Church of the Saviour in inner-city

Washington. A former co-director of the Servant Leadership School (1998-2004), he has been teaching there for 15 years.

Ray came from his native New York to Washington in the early Sixties as an Army infantry/intelligence officer and then served as a CIA analyst from the administration of John F. Kennedy to that of George H. W. Bush. Ray's duties included chairing National Intelligence Estimates and preparing the President's Daily Brief, which he briefed one-on-one to President Ronald Reagan's most senior national security advisers from 1981 to 1985.

In January 2003, Ray helped create Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) to expose the way intelligence was being falsified to "justify" war on Iraq. On the afternoon of the day (Feb. 5, 2003) Secretary of State Colin Powell misled the UN Security Council on Iraq, VIPS sent a blunt memorandum to President George W. Bush, in which VIPS gave Powell a C minus for content. They ended the memo with this:

"No one has a corner on the truth; nor do we harbor illusions that our analysis is irrefutable or undeniable [as Powell had claimed]. But after watching Secretary Powell today, we are convinced that you would be well served if you widened the discussion beyond ... the circle of those advisers clearly bent on a war for which we see no compelling reason and from which we believe the unintended consequences are likely to be catastrophic."

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Jay Rockefeller, after a five-year study by his committee, described the intelligence used to "justify" war on Iraq as "unsubstantiated, contradicted, or even non-existent." In other words, it was not mistaken; it was fraudulent.

As an act of conscience, on March 2, 2006 Ray returned the Intelligence Commendation Medallion given him at retirement for "especially meritorious service," explaining, "I do not want to be associated, however remotely, with an agency engaged in torture." He returned it to Rep. Peter Hoekstra (R, Michigan), then-Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee.

Hoekstra added to the Intelligence Authorization Act for FY'07 (HR5020) a provision enabling the Government to strip intelligence veterans of their Government pensions. HR5020 passed the full House, but Congress opted instead for a continuing resolution. Thus, Ray was spared from having to

go back to driving part-time for Red Top Cab.

On the early afternoon of May 4, 2006, in Atlanta, Ray confronted Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on live TV with pointed questions like: "Why did you lie to get us into a war that was not necessary and that has caused these kinds of casualties?" (JON: Wow, I've never read that before. It was an honor to quote you on that, laughs)

The impromptu, four-minute mini-debate that followed is still receiving hits on YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1FTmuhynaw> Accused by TV pundits that evening of "following the Secretary of Defense all the way down to Atlanta," Ray explained that he had gotten to Atlanta first - to receive, that same evening, the ACLU's National Civil Liberties Award (won the previous year by Coretta Scott King).

Ray's opinion pieces have appeared in many leading newspapers here and abroad. His Web site writings are usually posted first on consortiumnews.com as well as here on raymcgovern.com, and they are usually then cross-posted widely on other Web sites.

Ray still serves on the Steering Group of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity; VIPS' 26 corporate issuances are posted on warisacrime.org/vips.

He has debated twice at the Oxford Forum, most recently in Jan. 2013, when he chose to take a lighter tone in trying to explain why it is still possible to dream the American dream. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w79XPllwdvY>

Ray has appeared on The Newshour, C-Span's Washington Journal, CNN, Aljazeera, RT, PressTV and numerous other TV & radio programs and documentaries. (His favorite gig was debating former CIA Director James Woolsey on Charlie Rose on Aug. 20, 2004) Ray has also addressed a wide variety of audiences in the U.S. and abroad.

He studied theology and philosophy (as well as his major, Russian) at Fordham University, from which he holds two degrees. He also holds a Certificate in Theological Studies from Georgetown University and is a graduate of Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program.

A Catholic, Ray has been worshipping for over a decade with the

ecumenical Church of the Saviour. He has been invited to lecture at various interfaith and ecumenical events around the U.S., and has preached at a number of Christian churches and Jewish synagogues.

Ray is particularly fond of the "substitute teaching" he has been invited to do at universities and colleges. At Georgetown University, though, he quickly wore out his welcome when he stood silently with his back turned toward then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. He was seized and badly beaten while Secretary Clinton spoke eloquently about the need for freedom of expression—in Iran.

So, that's Ray's bio. I remember all of that stuff and cheering you on and hoping you were OKAY when you were beaten up and all of that stuff. I have a little personal story to tell about Ray.

On September 11, 2004, in Washington D.C. Pacifica Radio held what was called the 9/11 People's Commission and at that that commission, I was fortunate enough to get the first question, and I directed it towards Ray. And my question had to do with the CIA's involvement in the drug trade. I talked a little bit about peak oil or the idea of peak oil, and then I finally asked Ray what would the motivations be for the administration, the Bush administration, to "allow" the attacks to happen? And what Ray said to me, stayed with me for years. It was a clever acronym, a clever formula, that seemed to be right but dead on. And what he said to me was he had an acronym for oil. "O" for oil, "I" for the protection of Israel and "L" for the logistical placement of bases in that region for future use. And Ray has been extremely influential to me over the years. He's a hero of mine and it's an honor to have him on the show today.

So, are you ready to get started?

RAY All set.

JON All right. Excellent. The first question is what was the day of 9/11 like for you?

RAY Well, I was in my office working away there and across the hall there was a woman with a radio on very loud. And about 9 o'clock I went into to her office and said, "You know, I'm trying to concentrate. Will you turn that thing down?" [Laughs] That's the way I learned what was going on.

So, what I did is what I normally do when something horrible is happening and I can't do anything about it at the time. I went back and finished my work and went home. After all the other people in Washington had evacuated and got home in good shape and then started to think about the implications of what had just happened. So, in a shorthand that's what I remember of 9/11.

JON Now, what was the first thing that you questioned about the 9/11 attacks?

RAY Well, I was—

JON You know, besides—what would happen from that point?

RAY Well, as the days went on it was very clear that President Bush, given the opportunity to choose between two courses of action, one in the best traditions of our country, and the other appealing to the worst instincts of all humans. He chose revenge. His Dad, a week later, said that his son George had read the Bible through completely twice, twice what George H.W. Bush said. Well, I don't know. I think he missed a lot of it, actually, or maybe he speed read through or maybe he was doing something else while he was supposed to be reading the Bible. But, it doesn't say vengeance is mine says Bush and Cheney. It says vengeance is mine says the Lord. Bush and Cheney decided to use this in the most—well, the adjectives and adverbs are coming to my mind but they're not good for taping on radio. And the most unsavory way that George Bush and Dick Cheney lead the country to believe that this was a hostile attack from an entity upon which we needed to make war. This is the first time in history that I have heard of a war against a concept namely terrorism and not a country or movement or something like that. So, long story short, I began to fear that the worst would happen. And, indeed, I didn't know the half of it.

JON Well, it's interesting that you talk about the concept of terrorism, having a war against that. When the FBI sets up people through entrapment to create terrorists and then stop their own plots or when the United States collaborates with Al-Qaeda linked groups in countries like Libya and wherever else, I often ask myself how can we have a war on terror if we're supporting terrorists here or creating terrorists there? So that's interesting.

RAY Well Jon, you have to realize that there are good terrorists and there are bad terrorists—we're only against the bad terrorists, so. (Laughs) When I was asked, well, it's a little aside, but it's very relevant. The head of the

operations department of the CIA was invited to give a major lecture at my alma mater Fordham. And he was [Laughs]—he came in and he said: "Hi Ray, I'm going to mention you together with Bill Casey and John Brennan who are both alumni."

I said: "Please, please. [Laughs] Thank you very much but don't mention me in the same sentence as those two guys, Mike." (Laughs) His name was Mike Sulik and he's a decent, nice guy, but in charge of all the terrorism—the good-guy terrorism, the torture and kidnapping, the black sites. So, he's up there, and to make a long story short, he's being lionized by everybody including the Republican Club that invited him. And then an innocent question came from a graduate student—and it seemed innocent at the time so the people who were vetting the questions let it through—and they said: Well, here's a question from a graduate student.

"Dr. Sulik, how do you define terrorism?" And, I'll tell you, I was sitting in the fourth row—you know the proverbial deer who's caught in the headlights? (Laughs) Quite embarrassing and he said: "Well, Ray McGovern is here and he worked in analysis, so maybe he can answer that question." (Right) I said, "thank you Jesus, thank you!" So, I walked up to the podium, and I said "Well, you have to understand, there are good terrorists, there are bad terrorists. The good ones are the ones doing terrorism in places like Nicaragua or wherever we want to overthrow Governments or push drugs, or whatever. Those are the good ones. The bad ones are the ones that take exception to you're invading their country, setting up regimes that oppress them, and those are the bad terrorists. So, just kind of realize that it's not really simple. There are good terrorists and bad ones." [Laughter]

So, I ended up with the question. I said: Well, Mike—his name was Mike Sulik. I said: "Mike, how do you justify—how do you square the concept of the sanctity of life? Which we Catholics are really good at for like the first nine months. But then, kind of don't pay much attention to young boys and then when they become old boys, we send them off to war. How do you justify the sanctity of life with killing a whole bunch of people who don't look like us?"

The head of the student council says: "Dr. Sulik, you don't have to answer that, you don't have to answer that." I said: "Come on, he's a big boy! He should know the answer to that." But, Dr. Sulik hid in the shadows until the next softball question was given.

So, all I'm saying here is that, state-sponsored terror—think drones. Think drones that have killed thousands of people, including of course, innocent people. And in a sort of "clean" way where then you don't have to imprison them. Then you don't have to take them to Guantanamo. Think all those kinds of things, torture, imprisonment, and black prisons and, the whole schmeer—kidnapping. That's terrorism done by us, so it's good terrorism. We don't call it terrorism. The only terrorism happens when we kill civilians in Afghanistan let's say, and their extended family, all 30 of them, show up at the next Al-Qaeda recruiting station and pledge to do jihad to get vengeance on those who killed their relatives, so.

It's, you know, it's almost—it's not funny. It's not funny at all.

JON No, it's not.

RAY But that's the real explanation of terrorism—the War on Terrorism.

JON Do you remember the many statements made by officials in the days, months, and years after 9/11, indicating that there were no warnings or indications that an attack like 9/11 was coming?

RAY Well, those are lies. There were many warnings. The President himself was warned on the 6th of August that Al-Qaeda was determined to strike within the U.S. Condoleezza Rice lied about that. George Bush, George W. Bush, was said to have dismissed the PDB. That's to the President's daily brief briefer that morning by saying: "Yeah, all right, now you've covered your ass. Right. OKAY." And then he went off fishing, I think, or he went off to see some baseball game, or something. On August 6, 2001—so what's that? That's about five weeks before 9/11. There was that.

And, there were things that went on during that August period that have been veiled or have been kept from the American people.

During the 9/11 Commission proceedings, when George Tenet, the head of the CIA, was put on the—sworn under oath—in his testimony, his sworn testimony—who was it? The Congressman from Indiana. He said: "Director Tenet, how many times did you speak with the President during August?" He said: "I didn't speak to him at all." And the member of the 9/11 Commission, previous Congress person, said...

JON Timothy Roemer, I believe you're talking about.

RAY Yes, it was Tim Roemer, yeah. He says: "Well, now, are telling me that you didn't by telephone, you didn't talk to the President at all during the month of August?" And Tenet said: "No, sir, not all. I mean, he was on vacation there in Crawford and, you know, I took a little bit of annual leave too. It was August." Well, guess what? Tenet was lying through his teeth. He flew down to see the President in Crawford—not once, as most people kind of know, but twice during August—and then he briefed him in Washington again on the last day of August, the 31st.

Now, after the TV cameras went home and the 9/11 Commission shut down for the day, Bill Harlow who happens to be Tenet's sort of propagandist, he called the commission staff and goes: "Oh, I'm sorry, my boss Tenet misspoke." And, even then, Harlow only admitted to that first visit to Crawford and Bush, which ironically, Tenet writes up in his memoirs: "Oh, it was just fantastic. The President was so cordial. He drove me around in his jeep, and there were flotsam and jetsam there that I've never seen in Queens. It was just great." That was August 17th. Now, guess what? He went back again on August 24th. Now, how did he explain August 17th? Well, he said: "I wanted to follow up on that warning that we'd given the President on the 6th in the President's daily brief about Al-Qaeda determined to strike in the U.S. I just wanted to make sure he knew that." Well, why did he go on the 24th? Why does nobody else know that he went on the 24th? How did I find out he went on the 24th?

Well, as usual, I scour the media and the blogs and it wasn't that I came upon this myself, but someone else pointed out that there was a White House press release quoting President Bush to the effect that Tenet had been there on the 24th as well.

Now, it's really funny that under sworn testimony before the 9/11 Commission that Tenet could have forgotten that first visit, which he bragged about so much in his memoir, but then the second—well, how do you explain the second? Well, the second came right after they found out that Moussaoui—now, he was the terrorist, he was the hijacker, presumed hijacker, that was training to fly big Boeings, and not terribly concerned about learning to takeoff or to land, actually, just to steer them. [Laughs] Was that suspicious? Yeah, it was so suspicious that the people at the training center very discreetly told the FBI office there in Minneapolis.

And, finally, they wrapped up Moussaoui on charges unrelated because the only charges they had were Al-Qaeda.

Okay, now, why do I mention that? Well, because on the 23rd of August—so, one day before Tenet hustled back down to Crawford—Tenet was given an alarming briefing focusing on Moussaoui who had been in court. Okay? And the title of the briefing was "Islamic extremists learn to fly." Tenet was told that Moussaoui was trained to fly a 747 and had paid for the training in cash.

Now [Laughs], what did he do? Well, now, he checked out to see if Moussaoui was connected with any terrorist groups and that the word came in: "Yep, he had ties with those groups there in Chechnya. He was a terrorist pure and simple." Now, what happened. Well, Tenet went down, told Bush about this, presumably—I don't have any proof that he did, but here he goes and stayed there on a secret flight, right? So, what happened? You know—what's that?

JON I was going to say that, according to the official sources or whatever he did not tell Bush about Moussaoui, but we don't know that.

RAY Well, yeah, I guess that's why I said that I don't have any specific information as to why he went down to Crawford. But what we know—and this is good enough for an intelligence analyst, and once one, always one, I suppose—what we know is that he'd been there on the 17th. He was following up on that PDB briefing. And why would he go back a week later on a secret mission he never mentioned. Why would he go back the day after he learned that Moussaoui (Right) was tied to terrorism?

So, I think that's a good inference that he went when he heard the information that Moussaoui was tied to terrorism. And this was important because then they could have wrapped him up. But the FBI decided not to wrap him up, and so Moussaoui's laptop, Moussaoui's effects, were not permitted to be investigated before 9/11—we're talking just two weeks, three weeks before 9/11.

So, there's that, and then there's the whole business about those two hijackers out there in San Diego. (Right) al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar. Now, you got into that a little bit with Senator Graham, and I have lots to say about Senator Graham and his behavior during this whole thing. But let's

just suffice it to say that al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar were being prepared to fly Flight 77 into the Pentagon.

Now, the President of the United States—this time, Barack Obama got up a year ago, and in defending the Dragnet-type surveillance, the blanket surveillance of all of us, all our telephone calls and stuff—he intimated that if we had this broad coverage of all our telephone calls and all, then maybe we would have been able to find out the telephone number in San Diego which was calling, which had called the Al-Qaeda central in Yemen and we might have been able to track down the terrorists. OKAY, well, guess what? That's a lie. (Yep) That's a bald-faced lie. If you talk to the NSA people as I have—Bill Binney, for example, senior scientist there for 35 years, he says: "Ray, if they only had the number—Ray, do you know about caller ID?" I said: "Yeah, I know." Binney: "That's as simple as it is, Ray, they had that, they had the number." And when Bush talks about—I'm sorry, Bush, same difference really—when Obama talks about that one telephone call between San Diego and the Al-Qaeda safe house there, that's the switchboard, he's lying. (Right) There were at least six calls. We know that because the chief of the Counterterrorism Center has said that. Binney: "And guess what, Ray? We didn't only have the metadata, we had the content."

So, why did NSA not report that? That remains a big mystery, but we ought to get that General Michael Hayden, who's such a favorite on Fox News, we ought to get him on the stand and say: "Why is it you didn't report those things? Why is it that you had information for war?" And the NSA people told me they had not only pinpointed all the Al-Qaeda networks and so forth, but they had this information before 9/11 and did not report it.

JON

Well, one of the guests that I've had on was NSA whistleblower Thomas Drake and he confirmed to me that the NSA did have the identity of the phone number from the San Diego hijackers, which means they knew they were in America and did not tell the FBI. And the 9/11 Commission barely investigated the NSA. And, so, we have no idea what was in those calls. We have no idea, basically, what information the NSA had specifically. I know that Thomas Drake testified before the Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11, but apparently, the transcripts or whatever were destroyed. The only thing that's remaining is the fact that he testified. But he was the one who brought in the "smoking guns" to the inquiry to let them know and all of those records have been destroyed apparently.

RAY

Yeah, and so what does that say about your distinguished guest Senator Graham? What does that say about his grumbling attitude toward the executive branch? What does this say about his acquiescence in this fraud, in this cover up, and his continuing cowardice in not releasing what was in those 28 pages. What does it say about the fact that he chose to write his novel. Isn't that neat? You write a novel which parallels what really happened. Give me a break. Graham is just as responsible for our not knowing about what went down on 9/11 as anybody, and for him to be kind of sidestepping all your questions and saying: "Well, what's really hard, Cheney didn't want this to succeed." Graham should have quit on the spot. Instead, what Graham did, it was really reprehensible.

Here, let me let me show you. Let me read from something I wrote at the time. I was out in San Diego, by some coincidence, and I was listening to the end of the Joint Congressional Committee which investigated 9/11. Their final report—well, this was interesting, the chair of that committee was clearly frustrated as hell. Her name was Eleanor Hill. OKAY. She's a pretty good person. And she began the session by saying: "Now, I want everyone to realize that we talked into the night with the White House and with the CIA and we were unable to include in this report anything, any information having to do with what the President of the United States was told prior to 9/11." The White House forbade that from being in the final report.

So, the report was ipso facto—incomplete, because it contains lots of stuff but nothing on what the President was told before 9/11. Now that's a proof positive to me. If you've got a partisan person here who'll do the bidding of the White House, and that's precisely why Porter Goss, the co-chair of this committee, was eventually nominated to become the director of central intelligence, the head of the CIA. So, what I'm saying here is that what Graham presided over was a fraud on the American people. And he dished it off to the Congressional but not the Congressional, but the 9/11 Commission which was fraud number two, witness the fact that the co-chairs of that commission, former Governor Kean from New Jersey and Lee Hamilton the token Democrat who is trotted out for such investigations, wrote a book four years after the 9/11 Commission Report in which they said and I quote: "We were set up to fail. We were not given enough information, not given enough time. We were not given enough access to sensitive information. We were not given enough money. And, so, we were set up to fail." Now, isn't that nice. Isn't that just dandy.

JON Do you know what people say, debunkers or whatever, say to that argument? They say that they never actually admitted that they failed. They just said that they were set up to fail. [Laughs]

RAY [Laughs] OKAY. All right. Well, you get the idea. What I'm saying is that the Congress, rather than acting like a co-equal, actually, the first and unequal branches of our Government representing the people as they do, are acting in such a slavish, subservient deferential way to the executive. Definitely afraid that that the President might accuse them of being soft on "terrorism"—and the bad terrorism we're talking about now, the bad terrorism, OKAY? Or that they would be launched, they would be degraded, or criticized in other ways.

You have Dick Durbin for example. Now, he's not the worst of the Senators, but he tells this story about all he knew before 9/11 he knew something was going down. Well, he had been briefed. That's why he could never. He could never—well, actually, it wasn't 9/11 I'm talking about now, it's the weapons of mass destruction, okay? So, strike that.

Dick Durbin said: "Yeah, I was briefed. I asked George Tenet and all those—you could tell and yeah, I said but when you look at it at home and they tell you it's all secret, then when you come out of the room, you can't tell anybody, and so I voted against the war, but I couldn't tell anybody that it was a crock."

And the same with Bob Graham. For God's sake, he was chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and he voted against the war but he didn't tell any other Senators. Why? Because it's secret. Give me a break. That's not acting. I say co-equal branch of Government. And, if I sound a little angry, well you can pardon me because I'm Irish, and also because I think there's just cause for anger here and people like Bob Graham should not be treated with kid gloves.

JON Well, I tried not to. I tried to play nice because, honey versus vinegar and all that stuff. And, you're right, you're absolutely right. But I tried to cut him some slack only because he is trying to help the families do something that they really wanted, which is get those 28 redacted pages released so as to use in the courtroom. So, I agree with everything you've said. I just, I cut him some slack only because he's helping them.

RAY This is not by any means a criticism of the way you interviewed him. You had to do it that way. All I'm saying is that, you know, maybe he should try and do penance or something for his misfeasance, I guess, rather than malfeasance in this case—his gutless performance let's say. He and Porter Goss knew better. When you asked him about Cheney: "Yeah, Cheney didn't like what we were doing." Cheney threatened not to allow any administration officials to testify before the Joint Commission. That's what Cheney did. Cheney sent the FBI in to investigate and subject Senators and representatives to lie detector tests because of that leak that you mentioned about Senator Shelby. That was Cheney. And they all shuttered in their boots. Oh, okay. That investigation did not get off the ground for three months because there was a big brouhaha about who the executive director was. Finally, they found somebody and the whole thing lasted about two more months. And Eleanor Hill, tried as she may, she couldn't get to first base. How many public hearings were there? One? The last one where Eleanor Hill, to her credit, got up and said: "Look, what you're going to get here, you should be aware of, no information, not even publicly available information that's in the Washington Post, New York Times. Nothing is allowed to be said in this report to indicate what the President was told or not told before 9/11." Well, if I were Bob Graham, I would be very ashamed to sign off on a report like that.

JON Yeah, I agree with you. And, I'd just like to mention that the Jersey Girls love Eleanor Hill, and they wanted her to be a part of the 9/11 Commission, but that never happened.

With regard to the August 6 Presidential daily briefing I have a couple of things to say. First off, there was a report by Kurt Eichenwald in the New York Times on September 10, 2012, and he says—he apparently gained access to some of the Presidential daily briefings that came prior to the August 6 PDB. He didn't gain access to all of them. He read a couple of excerpts. They're not made public for anybody. But he said: "The August 6 document, for all of the controversy it provoked, it is not nearly as shocking as the briefs that came before it."

And, let's talk about what was in the August 6th PDB really quick. It said: "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."

So, if it was even worse than that, you know, we don't know, because unfortunately, Bush was briefed 40 times on Al-Qaeda-related issues. He had 40 Presidential daily briefs. And we have no idea what they said. And, unfortunately, during the 9/11 Commission, only four people were allowed access to certain PDBs. And that was Thomas Kean, Lee Hamilton, Philip Zelikow, and Jamie Gorelick.

And, at the time, the family members—I have a quote from them, a statement that they released at the time, and they said: "All ten commissioners should have full unfettered and unrestricted access to all evidence including, but not limited to, all Presidential daily briefings and all working notes related to those Presidential daily briefings that may be related to the attacks on 9/11. [...] As it now stands, a limited number of commissioners will have restricted access to a limited number of PDB documents. This will prevent a full uncovering of the truth and is unacceptable."

And that was from a statement that they released on November 13, 2003. Now, when it was announced that Zelikow was going to be a part of the people to read these Presidential daily briefs, Kristen Breitweiser said: "How much more of Zelikow do we have to take?"

So, as to what they knew, to me, they had two options after 9/11. They could have denied everything, denied any knowledge whatsoever, or they could have taken responsibility and said "yes, we had some indications, and some warnings that came in, but we screwed up." And as we saw from the Richard Clarke testimony, when he apologized to the families, how much they loved that, it seems like that would have been a better PR route, but because of the fact that they denied any knowledge whatsoever, and acted like this was a surprise attack, tells me that they knew a hell of a lot more than has been led on.

RAY Well, they certainly did. Now, whether they took it seriously or not despite the credible reports that George Tenet the head of the CIA, and its chief lieutenants had their hair on fire in briefing Condoleezza Rice and Bush. You see, when you have people who are really toadies, people who like George Tenet came up through the Congressional staffer ranks where you really try to make everybody happy and you don't say anything or not knock any noses out of joint. That's the exact wrong kinds of people to have in that situation.

So, let's say George Tenet and his lieutenants, the anti-terrorist people who have, you know, 87 indications that Al-Qaeda is going to attack us in the United States. They go to Condoleezza Rice and they say: "Hey, you know, this is really bad. Our hair is on fire. We've got to get this stopped." And Condoleezza Rice, in her great wisdom says: "The President's not interested in this. How many times do I have to tell you? Ashcroft has cut the budget for counterterrorism. We don't, you know, this is Bill Clinton. This is, you know, the previous regime here for Pete's sake, you know. I know you left that big folder on my desk when I came in, but I'm not ready yet. I'll tell you what, let's—I'll try to arrange—yeah, let me see if I can arrange a meeting or say, let's try September 4th. Maybe September 4th, okay, come back then and we'll talk about it then?" That's exactly what happened, OKAY?

So, sure, Tenet and those guys knew more. But the way Tenet explains it—now, bear in mind—Tenet is a guy that hitched a ride down with the PDB briefer in the morning to get face time with George W. Bush so that George W. Bush would keep him on, okay? So, he's seeing him five mornings a week. And what Tenet said when he was asked: "Well, why didn't you stop with Condoleezza Rice? Why didn't you just tell the President?" Do you know what he said? "Well, that's not my place." He did that—16 intelligence agencies at the time and it's not his place.

Well, I think he called the President and the President said: "Look George, I told you, I don't want to—you know, you come here asking all the time—I don't want to hear it." So, there was a lot of—oh, what's the word? Hubris, arrogance. We know better. These guys, you can't take them seriously. And that is, that has a very, very, well, kind of throws a wet blanket on people like George Tenet, people like Michael Hayden over there at NSA, people like Bob Mueller at FBI. They put the word out: "Look, the President isn't very interested. We find it really interesting, but you know." So, what happens?

Well, they had the telephone number of these guys in San Diego. They also know that they're there and the CIA knows that they're there for a couple of years before they tell the FBI. When do they tell the FBI? On September 4, 2001, at that meeting, one week before 9/11.

Why did they hide that information? Well, Richard Clarke has spoken to that on a very obscure radio station out there in Denver, Colorado—got no treatment, got no publicity in the mainstream media. But what he said was

that there were 50 people at CIA who knew about Hazmi and Mihdhar out there in San Diego and never told the FBI about them, okay? Until September the 4th. OKAY. Now, Clark is asked by these two young very, very good reporters. Well, why do you suppose that was? And Clarke says: "Well, it can't be a glitch because, you know, all that stuff came to me. All the terror—I'd come in early in the morning and the first hour or so I'd read—George Tenet shared everything with me . . . except this." And they said: "Well, why would he not give you that?" And Clarke said: "I've been thinking about that for three years now." The only explanation seems to me is this, that the CIA was embarrassingly short of sources in Al-Qaeda, or even close to Al-Qaeda—when I say short they had zero. Oops, here's two live bodies—Mihndar and Hazmi. Oh, man! If we can turn 'em, then they become our agents. And we go to the President and say: "Hey, now we got two live ones. They're working for us now. We're going to find out all kinds of things about Al-Qaeda."

Now, Clarke says that's the only thing that makes any sense. Why does this work out this way? Because once the CIA told the FBI about these two guys in San Diego, guess what? The CIA loses control over those people and over any operations. In other words, once you tell the FBI and these guys are in the United States of America, it's the FBI's action and CIA doesn't have the ability to turn these guys—you know, it's sort of a term of the trade that means to recruit them to be double agents or whatever. That's the only explanation that the Clarke could come up with and it's the only one that makes any sense to me. These people are not above that.

So, why was it that the two hijackers from San Diego were able to crash into the Pentagon? Well, we know now, but not many Americans know and that's the problem.

JON

I have a couple of questions about that because, obviously the CIA is not allowed to operate on American soil. Those two hijackers in San Diego apparently had connections to the Saudi Government as well. And, George Tenet had a great relationship with Prince Bandar. Were they monitoring these people? Did they have wiretaps on these people while they were in the United States? Because I would think that if you're going to flip somebody, you would want to know everything there is to know about them so as to be able to use that information. So, I'm wondering, did they ever wiretap a conversation about 9/11 or something to that effect. I don't know. It's all speculative.

RAY Well, if they didn't, it would have been because of the political problem here. Now, they're in San Diego, that's part of the United States, okay? The FBI is supposed to have the action, and the FBI is sort of on to it because one of the guys working for them is the landlord of these two guys. Graham mentioned that and, not only that, but you have Prince Bandar, the ambassador from Saudi Arabia to Washington. His wife is paying these guys. Now, when was that done? I'm not sure, but if the CIA wanted to monitor their conversations or to really do intrusive surveillance on them, they had not only the Saudis, not only the hijackers themselves, but the FBI itself to contend with. In other words, they had to be really discreet here or else the FBI might realize that these guys—who they were and how they got into the country and all that business.

It's an insidious—it's a—what's the word—despicable example of bureaucratic rivalries and they existed between the FBI and the CIA from the very foundation—the very creation of the CIA and they have still not healed except to cover up one for the other.

JON Now, with regard to the Richard Clarke interview, the individuals that did that were Ray Nowosielski and John Duffy, also the makers of the film 9/11: Press For Truth. One of the things that Ray Nowosielski said that was interesting is that—you mentioned that there were 50 people that were aware of this information. And it just so happens that Alec Station, the Bin Laden unit, was pretty much made up of 50 people. And one of the instances that really just seemed so criminal to me is that there were two FBI agents assigned to Alec Station—Doug Miller and Mark Rossini. And, I believe, that Doug Miller—it might have been one or the other—but I'd say, Doug Miller found out that one of the hijackers had a visa to the United States. So, he goes to somebody by the name of Michael Anne Casey to find out if they can send a draft to the FBI to notify them of this. And under orders from Tom Wilshire, Michael Anne Casey tells him no, you can't do that. And hours later in the day, Michael Anne Casey sends out a cable within the CIA overseas saying that the FBI was notified.

And that just seems so criminal to me. We talk about accountability and the lack of accountability. Tom Wilshire, Michael Anne Casey, these are people that need to be held accountable as far as I'm concerned.

RAY Well, they're the same people who were moved up under George Tenet and John McLaughlin. The same operations part that did the torture, the kidnapping, the black prisons. So, one shouldn't be surprised. Once you

corrupt the whole operational arm of an agency, these are the kinds of people that move up and do whatever you tell them to do, including lie to the field. Now, why did they lie to the field? Because, you take the CIA station in London, well, they work side by side with the FBI representatives there. And so if the FBI is going to ask the CIA: "Have you shared this? Of course, yeah, here's the cable." Of course, they didn't.

Now, you mentioned Rossini—to his credit he had a very tearful confession about what went down, how he didn't have the guts to violate orders, orders to withhold information about the two hijackers in San Diego and he just feels terrible about putting the orders—he was following orders, as we know how that happens. Ahead of his patriotic duty, you tell the truth, because had those people been wrapped up, or even had the FBI allowed Moussaoui's computer to be searched, or even if the FBI had allowed the capture of Moussaoui to be publicized, the whole thing might have been aborted, because once you get one guy that's compromised, you have no assurance that the operation can go forward.

So, there are a whole bunch of things that weren't done that could have nipped the thing in the bud, and that raises legitimate questions as to why they weren't done. Whether it was—and what we know now, whether it's the result of covering up misfeasance, malfeasance, crimes, or whether it's covering up actual knowledge and involvement of exactly what was going down, that in my view is something that really needs to be sorted out. That has to begin with an acknowledgment that we were sold a bill of goods by the 9/11 Commission, that Kean and Hamilton should be put in jail for presiding over this charade. And that an independent investigation needs to be laid into operation and that's going to be up to us and the families, and I don't know how we do this, but tougher things have been undertaken and tougher things have been done, and that's exactly what we owe to the families, what we owe to the country, given all the incredible effects of this. After 9/11, everything changed.

JON

Well, we owe it to the world. And with regard to the 9/11 Commission and what you just said about Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton and so forth—Bob McIlvaine, 9/11 Family Member Bob McIlvaine, is going to love what you just said.

Now, with regard to the 9/11 Commission, I have a little quote here. This is from 9/11 Family Member—Jersey Girl—September 11th Advocate, Patty Casazza. In late November, 2007, we had a conference in West Hartford,

Connecticut and she showed up as a surprise. And I was thrilled. I had never met a Jersey Girl and she walked in and I said: "Patty!" and I ran up to her and I gave her a hug. And then I asked her to take a couple of questions on the stage, and one of the things that she told us was.

. " . . We met other whistleblowers on the side of the road in Maryland, you know, to hear what they could tell us. None of them revealed state secrets to us, by the way, ha ha, but they had information and, basically, the Government knew. You know, other than the exact moment, they knew the date and the method of which the attacks were supposed to come."

And she goes on.

"Other than the exact, perhaps, time—you know, because planes don't always go off on time—they knew the date, they knew the method, that it was going to be with airplanes."

And, unfortunately, the 9/11 Commission didn't speak or barely spoke to any whistleblowers, even though there was a line-up of available whistleblowers and they promised the families that each and every one of them would be heard.

Now, wouldn't you have liked to have heard from a whistleblower who knew that kind of information? I certainly would have.

RAY First, let me amend what I said about Kean and Hamilton. I, perhaps, did them a disservice. They should be in prison. But, Zelikow should be right there with them.

JON Oh, my goodness, yes.

RAY Now, you know, the business of—I don't know how much Tom Drake told you, but we did a long memorandum—VIPS Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity. (Yep) Laid it on and the four senior scientists from NSA pretty much drafted it and we put it together. It's dated 7 January last year, 2014. And this is the first time Tom was very frank about what he learned. What he learned, of course, was that the information was available, and that it was not shared outside of NSA, but that chances are the leadership, including General Hayden, knew about it. And, General Hayden used to have these staff meetings and Tom Drake hung around for a while

after 9/11, actually 9/11 was his first day on the job. The others quit because they couldn't countenance the violations of the Fourth Amendment. So, Tom was in on all this and he used to listen to Mike Hayden cackle.

JON Yep.

RAY Hayden: "Ha ha ha! Joint Commission? Ha ha ha! Get out! It's kind of fun to see the FBI and CIA taking all the criticism here and we're just sitting with our feet up, you know?" And Hayden knew, and Tom knew, and most of the people at the very top—not all of them—but most of the people at the very top of NSA knew darn well that NSA had been able to stiff-arm both commissions. Okay? Stiff-arm them, not give them the information. And who helped them on that? Of course, Dick Cheney and others.

So, it's conceivable to me that Dick Cheney—and there are ways for NSA to report just to one person or two, and it's conceivable to me that Dick Cheney was fully apprised of that. His behavior in the bunker [laughs] raises all manner of questions.

And, so, it just cries out for thorough dispassionate objective analysis and investigation. And it's a blunder. It's a kind of a cancer on the body politic that this has not been done. And I'm from New York. My wife's cousin was killed in one of those buildings. (I'm sorry) You know the New Yorkers—what they tried to do, but they need some help from everyone in these United States of America.

JON Now, with regard to what you just said about Dick Cheney, there is a report that Scooter Libby was reading unvetted NSA intercepts and it's unclear, however, whether that was taking place prior to 9/11 or after 9/11. And I've been trying to find out and I can't.

Now, one of the questions that I have, are you aware of the multitude of warnings we received from foreign countries before 9/11?

RAY Sure, yeah. The Russians, the Germans, there are a whole bunch of people that warned. They had their own sources, of course, and somehow or other they were not taken very seriously.

JON Well, I have a couple of them that I'd just like to read for people, just so they have an understanding of what kind of information was coming in.

"In 1999, MI6, the British intelligence agency, gives a secret report to liaison staff at the US embassy in London. The report states that al-Qaeda has plans to use "commercial aircraft" in "unconventional ways," "possibly as flying bombs." - [Sunday Times, 6/9/2002]

"In June 2001, German intelligence warns the CIA, Britain's intelligence agency, and Israel's Mossad that Middle Eastern militants are planning to hijack commercial aircraft to use as weapons to attack "American and Israeli symbols, which stand out." - [Frankfurt, 9/11/2001, WaPo, 9/14/2001]

"On June 4, 2001, three men claiming to be Afghans are overheard discussing hijacking attacks in New York City during this period. On this day, they are taken into custody, questioned, and released some time later. This information is forwarded to US intelligence." - [Fox News, 5/17/2002] - I think it was passed along by Cayman and British investigators.

"In August 2001—*our enemies right now—the people the powers that be declared to be our enemies*—apparently Vladimir Putin or his intelligence people warns the US that suicide pilots are training for attacks on U.S. targets. The head of Russian intelligence Nikolai Patrushev also later states, "We had clearly warned them" on several occasions, but they "did not pay the necessary attention." - [Fox News, 5/17/2002, Agence France Presse, 9/16/2001]

Now, one question that I've always had. Now, everybody says that—and this is all speculative, but it's a question that I have—everybody always says that they did nothing. That they had all this information and that they did nothing.

My question is: If you had all of this information, isn't it conceivable that people in the upper echelons of power could have taken that information and used it and done things that would have caused the "success" of the attacks? Is that a valid question?

RAY

Sure, it's a valid question, and so it raises another question about who prevented that from being done? Who gave the word from on high that this should not be taken seriously? "Yeah, thanks very much, you covered your ass," as George Bush is quoted as having said. "And just go about your business. We're not interested in this kind of thing."

Now whether that was from rank amateurishness and not taking these things seriously or whether it was something more sinister. That's what we need to probe.

You know there's one other thing here that most people don't know. But Coleen Rowley, our colleague in Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, who was the division counsel and special agent out there at the Minneapolis office of the FBI, she and the head of the Red Team for the FAA, a fellow named Bogdan Dzakovic, wrote a piece in The LA Times way back about four years ago, and the reason they wrote it is that the question was—Wikileaks was able to reveal all manner of interesting things, if for example the agents in Minneapolis and the FBI office there, if they got nowhere important with their reporting on Moussaoui, would they have gone to Julian Assange and been able to get their reports published that way? Now, that was one thing.

The other thing was this FAA special agent. Okay, now, he was head of the red team and their job was to penetrate airports and aircraft or airplanes or anything—to see if they could. And nine times out of ten they could. And, so, he was incredibly agitated and frustrated because he could not get anyone to take his warning seriously. All they had to do, after all, was put locks on the doors of the cockpit. Of course, it would take \$195 dollars to do that. The Israelis, they've done it ten years before. Why they didn't take this stuff seriously is another question.

So, the question they asked Bogdan Dzakovic—would you have gone to WikiLeaks to get that word out, and he said I certainly would. It was just so unexplainably difficult to get that word taken seriously and obviously when you can nine out of ten times carry weapons onto aircraft getting through security at airports—granted this was before 9/11, but so much the more important was it. So, you had all manner of people who are being suppressed, who had indications that if something indeed were planned that involved aircraft, it would have been at cake-walk to walk the cake onto the aircraft and, as you know, they only had box cutters. They could have had weapons as far as the Dzakovic is concerned.

Now, what happened to Dzakovic? Well, after he protested too much, he was given the job in the supply room to make sure that the staples were all pointing in the right direction.

JON

Now, was he ever talked to by the 9/11 Commission? Do you know?

RAY No.

JON They did not talk to him.

RAY That's my impression. I'm not completely clear on that. But you can ask him. We're in touch with him.

JON Okay. Now, are you aware—there's two people I want people to be aware of—are you aware of the story of David Schippers?

RAY You know, I'm not. I may be if you explain what that's about. But it doesn't ring any bell right off the bat.

JON Okay, he was the head of the legal team that prosecuted Bill Clinton for the Lewinsky thing. (Mm-hmm) Prior to 9/11 he will claim that "FBI agents in Chicago and Minnesota tell him there is going to be an attack on Lower Manhattan." Schippers will later claim that he will attempt to contact Attorney General John Ashcroft and other politicians about this warning in coming months, but that they will have shown little interest. He also happens to be the attorney that was representing FBI agent Robert Wright who was in charge of an investigation called Vulgar Betrayal, which was looking into Saudi ties to terrorist financing and he was shut down. So, that's the story of David Schippers really fast.

RAY I know the Robert Wright story. That was criminal. He was on to some really big stuff about Saudi financing of Al-Qaeda. He was in Chicago with the FBI and they just shut him right down.

As for Ashcroft, I already mentioned, I think, that one of the first things he did coming into office as attorney general or, yeah, I guess, attorney general—well, the FBI do terrorism? Look, let's not do terrorism. Let's do other things. Let's go after drugs. Let's go after—terrorism, not a problem. And so, the budget was actually cut from the FBI budget on counter-terrorism.

So, yeah, it all fits in with this pattern of, certainly, these people either are not taking the threat seriously, or deliberately not taking the threat seriously because they were told precisely that. Don't worry about this threat.

How could Cheney get away with this kind of thing? Look what else Cheney got away with, eh?

JON Right. Well, I think there was a story about John Ashcroft being approached by, I think, Tom Pickard about terrorism, and John Ashcroft said something to the effect: "I don't want to hear about it." So— (Yeah)

RAY A bureaucrat that wants to move up or get more promotions, then if somebody said they don't want to hear about it, well, what are you doing to do? Well, you're going to slavishly suppress all this information and not let any of your underlings get it up to your boss who might get upset and then you might not get promoted. It's that bad, it's that bad.

JON Well, okay. Are you familiar with somebody by the name of Niaz Khan?

RAY Again, Jon, it doesn't ring a bell. Can you say a word or two?

JON Okay, that's fine. I'll read very quickly.

For three weeks FBI counterterrorism agents in Newark, New Jersey will interview Khan. And this is a year, I think, prior to 9/11. One FBI agent will later recall: "We were incredulous. Flying a plane into a building sounded crazy, but we polygraphed him and he passed." Later in 2004, Khan will say he was only involved in a plot to hijack an airplane not crash it into a building. However, he had earlier clearly talked to the media about flying a plane into a building. And FBI officials had also referred to his case as flying a plane into a building. A former FBI official will say that the FBI agents believe Khan, and aggressively try to follow every lead in the case. But word comes from FBI headquarters saying: "Return him to London and forget about it." He is returned to Britain and handed over to British authorities. However, the British only interviewed him for about two hours and then released him.

Basically, what he did is he came—he was apparently a part of Al-Qaeda and came here to the U.S. with the purpose of hijacking an aircraft, either to crash it into a building or, whatever, and he chickened out and turned himself in.

RAY What year was that?

JON I think it was in 2000—April 2000, I think. I forgot to write that down. It was definitely prior to 9/11.

RAY Mm-hmm, well, here we have the old problem, you know? FBI headquarters doesn't want this thing to go forward. Now, I know enough about the lawyers, including the guy that got a big, big bonus for turning down the Minneapolis office's request to go into Moussaoui's laptop and his other effects. Spike—his last name will occur to me in a second. Now, he's one of these Marines who was a lawyer and he became a big FBI lawyer, and he refused to send forward this request, under FISA, to get into Moussaoui's stuff.

Now, if the head of the FBI at the time, Bob Mueller, who was kind of a toady himself, is told by Ashcroft: "Look, the President isn't interested in this guy. We are going to tell your agents to knock it off, okay?" Now, it's that bad. These guys rose to the top by acting in this manner. They expect it of their subordinates. And it's entirely conceivable to me that this good work done by field agents of the FBI was all in vain simply because the guys at the top didn't want to hear it. OKAY. So, whether that's because they were stupid, and there's ample evidence of that—Ashcroft being a paragon example. Or, whether this is something more sinister, which is equally possible in my view. The evidence needs to come out about what was going on at the very top. Now, we know enough instances where Minneapolis was screwed up, Phoenix was screwed up, the people training to fly aircraft there. Lots of stuff going on in Florida that was screwed up.

So, you wonder whether it was misfeasance or malfeasance, could be a combination of both.

JON One of the things the family members really wanted from the 9/11 Commission was accountability, that if people were incompetent, were criminally negligent, or just acted criminally, that they be held accountable. And we didn't see that after 9/11. Instead people that should have been held accountable, like you said, were rewarded and promoted.

And, you know—oh, I forget what it was going to say, but the accountability. Oh, I know what I was going to say. The great thing about calling for accountability is that it applies to both incompetence and criminality. And, generally, you find out which is which when you hold people accountable. And, we didn't see that.

RAY They went after the people at the bottom, right? And the people at the bottom said: "Well, wait a second, we're not going to take the rap for this thing." (Exactly) But none of that happened and none of that happened for lesser reasons, whether it's covering up gross incompetence or something really a lot worse—what can be worse than gross incompetence, but there can be.

That's what we really need to get to the bottom of.

JON Yep, yes we do. And the last question I have for you, that you kind of already answered. So, I'm just going to use this time now to say that Cindy Sheehan and her sister DeDe Miller told me to say hello to you.

RAY Oh, great!

JON My friend Debra wanted me to say hello to you. A lot of people admire you, Ray, and the work that you do. I am one of those people. I hope that you continue doing what you do, because we very much need you.

RAY Well, thank you.

JON And I hope you're around for another 50 years.

RAY [Laughs] I'm not counting on that, but a few more, perhaps.

And thanks very much for the opportunity to talk about these things.

JON Is there anything that you would like to promote at this time?

RAY Well, yeah, I get really upset by the confusion attending the people who are trying to find out what really happened on 9/11. They're all too easily dismissed in our mainstream media and propaganda as "conspiracy theorists" when all they're trying to do is find out what the hell Hamilton and Kean didn't find out because of their what? Incompetence? Because they were told? Because they're toadies? Whatever reason. Now, I have the highest regard, I have the highest respect for people who do it anyway, despite all the criticism, who bear the label conspiracy theorist, because they're just trying to find out what the truth is. God knows that's what we Americans are supposed to be all about. At the same time, you know, it's really difficult for someone who can't spend full time on this like myself.

People say to me: "Now Ray, come on, Ray, don't you believe that Dick Cheney is capable of doing this kind of thing?"

And I say: "Sure I do!" (Laughs) They say: "So, what's the problem?"

I say: "Well, you know, it doesn't matter really what I believe. I don't do faith-based intelligence. I do empirical intelligence." There's are lots of dots out there. But whether it was deliberate or whether it was incompetence, I just don't know. And I try to keep up with all the good work you guys are doing, and I still don't know, and that's why—that's precisely why, not just for me, of course, but to the whole world. We got to get to the bottom of this. And hats off to you, Jon, and to your associates for following up.

JON Well, thank you very much Ray. I have a quote that I'd like to read.

"For people to dismiss these questioners as conspiratorial advocates or conspiratorial theorists, that's completely out of line because the questions remain. Because the President, who should be able to answer them, WILL NOT."

Do you know who said that?

RAY No.

JON That was you.

RAY [Laughs] Well, it's absolutely right, then. [Laughs]

JON [Laughs] Well, again, thank you very much for your time today, Ray, and good luck with all your future endeavors.

RAY Okay. Thanks Jon. Bye.

JON All right, take care.



Chapter/Episode 25 – Jonathan Kay – March 30, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Jonathan Kay (JONKAY)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week we're going to speak with someone who disagrees with the so-called "9/11 Truth Movement."

Hi, this is Jon, and I'm here with Jonathan Kay. How are you doing today, Jonathan?

JONKAY Good, thanks.

JON Wonderful. All right, so I'm going to read your bio.

Jonathan Kay is a Canadian journalist. He is the editor-in-chief of *The Walrus* and former comment pages editor, columnist and blogger for the Toronto-based Canadian daily newspaper *National Post*. He is also a book author and editor, a public speaker, and a regular contributor to *Commentary Magazine* and *The New York Post*. His freelance articles have been published in a variety of US publications including *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Salon.com*, *The New Republic*, *Harper's Magazine*, the *Los*

Angeles Times, The Weekly Standard, The Literary Review of Canada, The National Interest and The New York Times. Books he has written are *The Volunteer: A Canadian's Secret Life in the Mossad*, which was co-written by Michael Ross, and *Among the Truthers*.

All righty, so that is your bio and are you ready to get into the questions?

JONKAY Sure, although I can't promise I will be as informed as some of your other guests on some of the most recent developments. As I mentioned in our correspondence, I haven't kept up with the latest developments since I wrote my last book, so—

I'm happy to proceed, as long as you're okay with me occasionally saying things like "I don't know."

JON Well, it's interesting that you say that you haven't followed it, but I saw that in March of 2014, you had written an article specifically about Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth.

JONKAY Yeah, that was about the head of AE911, Richard Gage, when he came to Toronto. I mean, that was interesting for me to see because I'd interviewed Richard Gage for my book and I'd seen him speak a couple times. So, I did have a special interest in going to see his presentation just to get a sense of how the "9/11 Truth Movement" had developed since I researched and wrote my book.

JON All right, so let's get to the questions. What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

JONKAY For me, I was up in Toronto, and it started like any other work day. I was working at the *National Post* newspaper. I have a specific memory of reading a news alert saying that a small, private plane had flown into the World Trade Center. And, this is not an unprecedented thing. Sometimes you get amateur pilots flying their planes into buildings accidentally, which is what I assumed it was at the time. And then I turned on the TV a little while later, and of course I saw the horrible footage that everybody else was seeing on that day. And started learning about what happened.

JON What, if anything, did you question about the 9/11 attacks?

JONKAY I don't—I guess I was too shocked by what happened to start questioning anything. I guess I knew immediately that there was some terroristic motive because of—if one plane had flown into a building that could lead to some crazy mechanical problem, but two planes—like everybody else I suspected it was a terrorist attack, and so I wasn't surprised when very quickly we learned about the identity of the hijackers and their affiliations.

JON As the person who coined the phrase "9/11 Truther" I defined it by saying that:

"In my mind, a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights alongside the family members seeking truth and accountability for the 9/11 attacks. In my mind, a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights for the sick and dying 9/11 first-responders who need healthcare desperately. In my mind, a 9/11 Truther is someone who does not like how the day of 9/11 is being used to inflict pain and suffering around the world and is trying to stop it. Stop it by using the truth, something we have been denied by our Government regarding the 9/11 attacks. Because of how the phrase has been so tarnished by the corporate media, by people such as yourself, Jamie Kirchick and debunkers, I have changed to calling myself an *Advocate for 9/11 Justice*. I don't consider myself a truther. I actually think that it's the corporate media's and debunkers lazy way of saying "9/11 Truther."

What is your definition for the phrase "9/11 Truther?"

JONKAY Well, in my book I identified the "9/11 Truth Movement," as it was then defined and understood by people like me, as being a subset of conspiracy movements more generally. And I had a section in the book where I defined what I thought of as a conspiracy movement. And I defined it as an intellectual movement where people have a theory of a certain historical event, and when they are greeted with adverse evidence, rather than question the nature of their conspiracy theory, instead what they do is they keep growing the conspiracy—the purported conspiracy until it swallows all the available evidence.

So, in the case of the "9/11 Truth Movement," as it was then called, I noticed that if I were debating someone who was part of the "9/11 Truth Movement," if I introduced any piece of evidence that challenged their view—you know, I talked about court documents, or I talked about the 9/11 Commission, or I talked about media reports—they would immediately adapt their conspiracy and usually enlarge it to swallow up all the evidence

I was suggesting. So, they would suggest that the 9/11 Commission members were all in on it, the Government was all in on it, or the courts are in on it, or the corporate media is in on it—and I identified that in my book as what I perceived as the defining feature of a conspiracy theory, which is that: it cannot be disproved in the minds of those who hold it, because every time you introduce evidence that casts into question, they simply just expand their list of purported conspirators. And the "9/11 Truth Movement" is, in my mind, a textbook study of that because of the nature of their literature and the nature of their theories and the way they kept on expanding the roster of purported evil-doers.

JON Well, I guess it's a good thing that I coined the phrase and get to decide it's meaning. [Laughs] Like when a comet is discovered, and someone gets to put their name on it.

JONKAY Yeah, no, and by the way, I do agree with you that it has become a sort of term of abuse. You know, if you call someone a truther or a 9/11 Truther on social media, or whatever, you're basically saying, oh, you're unhinged or you're not part of the mainstream conversation. Strategically, I agree with your decision, it's probably a good one to use a different set of words to describe your own efforts on your website and such.

JON Well, a 9/11 Truther has essentially become the equivalent of a baby-killer or a dog-torturer because of all of the hit pieces over the years from the corporate media and so on and so forth. It's actually quite disgusting in my mind.

JONKAY Well, I think in recent months you've been replaced by anti-vaxers. Because the debate about vaccinations, so—

JON Well, that's not my thing. My issue is 9/11. We'll talk about that in a minute. But, what inspired you to write your book.

JONKAY The reason I wrote my book was because I was interested in why people believed these things because as I wrote in the book, I was at the time the comment-page editor at a large Canadian newspaper, and so, I heard a lot on a daily basis from readers and contributors who had alternative theories about what was going on in the world.

So—and one of the groups that send me emails was people who were 9/11 conspiracy theorists. And what was interesting to me was a lot of these

people were well-educated. Some of them were engineers and some of them were, one or two of them were academics. And, it was very interesting to me why these people—who are the furthest thing from kind of unhinged losers sitting in their basement—why they believe things that I thought were kind of, were far-fetched, and I wanted know about it. I had an intellectual curiosity in knowing why smart people believed things that I thought were so far-fetched, and I started interviewing them.

But, I never would have done it if I didn't start from a position of being an editor at a newspaper and getting so many emails from people who believed all this stuff. And it wasn't just 9/11—I got, one guy I interviewed for my book was someone who, he was a Serbian Canadian and he didn't believe that the War in Kosovo in 1999 happened the way people said it did. He thought a lot of the stuff was made up or contrived. So, I interviewed people like him and I interviewed people who had conspiracy theories about Barack Obama and where he was born.

So, the book became a wide-ranged project about why people believe far-fetched theories, but 9/11 conspiracy theories became the central case study of my book.

JON Well, you understand that when you're being lied to, or people refuse to answer your questions, it's human nature to theorize as to the reasons why. I mean, don't you agree?

JONKAY I agree with you certainly—well, I agree with you on a few levels. One is that it was a complete mistake by George W. Bush and the U.S. Government to wait so long to start the 9/11 Commission. It made it look like he had something to hide. He was being evasive. I think it took like more than 400 days, 440 days, something like that, before he agreed to strike a 9/11 Commission.

And, it's true—people look at that and they say you have something to hide.

JON Well—

JONKAY It's also true that our Governments sometimes do lie. There's a reason a lot of people are skeptical about their Government. I don't think they lie about things as big as 9/11 because I don't think they're able to lie about things as big as 9/11. It's just too big and too complicated to have a coherence set of lies about. But Governments do lie to people, and it's especially true in

parts of the world that have autocratic Governments. You know, if you look at which people around the world are more prone to believe that their Government does horrible things, it tends to be places like say Iran and Pakistan where the Government does do horrible things. Government conspiracies, unfortunately, are quite frequent. But it's harder in Democratic countries with a free press, and independent courts for Governments to systematically lie to people. That's one of the benefits of our society.

JON

You mentioned that it took over 400 days to get the 9/11 Commission started. It was 441 days—and that commission would not even have existed if not for the family members. Think about how scary that is. And it's not just the 9/11 Commission. The Bush administration—Bush and Cheney went to Tom Daschle in January of 2002, and asked him not to investigate the attacks at all. And this was regarding the Joint Congressional Inquiry, which was limited in scope. It only looked at intelligence agencies and so on and so forth. And the families fought for what they thought would be an independent 9/11 Commission—and it was anything but. And we can get into that a little later.

But, you make it sound as if we shouldn't question 9/11 at all, or if we do, that we have to have a certain belief about 9/11 before we do so. And, you say that it would be impossible to lie about 9/11. My God, after 9/11 we were told repeatedly that there were no warnings whatsoever. That this was a complete surprise, that nobody had any idea that an attack was coming, and so on and so forth. And then in May of 2002, when the August 6 PDB was leaked, which was labeled: "Bin Laden determined to strike in the U.S." we found out that there was a warning that talked about hijackings or other types of attacks. That talked about people photographing buildings in New York City. And that PDB, which everybody made such a big deal about, as we learned from Kurt Eichenwald, is NOTHING compared to the PDBs that came prior to it. PDBs that we aren't even allowed to see. So, that's one lie.

Another lie is the NSA said that they couldn't identify where the calls were coming from with regard to the two hijackers in San Diego, that they could only identify where the calls were going to, which was the hub in Yemen. But they were well aware of where the calls were coming from, which means that they were well aware that the hijackers were in the United States. They didn't bother telling the FBI. I mean, so there's a MULTITUDE of lies out there. So I don't understand how you could say that it would be impossible to lie about 9/11.

JONKAY What I'm saying is it's impossible for a Government or entity to create a coherent and sustained tissue of lies that purports to disguise the entire province of 9/11.

So, it is certainly true that Governments will pick and choose what kind of information they release about historical episodes, and the reason they're doing it is because it's their ass covering. If you look, for instance, at the recent terrorist attack that took place in, I believe, it was Tunisia— (Well) something like six police chiefs just lost their jobs because of what happened. When disaster strikes, people who were in power instinctively think: "I'm going to get blamed because I didn't prevent this." And they start trying to manage information to make sure that the narrative that comes out doesn't make them look incompetent or stupid.

This happens all the time—and I don't dispute that. Sometimes they lie about... Why, for instance, in the 9/11—official 9/11 Commission Report the authors of the report clearly indicated that the folks from NORAD gave false information during the commission's investigation. And, in fact, the 9/11 Commissioners referred the information they have to the Inspector General of NORAD. And this was, it was classic institutional behavior where you're trying to manage information flow after a horrible disaster, so you don't—try not to look incompetent.

JON Well, what happened was, they put forward a story to coincide with what people like Paul Wolfowitz and Dick Cheney were saying about shooting down Flight 93. They were saying, trying to act heroically—

JONKAY Right, oh yeah, you and I are on the same page on that and that is what institutions do. (But—) Where you and I differ though is in our conception of the extent to which institutions, such as Government, are capable of managing that narrative. I think they sort of nibble and pick at the edges, usually in a failed attempt to make themselves look good.

But, the thing that I found far-fetched about what was then called the "9/11 Truth Movement," was that they imagined that Government could create this enormous architecture of lies that presented 9/11 as being this COMPLETELY different historical episode than it was. That it originated with different people. That it originated with radically different motives. That the terrorists were stooges, I mean, you're obviously more familiar of this than me.

JON I'm well aware of all of the theories that exist out there. With regard to NORAD, they put forth a story to coincide with what Paul Wolfowitz and Dick Cheney were saying, but the fact of the matter is that they did not intercept any of the planes that day. So, why didn't they intercept any of the planes that day? And there are a number of questions as to why that happened.

With regard to the Inspector General, do you know that during the time of the 9/11 Commission a memo was sent to Philip Zelikow suggesting that we refer NORAD to the Justice Department for a criminal investigation, and he sat on that memo. And then towards the end of the 9/11 Commission, they finally decided to send it to the DOD Inspector General. Do you know what the difference is between sending it to the Justice Department and the Inspector General?

JONKAY Well, it's a difference between essentially an internal investigation and an external investigation.

JON Well, an Inspector General can only recommend that people be held accountable whereas the Justice Department can actually hold people accountable.

And with regard to the Department of Defense Inspector General, Frank Rich spoke about how the Inspector General, during the time that these investigations were taking place—like into Able Danger, like into NORAD—that they were corrupt and that they were taking orders from above. Catherine Herridge, from Fox News, also confirmed that the Inspector General from the DOD was corrupt.

So, I don't understand how you could possibly think that we even have the slightest idea of what the truth was with regard to that day—with regard to NORAD and so forth—with regard to a MULTITUDE of things.

Now, have your opinions changed at all since writing your book?

JONKAY Ah, not, really. In fact—well, just to go back a little bit to what you said. I completely agree with you that Governments lie about how much they know and how they react to information. And the best example is what's happened in Argentina over the last couple of months, where you had a prosecutor in Argentina who was said to have died by suicide, but there's a

controversy about how he died. Nisman was his name. And he fell into controversy there because he started investigating how the Government reacted to a Hezbollah attack two decades ago. And the Government's efforts to manage the flow of information about how they followed up on that, who they investigated, when they investigated—and that is a very real conspiracy. But again, it's an after-the-fact conspiracy. It's not a before-the-fact conspiracy.

In the case of 9/11, the most sensational allegation coming out of the 9/11 Truth [sic] Commission isn't that there was any kind of after-the-fact conspiracy to manage information—that certainly did happen. It's about whether there was a before-the-fact conspiracy about actually creating this horrible tragedy for all kinds of nefarious foreign policy purposes.

JON Well, you mentioned—

JONKAY And just to answer your question, on that score, have I changed my mind about whether there was any kind of veracity to those 9/11 truth claims about who actually did 9/11? No, I haven't changed my mind. If anything, my views have become more concrete because as each year goes by, as more and more politicians flow through Washington, as there are more and more opportunities for retiring public servants, retiring politicians, to come clean about things they might have done in office, you would think that the truth about such a horrible thing, if indeed there was an American conspiracy to perpetrate the crimes of 9/11, one would think that that would start coming out now. And, yet, the years go by and we don't learn any new information that supports this.

JON That's completely—supports the idea of what? That there being an inside job?

JONKAY Correct.

JON You make it seem like it's blasphemous to even consider the possibility of criminal complicity.

JONKAY Not blasphemous, but it's highly far-fetched.

JON Our elected officials and people that work in Government are human beings just like you and I. They are capable of greed, they are capable of jealousy, they are capable of murder, and every other horrible thing human beings are

capable of. I don't put these people on pedestals. I certainly don't pray at the Church of Cheney.

Now, with regard to before 9/11—when Bush first came into office, at his very first principals meeting, according to former Secretary of Treasury Paul O'Neill, it was all about finding a way to go into Iraq. It was the President saying: "Go find me a way to do this." And in a 2007 interview, Richard Clarke said that there were members of the Bush administration in the months prior to 9/11 discussing creating a casus belli in order to go to war. You don't find that suspicious at all?

JONKAY [Laughs] What I think you will find is that if you pore through the speeches and writings of Henry Kissinger (Oh my God), who's often quoted by 9/11 conspiracy theorists, you find all sorts of things that—you look at that sentence, you look at those phrases—that's exactly what someone would say if they were plotting to invade Iraq or invade Afghanistan, or what not.

JON Dick Cheney was—

JONKAY It's true that out of the reams of information these things have said, there are always going to be slogans that they've said that you say: "Oh, that fits into my theory, exactly."

JON Well, it's not—it doesn't fit into any—first of all, I have no idea what happened on 9/11, or who was ultimately responsible, but I know suspicious behavior when I see it. And, Dick Cheney before 9/11 was meeting with every head of every oil company in existence, even though they denied it before Congress and Judicial Watch, managed to get documentation to show that they were looking over Iraq's oil fields prior to 9/11.

JONKAY Okay, so let me just stop you there—okay, let's say the theory was that they were looking over Iraq oil fields and then they invade Iraq, it's a trillion dollar operation—

JON But, it wasn't—

JONKAY And then they don't even take the oil. Like this whole theory falls apart after the invasion of Iraq, because the theory would suggest that they'd invade Iraq and then steal Iraq's oil. Instead, you look at Iraq, it's being run by French and Russian oil companies.

JON Not every criminal gets—

JONKAY The theory makes no sense. [Laughter]

JON Not every criminal manages to get away with their crime.

JONKAY But then what's the theory here? That they invaded Iraq. They did all the dirty with gloves, thousands of lives, and then they forgot to take the oil? Like, it makes no sense to me.

JON They didn't forget to take the oil. There are plenty of American companies that have benefited from the oil in Iraq, along with Russia, along with China and so on and so forth.

JONKAY Oil's at like \$50 a barrel. Where's all this money coming in? In fact—I was listening to NPR this morning and they were saying there's so much oil being pumped in the United States itself and the price of oil's now so low, that you actually have storage facilities in Cushing, Oklahoma that are actually running out of space for all the surplus oil—which is terrible business by the way for the oil companies.

JON There were several reports that said that Saudi Arabia and the U.S. colluded to lower oil prices in an effort to bankrupt Russia. And these aren't figments of my imagination. These are reports from *The Guardian*, I think *Reuters*, and so on and so forth.

JONKAY All right, it just, it seems, it all—you can see why someone who was listening to a theory about how Iraq was a smash and grab operation to steal oil—

JON I, but see—many people had said that it was about oil. I think—the guy who was the former head of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, even said it was about oil.

JONKAY I think what people—responsible people have said, and what I would agree, is that the United States and other countries were especially concerned about Saddam Hussein and especially concerned about that region because tinpot dictators in that region have an outsized effect on world events because of their ability to manipulate huge quantities of oil.

That is true. I agree with that. In that sense, the Iraq War could, in the abstract, said to be about oil because we don't care as much what happens in less strategic places, like for instance [AUDIOBAD] in Africa because they don't monopolize a particular globally essential asset, such as oil.

So, a lot of the rhetoric I hear from people say: "Oh, this war was about oil, because such and such a statesman said it, or such and such a military person said it." Usually, it's a reference to the fact that oil is abundant in the Middle East, therefore, the Middle East is an extremely strategic part of the world. And, in that respect, I agree with you. It doesn't mean the Iraq War was a smash and grab operation just for oil.

JON First of all, it wasn't just about oil. It was about making billions of dollars. It was about projecting America's hegemony across the world.

It's not just about oil, but again, as I said, not all criminals manage to get away with their crimes.

JONKAY Okay, fair.

JON So, let me get to the next question.

Do you consider journalists like Robert Scheer who wrote an article for *The LATimes* called "What We Don't Know About 9/11 Hurts Us," or Benjamin DeMott who wrote an article for *Harper's Magazine* called "Whitewash as Public Service: How The 9/11 Commission Report Defrauds the Nation" as 9/11 Truthers or conspiracy theorists?

JONKAY I'm going to plead ignorance here. I have to say I have not heard of either of those two authors or the articles in question.

JON Well, okay, but any journalist that has ever questioned 9/11—which are very few by the way—but there have been reports. Do you consider them to be 9/11 Truthers or conspiracy theorists—just in general?

JONKAY What I have seen is—here in Canada there's been a couple of respectable journalists who had dabbled in what I consider 9/11 conspiracism. Barrie Zwicker is an example. I'm sure you're aware of his work. He used to work at a big newspaper here called *The Globe and Mail*, and he became a truther. What sometimes happens is these people, they are—Barrie Zwicker, you can look him up. He's written thousands of articles for respected

publications. And then sometimes they sort of lose the plot a little bit later in life and they kind of go into some crazy directions. In his case, it was 9/11 conspiracism.

I know a guy who worked at the *National Post* here in Canada and he started writing a lot about stuff about how vaccines were going to kill you and stuff. It happens, I mean, people kind of sometimes—

JON I'm not going to defend Barrie Zwicker. I'm not into theories, so much as I am promoting information, asking questions, promoting lies, and so on and so forth. But, I mean, I just, you know, where's the line drawn. And, you know—

JONKAY No, but that's a good question. Let me stop there because I don't want to leave that question hanging. To me, the line is drawn—I'm going to go back to something I said earlier, I meant to—I'm willing to pursue any avenue of inquiry. And when you talk to 9/11 theorists, they always say: "I'm just asking questions. I'm just using empirical method. I'm just being scientific." And I respect that. And, as I admitted earlier in this interview, Governments do lie. They do it for their ass-covering purposes. (Well, but--) It's common.

So, it's especially important for journalists to ask questions. For me, the line is when something becomes a conspiracy theory is when it's clear that the person offering the alternative theory is locked in their own dogma and they're dismissing any evidence to the contrary, which is saying any evidence that backs up the officially promoted theory, and that they keep enlarging their conspiracy theory and enlarging their mandate to "ask questions."

JON One thing –

JONKAY Every time a contrary authority is raised.

JON Do you understand that the 9/11 Family Members—they submitted hundreds of well-researched questions to the 9/11 Commission to answer. They only answered 30 percent of their questions.

JONKAY Okay, but let me step back a little bit.

JON Now, hold on a minute. Let me—

- JONKAY I agree with you that from a moral point of view it is extremely important to address concerns from survivors from—
- JON It's not just about survivors. There are a multitude of questions, there are many things that the 9/11 Commission either omitted from its report or distorted and so on and so forth. I mean, the mandate of the 9/11 Commission was to give a "full and complete accounting of the 9/11 attacks." And every whistleblower that they didn't speak to, or every avenue they didn't look into, it just shows that they failed in their mandate and, there's a multitude of problems with the 9/11 Commission. But—
- JONKAY One thing I found, as a journalist, there is as human beings a tendency to assign great moral value to the questions asked, and the testimony and the beliefs of people who are directly affected by tragedies. So, if it's EMS first responders or family members of victims or, you know, injured victims themselves who step forward, that we do have a tendency to assign them a lot of moral credibility. (Ha!) Unfortunately, what you do find as a journalist is that sometimes these are the people who are actually the most least informed.
- One example, for instance, is the false movement to link vaccines to autism—some of the biggest proponents of that theory are parents who have autistic kids. And one of the reasons these theories, these false theories about vaccines and autism have been promulgated in the media, is because reporters want to believe the parents. They think it's morally important to believe the testimonials of autistic kids. But those are often the people that are least informed because they're so upset by the situation (Okay, let me--) because they're so personally affected, they latch on to non-sensicle theories. So, in some cases, sadly—this is a sad thing to say—they're actually the last people we should be listening to because sometimes they're the most emotionally vested in the answer to the questions.
- JON You couldn't be more wrong. Let me—do you know who the September 11th Advocates are?
- JONKAY They used to be called, the term, I forget—a group of women who are especially prominent and I forget the name that the media gave them.
- JON They were referred to as The Jersey Girls (That's it) And it was 9/11 Family Member Sally Regenhard who actually called them that. I want the audience to know who these women are.

They are four widows who lost their husbands on 9/11. They are essentially responsible for the creation of the 9/11 Commission. They were part of the 9/11 Family Steering Committee. They worked with the staffers of the 9/11 Commission. They provided hundreds of well-researched questions for the 9/11 Commission to answer. They attended every public hearing of the 9/11 Commission. And before and during the 9/11 Commission, they were in the media a lot. They were part of the process from the very beginning.

I want you and people to understand that these aren't just any 9/11 Family Members. They went through hell and know what they're talking about. Or, at the very least, should be listened to. So, for you to say that they're the last people we should be listening to, I think that's absolutely absurd. And, incidentally, I heard you say that 9/11 Truthers or advocates for 9/11 justice started appearing after it was found that there were no WMD in Iraq. Do you know that the family members are actually, technically, the first members of the "9/11 Truth Movement?" Do you understand that? Do you realize that?

JONKAY I can see how that, based on how you define that term, that would make sense.

JON Okay, well.

All right, my next question. Is it fair to say that you consider yourself to be a Neoconservative?

JONKAY I don't think, you know what, I don't consider myself a Neoconservative. I've—this may surprise you—I've actually kind of moved away from the right wing of the political spectrum in the last few years. In part, because I'm so disappointed in how the Iraq war did turn out. It is true that the Iraq war ended up being a really bad idea. I've admitted this in my journalism. I admit also to being a columnist here in Canada who thought otherwise. I thought the Iraq war would end up very differently. And, foreign policy adventurism has very mixed results over the last 10 or 15 years.

So, I'm someone who's changed his mind about a lot of things.

JON Well, I saw that you've written for papers like *The Weekly Standard* and belong to an organization called the Foundation for Defense of

Democracies, which has James Woolsey as the chairman and includes people like Michael Ledeen.

So, you're saying that you don't like being lumped into a category of people simply because you may agree with some of what they say?

JONKAY Let me put it this way. If—

JON Because I can relate to that.

JONKAY If anyone—for instance, the logical extension of the Neocon thesis would be that we should start bombing Iran and that we should, perhaps, even consider invading Iran to halt their nuclear program. But I think that would be a terrible idea. And, in truth, I actually don't know—I know very few American conservatives. Even people who write for commentary magazines would agree with that thesis.

I think Neoconservatism, although it's still used as a term of abuse in American political circles, I think the Neoconservative movement was, as we knew it, was essentially killed off by the failure of the Iraq war to meet its expectations of its loudest cheerleaders.

JON I think they still exist. I think PNAC closed its doors and now they've started this new organization—I think it's called FPI or the acronym is FPI. So, they're still out there. Ray McGovern who was a CIA analyst for 27 years called them the "crazies," and when they came back into office after Bush was "elected" President, he said: "Uh-oh, the crazies are back."

JONKAY [Laughs] Look, there's always going to be people who have a really ambitious view of what American military power can accomplish. However, I think the ranks of those people have been vastly diminished because of what happened in Iraq—and not just Iraq, also Libya. Let's not forget Libya, which America had a relatively modest role in compared to its role in Afghanistan and in to Iraq. And look at how that turned out. Libya's a mess.

So, I think anyone who, back in 2002 and would say: "We should start bombing this country. We'll take it over. We'll turn it into a democracy. What could go wrong?" In 2002, 2003 people still took that view seriously. Now very few people take that seriously. And that's what killed Neoconservatism.

JON Okay. Why do people who write pieces against those who are advocating for 9/11 justice lump in crazy things like UFOs, the Illuminati, reptiles and such. I'm an advocate for 9/11 justice. I don't advocate for that crazy bullshit. And I know many others who don't either. So why—

JONKAY The reason for this is that, for whatever reason, some of the people who have been the most vocal proponents of the "9/11 Truth Movement" have been people who believe in all sorts of other bizarre things. And the example I give in my book is this fellow Icke in Britain. His first name escapes me now—he's the one whose thesis involves human beings being ruled over by lizard people. I can actually look up his first name on the internet. David Icke is his name.

JON I'm well familiar with who he is. I've never promoted him. I never supported him. And the same goes for Alex Jones. I tried to be a team player at one time, but I found out that he was just a member of what I call the conspiracy theory industry, and I want nothing to do with him. And he does not speak for me. And neither do people like David Icke.

So, I don't think it's fair that writers like you lump in all these crazy sounding things. It's crazy by association is what it is.

JONKAY Okay, but it's not that—look, when I would go to campus events and I would see people campaigning for 9/11 truth, they'd be wearing Alex Jones tee-shirts.

JON Oh I understand. He has a lot of power.

JONKAY Okay, so but that's—it's not the basis that we therefore—that journalists like me would therefore say: "These people want 9/11 truth. Many of them are followers of Alex Jones. And many are followers of David Icke, or whatever." Like it's—you know, if you ask these people: "How did you learn this information?" Many would say: "I heard about it on Infowars."

JON Well, do you know that a lot people who got turned on to places like Infowars, they first started questioning 9/11 by themselves, and then they came across people like Alex Jones and started to listen to what he said. And they were well-intentioned, well-meaning people who took bad information and started promoting it.

And—it's like, unfortunately, he had a lot of pull. He essentially helped to co-opt what I considered to be the "9/11 Truth Movement." Our signs used to say: "Support the 9/11 Family Members. Expose the 9/11 Cover-up." And then they started to say: "New World Order. False Flag Attack." And that came—or 9/11 was an inside job—which is a phrase I can't stand. And, that was because of people like Alex Jones.

So, it's unfair, I think—essentially, what you're doing is you're taking a few bad apples out of the cart and then throwing away the rest of the cart and saying they're all bad apples, as well.

JONKAY Ah—look, it's—if you're part of an ideological movement, you can't control who the major players in that movement are going to be. (Well—) It's kind of like saying, look—

JON You actually can. When the corporate media—there's a multitude of people out there that could have been spoken to but were not—like Paul Thompson, the creator of the Complete 9/11 Timeline. He was never on Fox News. They chose people like Jim Fetzer and Webster Tarpley and Alex Jones and David von Kleist. And all of the people who are willing to promote their theories about what happened that day. They did not—

JONKAY Tarpley is a good example. I went to Washington to do a speaking event and Webster Tarpley was the guy I was debating. I was shocked how many people showed up to hear Webster Tarpley speak. He has a huge following. So, it's not surprising the media is going to say, these guys have large followings within, you find, the conspiracy industry. So, these are people who are mainstream advocates of this kind of conspiracy. Mainstream in quotes, I guess.

JON Most people in the "9/11 Truth Movement" started to see through Webster Tarpley's bullshit over the years. And, as a matter of fact, there's something called the "Kennebunkport Warning" that you can look up if you want. Essentially, he called Cindy Sheehan a name, and I defended her against him and as a result of me defending her and so on and so forth, he went on a stage, in New York City during an anniversary event and inferred that I was part of COINTELPRO.

So, Webster Tarpley is not someone that should be taken seriously, okay? (Okay)

Why do writers like you and others find it necessary to try and discredit the messenger by name-calling and assigning psychological profiling diagnoses instead of taking the time to answer the actual questions, or to see if the questions were ever honestly answered?

JONKAY Well, look, in my case, for people who read my book, they'll see in my chapter on the personality types of people, who did become heavily invested in the "9/11 Truth Movement," I was careful to say: "Look, these people fall into different types." And I actually said in my book that a very small percentage of the people I interviewed were clinically insane. Most of them were quite sane. And there were people who had profound feelings of distrust toward the society around them—that was intended to be the unifying characteristic about the people I spoke to. And I broke them up into subsets. Some of them were sort of militant campus revolutionary types. Others were sort of middle-aged intellectuals who latched on to 9/11 Truth because they love puzzle-solving and they like the complexity of it, and they love immersing themselves in the research. And there were others who were more mystically minded. David Icke falls into that category, I would argue, and who see the geopolitical world around us as sort of a smokescreen on some larger truth that lies behind it, but they see it in mystical terms.

So, I went into this whole typology, but as I say, as I made clear in the book, I didn't find these people to be clinically nuts. What I was trying to do was discover why sane, smart people believe stuff that I find as far-fetched. And I believe, in my book, I didn't engage in name-calling.

JON You've called several people cranks. In fact, I looked up the word. It showed up 35 times in your book. So—

JONKAY The word crank—okay, so, when you look at someone who's a crank, you know, when we use the term colloquially and you see them and they start talking about how we'd all be driving around and flying planes if the U.S. oil industry didn't kill off the flying plane, or they have theories about aids; or they have a theory about the banking system; or the global money supply; or about Jews; or about who really wrote Shakespeare's plays; we all know what a crank is. A crank is someone who has a weird theory about everything. And these people, if they have a weird theory about aids, you can usually predict they're going to have a weird theory about B, C, and D. And, we all know the type. It's a word that's accessible to my readers, which is why I used it in my book. I didn't mean it to be like a term of

ethnic abuse. I was just trying to tap in to the concept of what we know of as a crank. That they're people who exist and that was a little label I put on them.

JON Okay, well, that's the modus operandi of everyone who's ever written a hit piece is that they love to call us names, suggest that we're crazy. I've seen people like Glenn Beck try to say that someone who took a few shots in the Holocaust Museum who murdered someone was a hero of the "9/11 Truth Movement," trying to paint us all as murderers. I mean, it's absolutely absurd.

And with regard to the psychological need—do you think I want to be doing this? I mean, do you think I wanted to spend the last 13 years of my life dealing with an aggressive corporate media, aggressive debunkers, aggressive members of the "9/11 Truth Movement," crank phone calls, death threats? I was spied on by a company called ITRR, you know, watching 9/11 First Responders become sick and die, listening to 9/11 Family Members cry because they want real truth, accountability, and justice. I mean, that's absolutely absurd. I believed everything my Government and the TV was telling me. It was THEIR actions and THEIR lies that made me try and do the right thing. I don't know, maybe you're right. Maybe I have a psychological need to do the right thing.

JONKAY Look, I've never met you. I couldn't say why you're drawn to this movement. I enjoy talking to you, but—ah, my book is about primarily about the people I met. I guess, it—the reason you're doing this is, right now, known only to yourself. I'm not going to try and psychoanalyze you over the phone.

JON It's the right thing to do. We were lied to about a multitude of things. Every—most investigations we had, had its own version of compromise and corruption. And I can't understand—in what world does it make sense not to seek truth, accountability, and justice for the murder of 2,976 people, especially knowing that we were lied to about that day, and especially considering what that day has been used for. It doesn't make any sense to me. I don't understand the thinking behind that.

In the beginning of your book, you say that you're not going to debunk every theory and, instead, you pointed to things like *Popular Mechanics'* book and the blog ScrewLooseChange. *Popular Mechanics* does not talk about things like whistleblowers, or the lies of the NSA or CIA, or Saudi

Arabia, or Philip Zelikow, the 9/11 Commission—a multitude of other things. As for ScrewLooseChange, did you know that at one time, one of their "star posters" was someone by the name of Troy Sexton who liked to crank call activists, such as myself, and family members to harass them, record the conversations, and post them online for everyone to hear? I mean, come on, really? Is that the best you could have pointed to?

JONKAY Ah, I pointed to a lot of sources in my book—

JON I understand that.

JONKAY But that website—actually, I thought it was a clever way to use the conspiracy theorists' own media tools against them. That's what I found interesting about them.

JON Well, they're a bunch of assholes is what they are. (All right) And they really don't deserve any attention, whatsoever.

All right, my next question. At one time, supporting the 9/11 Family Members was considered the thing to do. In your book, you essentially infer that we use 9/11 Family Members because: "Damaged survivors are particularly effective as recruiters for conspiracist movements because the spectacle of their grief short-circuits our intellectual faculties—much the same way that graphic testimony from a crime victim can sway a jury to convict an innocent defendant."

Now, first of all, I don't appreciate the inference. If you want truth, accountability, and justice for the 9/11 attacks, working alongside 9/11 Family Members seeking the same, is only natural. And, I might add, the right thing to do. Secondly, I came into this all on my own. No author, movie, or family member brought me into this cause. I saw that we were being lied to, and I tried to do something about it. Now, do you or do you not think we should be supporting 9/11 Family Members seeking truth, accountability, and justice?

JONKAY I think everybody supports truth, accountability, and justice, but I don't think that theories advanced by a lot of people in this field have any credibility, because they've been investigated. It's now been the passage of 14 years. There's no additional evidence that any of these theories that we were lied to on a massive scale about the true origins of 9/11. They don't hold water. And the fact that someone is related to someone who was

tragically killed on September 11, 2001, that doesn't give them any kind of magical insight into why that event occurred. In fact, as I've discussed before, sometimes it makes them less insightful about the true origins of that event because they're psychologically wounded by the event, and so they become more vulnerable to far-fetched theories that might have caused that event. It happens all the time. You see it with examples I've given you. It happens with wars. It happens with the origins of autism. It happens with people who get aids, and sometimes they latch onto bizarre theories about how aids is propagated. The human mind becomes more vulnerable when it's investigating the causes of its own misery.

JON Okay, the true origins, according to the official account in the 9/11 Report says that there were no state sponsors for the 9/11 attack, and yet we have found and heard over and over again that specific Saudis that are linked to the Government helped to finance the attacks. But, the 9/11 Report absolved the Government of Saudi Arabia. And, in fact, they absolved people like Princess Haifa, Osama Bassnan and so on and so forth. And so, there you go right there—

JONKAY Actually, I'm on the same side with you about the Saudi stuff, because apparently there's all kinds of information in the 9/11 Report about the Saudi Government and Saudi nationals, which was essentially blacked out, right? (Well—) and we haven't seen it yet. I'd love to see that information.

JON Do you know why it was blacked out? Because people like Philip Zelikow blocked half of the Saudi interview requests; he fired someone by the name of Dana Lesemann (RIP), who was on the Joint Congressional Inquiry who helped to author the 28-redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry. He blocked her access to those 28-redacted pages when she was trying to do her job. And so she went through a back channel to get them and as a result he fired her. Dietrich Snell and Philip Zelikow took part in a "late night editing session" to remove Saudi support from the 9/11 Report and move the information into a footnote in the back of the book against the wishes of the staffers who worked on the 9/11 Commission.

So, that instance, alone, how could you trust the 9/11 Report? My God, they had Government minders who were intimidating witnesses. I mean, the families released three statements during the time of the 9/11 Commission that said that there should not be any Government minders, whatsoever.

Now, think about what I just said. They were intimidating witnesses. So, how could you EVER come to the conclusion that the 9/11 Report is the end-all, be-all—the definitive account of 9/11. It's absurd to me.

JONKAY You know, no report commissioned by the Government—I agree with you on this—is ever going to be truly 100 percent objective, because at the end of the day, it's being commissioned and paid for by the Government, so it's never going to be 100 percent independent.

But, when I read that report—and I guess it was what five years ago that I read the report? Whatever it was, six years ago? I remember cross-checking with what I knew, with the evidence that was cited, with the sources that were cited, and it read reasonably to me. I also liked the fact that the report knocks Democrats and Republicans alike. No one can read that report and say: "Oh, this was written by a bunch of Republican stooges." It's not written that way.

And subsequent books—you know, there's a book that was written by Thomas Kean about, you know, sort of what it was like during the 9/11 Commission. There have been numerous journalist inquiries into the functioning of that Commission. They have identified one or two problems (heh) and you've talked about problems, but by and large it was a credible and well-respected commission exercise—and, by the way, the results of the 9/11 Commission Report have largely stood up. I would like to see more information about the Saudi connection. By and large it's not as if the results in that report have been massively discredited since it was published.

JON But how could—they didn't do their job. And the families, when they fought for the 9/11 Commission, they expected that people would be held accountable. We're talking about people who lied, or organizations that lied. Don't you think that people should have been held accountable for that?

JONKAY Well, as I say, everybody loves the theory of accountability and transparency, as do I, but I think your questioning about accountability and transparency starts from the premise that some horrible, overarching fiction was being promoted by the 9/11 Commission. (No—) On that thing, you and I just fundamentally disagree. I don't think that was the case.

JON It starts on the premise that they lied and that people need to be held accountable. I think Thomas Kean said at one time that if he was in a

position of power, there are people in Government who would no longer be in their jobs.

JONKAY You know, on that point I agree too. You know, the CIA Director, he didn't lose his job. It's true. Actually, you and I agree on that, that there were massive intelligence failures. This happened after Katrina. George Bush flies in, says the director of FEMA did a bang-up job. This is kind of what Governments do. Often the dishonesty expresses itself through cynical reactions to Government failures. People cover their asses and they congratulate themselves for their performance even if their performance was essentially a failure, as it was in this case, because they failed to prevent 9/11.

JON Let me ask you a question. Do you think that elements within our Government are capable of hurting Americans?

JONKAY I think that there are elements within the U.S. Government that are remarkably indifferent to the suffering of certain classes of Americans. For instance, American prisoners. For instance, Americans in some poor communities. I think that people in the lower classes, people who are mentally ill, people who are prisoners in America, people that have very little constituency in the media or in politics, they often get the shaft in the United States because there's no repercussions for victimizing them.

JON How about the heroes of 9/11? Do you think that they would hurt them?

JONKAY One thing that you have seen is, at least for a while, you saw an indifference to the medical conditions that resulted from their activities on 9/11—breathing in all sorts of toxic chemicals.

That part—you know, you talk about the "9/11 Truth Movement"—that part, there is some resonance for me. That you had people working in extremely dangerous and toxic environments during the after effects of that tragedy, and some of them did get very sick.

JON They were lied to about the air and the water quality down there in an effort to open Wall Street. This is well documented. And, as a result, thousands of 9/11 first responders have gotten sick. Well over a thousand have died. No one was held accountable for these lies. And these lies were directed by the White House.

So, the idea that elements within our Government would never hurt Americans is absurd. I mean, look at how many soldiers they were willing to send to war to their deaths? How many chemical weapons did they use, which caused our soldiers to get sick. I don't think they give a SHIT about Americans, or [AUDIOBAD]

JONKAY Well, that's a pretty broad statement. I can generalize—I wouldn't go that far. I do think, sometimes, Governments are indifferent to the suffering of some disenfranchised communities. But, broadly, I don't think it's true that Governments don't care about the citizenry in general.

JON Our Government is more—does not work for the people. It works for the corporate interests. And this is well documented. I think the support for Congress right now is at its lowest it's ever been.

My next question: Are you familiar with groups like 9/11CitizensWatch or HistoryCommons?

JONKAY Ah, HistoryCommons, yes, I've seen that. Some of these are sources that I investigated when I was doing my book but, as you know, my book was published in 2011. So, I'm not state-of-the-art when it comes to some of the sources you're talking about.

JON All right. 9/11CitizensWatch was a citizen's watchdog group formed by the late John Judge and Kyle Hence to make sure the 9/11 Commission was doing its job. They worked with the 9/11 Family Steering Committee as best as they could. HistoryCommons is the current site that houses the "Complete 9/11 Timeline" that was started by Paul Thompson.

And, I didn't know if you'd heard of them because they weren't mentioned in your book. And these things that are an essential part of the history and tools of the "9/11 Truth Movement" and you completely overlooked them. How is that possible?

JONKAY Ah, it's a big movement, or at least it was at the time. There were thousands of potential people to look towards. Some people consented to interviews. Some people didn't consent to interviews. I tended to prioritize people who gave me interviews, or whose documentation that I could find on the internet was particularly interesting or original. There were some fairly minor figures in the "9/11 Truth Movement" that figured prominently in my book because they were extremely forthcoming in interviews and said

interesting things. (Well—) That's the way it is with any writing exercise. You have to pick and choose the sources you use.

JON All right, since we're on the subject of what was and wasn't mentioned in your book, I did a little counting. And you have:

Alex Jones mentioned - 16x
David Ray Griffin - 15x
Webster Tarpley - 14x
Richard Gage - 11x
Robert Balsamo - 8x
Kevin Barrett - 6x
Eric Hufschmid - 4x
Theierry Meyssan - 2x

And so on and so forth. And then you have:

Paul Thompson - 0
Kevin Fenton - 0
Ray Nowosielski - 0
Jenna Orkin - 0
John Judge - 0
Peter Lance - 0
Phil Shenon - 0
James Ridgeway - 0
Erik Larson - 0
James Dorman - 0

And do you know the difference between those people you covered the most and those you didn't?

JONKAY No, what is that?

JON Well, the first bunch likes to focus on promoting things like controlled demolition or a missile hitting the Pentagon. The second bunch does its best to promote solid information and ask good questions.

So, I can't believe so many important people, like Paul Thompson and John Judge, my god! They were [AUDIOBAD]

JONKAY Well, Michael Ruppert was also extremely prominent in my book and he's not someone who believes in crazy missiles or UFOs or anything like that. He was a guy who was just asking. I went all the way to California to—and, by the way, Richard Gage himself doesn't have any crazy theories about 9/11. He's all about the engineering and asking questions. He is by no means someone who is considered marginal to 9/11. (So, you're—) And Richard Gage, if you ask him what happened on 9/11, he's like extremely careful. He'll say: "I don't know. I'm just asking questions. I want a citizen's inquiry." So, I don't think you can credibly accuse me of simply going for the people who are the most extreme in their views.

JON Well, it certainly seemed that way. Now, why did you reference *Loose Change* and not *9/11 Press for Truth*?

JONKAY The reason I—sorry, unfortunately, we've been at this for an hour, so I might have to go back to work soon, but let me address that question because I think it's important.

The reason I addressed *Loose Change* is because so many of the people who I interviewed—especially, young people—when I said: "How did you get into this movement?" They said: "I got into it because I was surfing late at night the internet and I came across this film *Loose Change*, and it was so well produced and it was so persuasive, and that's what made me get on to a "9/11 Truth Movement."

So, so many people said that. I said, obviously, this *Loose Change* film (Well, okay—) is an important phenomena and that's why I featured it in my book.

JON The reason that *Loose Change* was so prominent was because that was the movie that the corporate media chose to focus on to give attention to—to paint as kind of like our Holy Grail—like everybody in the "9/11 Truth Movement" believes everything that's within *Loose Change*, and that's simply not the truth.

And don't feel too bad about not covering *9/11 Press for Truth* or its sequel, which is *In Their Own Words: The Untold Stories of the 9/11 Families*, the corporate media completely ignored them, as well. However, every movie critic that was willing to review *9/11 Press for Truth*, gave it a good review. So, imagine that.

JONKAY All right.

JON So, we've been doing this for an hour. Let me see if there are any questions. Have you read the different press releases from the Jersey Girls over the years that call into question different things about 9/11?

JONKAY Ah, I did read at least some of their material when I was doing the book back in 2009-2010. I can't say, as I already admitted, I can't say that I've kept up with this field since the publication of my book four years ago.

JON All right. Did you read the report compiled by 9/11 Family Members Lorie Van Auken and Mindy Kleinberg that shows how poorly the 9/11 Commission answered their questions?

JONKAY I can't remember if I read that document. But, I do know that there are relatives of 9/11 victims who are concerned about what was and what wasn't covered in the 9/11 Commission Report.

JON All right. Are you aware that on September 11, 2006, 9/11 Family Members got together at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. to call for a new investigation into the 9/11, that in February 2008 the Jersey Girls called for a new investigation, that in 2009, over a hundred 9/11 Family Members supported our effort to get a new investigation into 9/11 onto the ballot of New York City?

JONKAY I'm aware that for these people 9/11 was, tragically, a defining element in their life, and I'm sure in many cases to their dying day, they will insist on new investigations and push for alternative theories behind what happened. This is what happens when people are traumatized by horrible events. (Why do you say—) They never—understandably, they never lose their hunger for trying to get new information about these horrible events.

JON Why do you say that they're pushing theories instead of asking questions? Seeking accountability. Why do you have to say they're promoting theories instead of those things?

JONKAY In the "9/11 Truth Movement," what I found is that everybody just says: "Oh, I'm asking questions. I'm asking questions. I'm asking questions. But, when you talk to them, the reason they're asking questions is because they have some alternative theory behind what happened on 9/11. And, if you push them further, they will admit to you that well, I suspect it was an

inside job. (Well—) And they don't want to say that because it sounds crazy and, in my mind, it is kind of crazy. (And that gives—)

So, instead what they said: "Oh, I'm demanding transparency. I'm demanding accountability." But these are fancy words to say: "I think 9/11 was an inside job and I'm looking for information to prove that." That's essentially what you find when you talk to these people.

JON I think—I look at 9/11 as a crime, not an act of war, and as with every crime there are suspects FOR that crime. And, I think that along with people like Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, elements within our Government AND other Governments, like Saudi Arabia, like Pakistan, have more than earned the title of suspect for the crime of 9/11.

JONKAY Fair enough, okay.

JON And, you know, I'm not trying to prove that, but I certainly don't discount it. I don't think that it's impossible.

My last—

JONKAY Well, that's—what you just said, to my mind, is the most reasonable articulation of the 9/11 truth thesis. But, as I say, most people I interviewed don't stop there. They will go and they will say, you know—

JON Well, then I think you need to start talking to a lot more people—people like Paul Thompson; people like Dr. Nafeez Ahmed; people like Ray Nowosielski or John Duffy; or Rory O'Connor; or Erik Larson; or James Dorman. I mean, there's a whole number of people you could have spoken to that come across a lot more credibly than the individuals you've spoken to.

JONKAY Now? Now, for the last hour, now I've spoken to you. So, presumably, you know—(Okay—) you've put yourself amongst that group, so I appreciate this opportunity to have this conversation with you. I did learn some things and thanks for taking the time to talk with me.

JON Well, would you like to apologize for misrepresenting Advocacy for 9/11 Justice?"

JONKAY No! I'm not going to apologize. I didn't say terrible things about these people.

JON You misrepresented...

JONKAY In fact, in some cases, the Wall Street Journal made a point in their review of my book—The Wall Street Journal made a point to say: "This guy Jonathan Kay actually painted a sympathetic picture of a lot of these people." So, I don't think I have to apologize.

JON I do—you misrepresented it. I think you owe an apology to the Family Members who have been seeking truth, accountability, and justice. That's my personal opinion, but if you don't want to apologize, that's fine.

JONKAY Fair enough.

JON Is there anything that you would like to promote at this time?

JONKAY Ah, no. Just to say, thanks a lot for the opportunity. If any of you wants to direct criticism or helpful links, I'm on Twitter. I'm @JonKay and, you know, if people are listening at this point—it's been more than an hour—thank you for dedicating your time to listening to me and Jon Gold talk about this. I appreciate it.

JON Well, thank you, Jon, for taking the time today.

JONKAY Take care.

JON All right, bye.



Chapter/Episode 26 – Dan Christensen – April 23, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Dan Christensen (DAN)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week we're going to speak with the journalist that is reporting on what seems to be a cover up pertaining to a senior adviser to the Saudi Royal Family and their possible connection to some of the 9/11 hijackers in Florida.

Hi, this is Jon and I'm here with Dan Christensen. Dan, how are you doing today?

DAN Hi Jon. How are you?

JON I'm doing great. All right. So, I'm going to read your bio for everybody. Dan founded *Florida Bulldog* in 2009 using the name *Broward Bulldog*. He is an award-winning former investigative reporter for *The Miami Herald* and *Daily Business Review*, and one of South Florida's most experienced reporters. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in political science from the University of Miami.

Dan's stories about Broward Sheriff Ken Jenne's private business dealings sparked a federal corruption investigation that landed Jenne in prison in 2007. His stories about hidden and falsified court records in Broward, Miami-Dade and elsewhere in Florida for The Miami Herald in 2006 led to a pair of unanimous Florida Supreme Court decisions in 2007 and 2010 outlawing those practices.

Similar stories for the Daily Business Review in 2003-2004 exposed excessive secrecy in the federal courts. The executive director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press later called Dan "the nation's leading journalist on an issue of tremendous First Amendment importance: the increasing trend toward secrecy in our nation's courts." In 2000-2001, Dan's reporting about a deadly gun-planting conspiracy and cover-up by Miami police resulted in the indictment of more than a dozen officers and significant Governmental reform, including the establishment of Miami's long sought civilian review panel.

So, very impressive. That's your bio. All right, so we're going to get right into the questions. Number one, what was the day of 9/11 like for you?

DAN Well, it was sort of a regular day for me. I was working at the *Daily Business Review*, which is a publication in South Florida that focuses on legal and business news. So, when 9/11 happened—the paper that I worked for didn't cover it, per se. It was—I was like everybody else, I probably watched a lot of it unfold on television and in the daily newspapers, which at the time were fairly pretty aggressive in covering it. (Okay) So, it was basically a day where I watched. I was on the sidelines. It wasn't until years later when I first got involved with all this.

JON Well, okay. What was the first thing you questioned about the 9/11 attacks?

DAN Well, the first thing was when Anthony Summers contacted me in August of 2011. He and his wife, Robbyn Swan, wrote a book called *The Eleventh Day*, which was, you know, actually it's a really good account of what happened and the events surrounding 9/11. And the book had just gone to press or was just about to go to press, and I've known Tony for a long time. He and his wife live in Ireland, so he contacted me since I'm in Florida and said: "I've got this lead and couldn't get it into the book. Do you want to help me report it out?" And I said: "Sure. And I've been on it ever since."

JON Okay. So, with regard to the *Eleventh Day*—and this is probably something

I should be bringing up with Anthony Summers, but I just want to mention it—there's no doubt that elements within what's called the "9/11 Truth Movement" promoted bad information and bad theories and some acted in ways that didn't help us in the long run. That being said, I didn't like how he treated the "9/11 Truth Movement" in his book. He went after the weakest links to denounce us and in the same book used the work of people like Paul Thompson and John Judge and Kevin Fenton, people who would be considered members of the quote unquote "9/11 Truth Movement." So, good or bad, it was the "9/11 Truth Movement" that did its best to bring attention to the family members fighting for accountability and justice. And it was the "9/11 Truth Movement" that did its best to bring attention to the sick and dying 9/11 first responders and, we'd been covering issues like Saudi Arabia and the 28-redacted pages for years. Along with a multitude of other issues, so, I never had the opportunity to speak with him, but I just—it left a bad taste in my mouth.

DAN I can assure you that Tony is a top-flight professional reporter and if he had, and I realize there was a section on this, in which he looked at a number of different things involving what you would call the "9/11 Truth Movement" and he discounted some of their theories.

JON Oh, absolutely. Believe me, I know. [Laughs] I know there are many theories out there that can be easily discredited and so forth, but you know, there's another faction that supported the families, that were asking questions, and demanding answers, and, were there from the beginning helping the families fight for the 9/11 Commission and all that stuff, so. Anyway.

DAN I will tell you this, I think Tony's a—I mean, I wouldn't have associated with him if I didn't think that. He's an honest guy who calls them like he sees them, you know? Right or wrong. Right or wrong.

JON No, that's fine.

DAN That's all you can ask from anyone.

JON Yeah, that's fine. Now, can you please give us an overview of this story concerning what happened in Sarasota?

DAN All right, well, the story begins when Tony spoke with the person that ultimately became our principal, but not only, source for the very first story

that ran, I believe it was on September 8, 2011, and it ran on what was then BrowardBulldog.org and is now FloridaBulldog.org. We changed the name a few months ago—sort of to reflect the—Broward is the name of the county where I am based. And we ended up writing stories that were more than just about Broward. That's why we changed the name.

Anyway, the story that we initially wrote about—this was the same day that we published it—the *Miami Herald* purchased it and had published it. So, a lot of times you Google around you'll see it as if it was a *Miami Herald* story or it was some different story, but it wasn't. They simply purchased our story and ran it as they have with a number of subsequent stories over the last four years.

But the story begins with this meeting in which this counterintelligence agent spilled the beans, I guess, for lack of a better phrase, on what had happened and was concerned about it and thought that it needed to come out—wasn't looking for glory or anything else, just telling me what happened. And it was so surprising because not a word of this had come out anywhere before. And Tony had the story and we've developed it a bit and then we went to Senator Bob Graham, who used to be the Governor of Florida and served two terms, and after that was a Senator, head of the Senate Intelligence Committee for maybe—he was in the Senate for three terms. And briefly he had run for President back in 2004. And we took this information to him and he was quite surprised and, frankly, upset about it, because he felt, frankly so I believe, that the FBI should have told him about their investigation of these people—what we call the Sarasota Saudi Family.

And the gist of what happened here, or was alleged to have happened, is that there were a family of Saudis who had lived in the Sarasota area in a development called Prestancia, which is actually just outside the city limits of Sarasota on the south side. It's an upscale community. And they had a home in there and had probably lived there for five or six years before that. The home was owned by Mr. and Mrs. al-Hijji. Abdulaziz was the husband and the wife's name was Anoud. Anoud's father, this guy named Esam Ghazzawi, who was an adviser to one of the Princes of the Royal Family of Saudi Arabia.

Anyway. So, they—the story sort of begins on the ground level here when after 9/11, neighbors start calling the authorities to report that these people had left abruptly a couple weeks before. But had moved out basically, but

had left behind their furniture, cars, food in the refrigerator. They left the pool pump running. Stuff like that. So, it took a little while, a few weeks, I think, or maybe even a month or so for the state and federal agents to go in the place. But when they did, they found all this—like dirty diapers and, it looked like they went out for a while. In fact, they had left the country.

And, on that basis, an investigation began into what had happened and we were told by this intelligence agent that they had done what you would expect to be typical police work. Since it was a gated community, they went to a gatehouse, they got records of people coming and going. They took photographs of license tags. They took logs of people coming and going. And they found through those logs and through those license tags, the cars driven by some of the hijackers, including Mohamed Atta, had gone through there and had visited that home. There were some others, too, including a guy named Adnan Shukrijumah who lived here in Broward County for a while in the town of Miramar, and later became very well known as an operative, senior operative, for al Qaeda. He was reportedly killed by the Pakistani Government a couple months ago.

Anyway, they find this out, they do a phone, they do what they call link analysis on the phone records trying to find out who made calls and they found, not necessarily—and we don't know all the details of this—but they didn't find, necessarily calls from Mohamed Atta going home, but calls that link analysis determined that Mohamed Atta and other folks would call numbers that also had calls in and out of this particular home. That's how it was described to us.

So, we have these very interesting findings, yet none of this was reported to the 9/11 Commission or to Bob Graham's—not Bob Graham, he was co-chair, but the committee that he led—the Joint Inquiry that was put together by Congress in the months after 9/11 to do an inquiry into what happened and such. And he, as I said, we spoke to him about this. He was quite concerned that he hadn't been told about this. He subsequently did checking on his own and he's told us that this information was never passed along to his committee, that it was an oversight or something. Nobody knew about this and nobody knew about it on the 9/11 Commission. If you read the 9/11 Commission Report there's no reference to what happened in Sarasota.

JON

That's very interesting. Now, the family that left, the Saudi family that left, were they ever questioned outside of the United States?

DAN Well, we have been told by the FBI that they were questioned. We don't know where, when, particularly. It does appear from some of the documents that the FBI subsequently released on this that Mrs. al-Hijji was questioned at one point when she returned to the home of her mother a couple of years after 9/11 to sell the property. They were there for, I don't know, a month or so. But we can't be—the records that we've got are too sketchy to know what's going on.

It sort of leads to the second part of the story is that we are currently pursuing a Freedom of Information lawsuit with the Justice Department and the FBI trying to open up the file to see what's going on, and the FBI has told us that there's nothing to all of us. They've said that on a number of occasions, but they are unwilling to explain the basis for that opinion. And without that declaration. And, frankly, I am quite prepared to believe there was nothing to all of this, if they are willing to explain why. So far, they haven't done that.

JON Well, with regard to the FBI cooperating with regard to 9/11 investigations, are you familiar with the site HistoryCommons.org?

DAN Yeah, little bit.

JON Okay. This is an entry that was from HistoryCommons. It's called: "Summer 2003 FBI reluctance over Saudi connection leads to complaint from 9/11 Commissioner." And it says:

The FBI is initially reluctant to provide documents to the 9/11 Commission team investigating possible links between hijackers Khalid Almihdhar and Nawaf Alhazmi on the one hand and some Saudi Government officials on the other.

Investigators' Attitude - The investigators, Michael Jacobson, Raj De, and Hyon Kim, have come to believe that, in author Philip Shenon's words, there could be "few innocent explanations for why so many Saudis and other Arab men living in Southern California had come forward to help the two hijackers—to help them find a home, to set up bank accounts, to travel." Jacobson previously worked on the 9/11 Congressional Inquiry and formed the opinion then that FBI officials had tried to hide much of the

evidence in its files linked to Almihdhar and Alhazmi.

FBI Drags Its Feet - At first, according to Shenon, the FBI "is as uncooperative with the 9/11 Commission as it had been in the Congressional investigation" and is "painfully slow to meet the Commission's initial request for documents and interviews." The three investigators want a formal protest to be made over the foot-dragging, but realize their team leader, Dietrich Snell, will not make one, due to what they perceive to be over caution on his part. Therefore, they approach 9/11 Commissioner and former Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick and she then contacts FBI Director Robert Mueller, warning him he will lose the Commission's goodwill if he does not start co-operating. [Shenon, 2008, pp. 184-185] In the spring of 2004, Mueller will launch a charm offensive against the Commission and will make significant efforts to comply with its requests.

So, that's one instance of the FBI being uncooperative with regard to the 9/11 investigations. And—

DAN Well, clearly, clearly Senator Graham believes that they have not merely been uncooperative, he was interviewed by *The New York Times* this month and a story that ran, I don't know, a week or 10 days ago. He referred to what it is that he perceives them to be doing as quote aggressive deception un-quote. (Laughs) And it's not merely attempting to cover up what happened, but attempting to deceive people about it. And, frankly, that may be what's happening in another matter involving the *Bulldog* and its reporting.

JON What do you mean? As far as what?

DAN Well, as far as the—I assume that you're familiar with the 9/11 Review Commission.

JON Yes, I am, Sir.

DAN As the FBI—I'm sure you are—as the FBI 9/11 Review Commission and what it reported and filed that's one—apparently only report on this—[AUDIOBAD] and most of the report was, basically, mildly critical of the

FBI regarding its response to 9/11, and how it's changed and what it's done. And, that sort of thing. For the most part though, it was—I felt it was somewhat cheerleading for the FBI, which isn't surprising given the fact that the FBI director was the guy who appointed the three members, one of whom includes former Attorney General Ed Meese and, also, the FBI was paying the members who do not know the terms of all of that. We do know from a report that they were operating under personal services contracts with the FBI, but those contracts haven't been released yet. Actually, I filed a FOIA request trying to get my hands on that stuff. But, so far, I haven't gotten a response from the FBI as to whether or not they're going to release that information. I've requested a lot of stuff, including transcripts of proceedings, things like that, reports that they relied on, memos that they used. The sorts of things that are done when a commission like the 9/11 Commission or the Warren Commission, no matter how criticized those commissions were, they did release a lot of information about what it was that they did. In this case, they haven't released anything except their report. And if you read that report, it becomes quite apparent that they were sort of under the FBI's thumb while they were doing this report.

JON Well, could you explain the formation of this commission, because it was unknown to anybody until this report came out, as far as I know.

DAN It was, I mean, there were—if you really looked around and, sort of in retrospect you could see that they were out there and functioning. But, boy, you had to look pretty deep because it was—there was no publicity about it. There was nothing in any newspapers that I could find—I did a pretty large search. Bob Graham didn't know anything about it, and a bunch of other people that I talked to, no one had ever heard about this. It wasn't—you can't quite say that it was completely incommunicado, because they did appear before a Congressional committee in a sort of an informal setting in a small room it looked like, but it was done somewhat subversive, I hear. They didn't hold any public hearings. They did not have subpoena power. They were sort of spoon-fed the information that they got by the FBI. Now, the members certainly could ask their own questions about this. But when, again, when you read the report, it doesn't look like they did that very much. They simply relied on what the FBI told them, for the most part, in reaching their conclusions.

And the part of this whole report that was of most interest to me was the part that had to do with the Sarasota situation, because in addition to looking at the FBI's performance post-9/11 in terms of how it operates, how

it functions, is it protecting us from terrorists, they also were charged with looking at any new evidence that came in and to make an assessment of that evidence as to whether or not there's anything there and presumably to recommend, if they saw anything there, to recommend that there be further investigation.

Anyway, in the course of all this. They looked at the Saudi situation. Sarasota Saudi situation. And frankly they botched it. They looked at one particular document that was put out by an FBI agent that we obtained from the FBI in our FOIA lawsuit. Remember, it was released only after we sued them. Originally, they filed for an information request and went for like a year, and they kept telling us they had no what they call "responsive documents." Then all of a sudden, six months after we filed the lawsuit, I go out to the mailbox one day and there is an envelope from the FBI and there's like 30 pages in there.

Among those pages—and they were all heavily redacted—there was one from April 2002, a report that talked about how these—the names of the people, the players, were all blacked out but you could tell by reading it who they were talking about, and our request was all about the al-Hijjis there—the people who lived in that home. It said that they had many connections to people associated with the 9/11 attacks and they went on to talk about how somebody in that family apparently trained alongside Atta and al-Shehhi, one of the other pilots, and perhaps Jarrah, the third pilot. At either Huffman Aviation or one of the other aviation training schools down in Venice, Florida, which is about ten miles from where the al-Hijjis home was in South Sarasota, essentially.

JON Well, it reminds me—with regard to the 9/11 Review Commission, you described it as "a secretive blue ribbon panel formed by Congress to conduct an external review of the FBI's post 9/11 performance and to assess new evidence" and said that it was "largely under the sway of the very agency it was tasked to examine."

So, essentially it was the FBI investigating itself. (Yeah)

Now, originally, from what I read, the 9/11 Review Commission was presented with the idea of having subpoena power. They didn't actually—they ended up not having subpoena powers, isn't that right?

DAN Yeah, the idea for this was actually by New York Congressman, uh.

JON Peter King.

DAN Peter King, thank you. Having a senior moment. Anyway, he had filed a bill back in 2011, calling for the establishment of a 9/11 Review Commission, which he and others seemed to envision would be led by the guys who were in charge of the 9/11 Commission. Former Governor Kean and former Congressman Lee Hamilton with the idea being that they would be best qualified to do this. Anyway, it was supposed to be an entity, a national commission under the legislative branch under Congress. And it was going to have subpoena power. This is all in the legislation. It was going to hold public hearings. It was going to—the administration was going to be run by the General Services Administration, and there was no inkling that the FBI would be involved in any way. That idea seemed not to get too much support in Congress and the idea began to fizzle out, or did fizzle out, at the end of 2012.

However, sometime in the first three months of 2013, this became transformed into the entity that it became, meaning this—or the executive branch, in fact, are basically under the FBI. The FBI was given Congressional funding, about a million bucks, to set this up. They had Director Comey as the one who picked the three commissioners quote unquote "in consultation with Congress" according to the report. They paid them. They helped staff them. They supplied virtually all the information that was used by the committee to reach its conclusions. And the FBI even ran the staff administratively. So, they obviously had a huge input as to how this was done. And it seems, to me, worthy of a story to point that out because I haven't seen any other stories noting that they were really, what I call, under the FBI's thumb.

JON Well, it reminds me of, I don't know if you remember or recall, but NORAD lied a lot about 9/11 and the 9/11 Commission referred them to the Department of Defense Inspector General and the Inspector General let them off the hook. And, with regard to Able Danger, it was also referred to the Department of Defense Inspector General. And that was apparently let off the hook like they didn't find what the people said they found they found, and so on and so forth. So, it just, every time somebody investigates themselves, it seems they get away with it.

DAN Well, it's not a good—obviously, you know, it's not a good idea to have an agency investigating its own situation here. And—it's a recipe for a

problem. And, Senator Graham believes that and he's a man I greatly admire.

JON Are you familiar with the story of Rudy Dekkers with regard to Huffman Aviation or the writings of Daniel Hopsicker?

DAN I'm familiar with them. I'm not completely conversant in them. (Okay) But Dekker's had some problems, I know, but it's not an avenue—he just did—I've spoken to Mr. Dekkers a while back trying to see if I could get some information about flight schools, trying to—one of the things that I've been trying to do is find out in that document—that April 2002 document that the FBI and the 9/11 Review Commission now both are trying to discredit—it talks about—the one that talks about how the family had many connections to the 9/11 players. It talks about the fact that there was a member of that family who is unidentified who was affiliated with that flight school. So, I was tempted to learn who that was —didn't have much luck. Along the way, talked to Dekkers, trying to find out if he had any information about it. He indicated that he didn't. I got the impression that he was telling the truth, but who knows?

JON Well, Daniel Hopsicker's book—it essentially portrays Atta as a drinking, drug-taking, party animal, strongly contradicting the conventional view of Atta as having been a devout Muslim, and it also implicates a retired businessman Wally Hilliard, the owner of Huffman Aviation, as the owner of a Learjet that in July 2000 was seized by federal agents after they found 43 pounds of heroin on board.

Now, this gained credibility because on December 13, 2012, *The Tampa Tribune* reported that:

"A year after he published a book about his travails, the owner of a flight school where two 9/11 hijackers trained has been arrested in Houston on cocaine trafficking charges. A federal judge last week ordered Rudy Dekkers held without bond pending his trial, partially because the Netherlands citizen poses a risk of flight. Dekkers was chief executive officer and President of Huffman Aviation in Venice, where 9/11 terrorists Mohamed Atta and Marwan Alshehhi enrolled as students."

So, you're—

DAN Jon, I know nothing about that.

JON Okay. Now, the next part of this question, and the reason I brought that up has to do with this next part of this question, was actually written by a 9/11 Family Member and I'm going to just quote it.

"Unless I read the documents wrong, it appears that there is a difference in the FBI/Hardy Declaration documents describing the residents at 4224 Escondito Circle, Sarasota, FL:

In the Third Hardy Declaration, the residents are described as a family, headed by a wealthy International businessman. Disappeared 9/4/01

In the Fourth Hardy Declaration, the residents are described as four Middle Eastern men, living in the house leased to a Middle Eastern woman. Disappeared 8/27/01.

Meanwhile, document DE72-1, indicates once again that a family lived at the address, headed by a wealthy International businessman. Yet, it also indicates that someone from that family had an arrest record, and was a flight student at Huffman Aviation.

If I am not wrong, why don't the descriptions of the occupants and their disappearances match? Did Dan Christensen look into those differences?"

DAN Well, it's—part of the problem with all this is that the documents are so heavily censored that we can't always tell. I don't know if I can make the same—draw the same conclusions that she has drawn. I didn't notice much difference in the descriptions. I mean, it seems to be pretty consistent here that there was a family here. When it talks about headed by a wealthy international businessman, they're referring I believe to Ghazzawi, but things are blacked out, so we don't know for sure. And it is—some of the wording is quite unclear. I've tried to piece it together. I'm not quite sure what they're saying.

But, one thing that we do know is—that's the only thing I think we can

work with here—is that this was the al-Hijji's home. They were the ones that were there. We know that from their neighbors. We know that from law enforcement. We know that from these informants that we talked to. And we also know that they were living in a home that they did not own. It was owned by the father. And this ties back to the Royal Family.

So, those seem to be—whenever you look at documents like this it's been my experience on many things over the years, not just on stuff like this, there are always going to be discrepancies. Somebody writes something—we all—everybody makes mistakes from time-to-time that, perhaps to read the last document closely and things filter in. We shouldn't—it seems to me we shouldn't get distracted by those sorts of questions. We should be focusing in on the larger questions, more important questions of, frankly, what is the FBI hiding? Or, why won't they talk about all this?

JON Well, this is the problem we've been having with all of the investigations. The Joint Congressional Inquiry, as you know, has 28-redacted pages that everybody is fighting to get released. The 9/11 Commission has only released 35 percent of its documents and many of the documents that it has released are greatly redacted. I don't know if you're familiar—

DAN Right, I think the 28 pages should be, assuming that that 28 pages gets released, should be the start, the first part of a wider push to open up all this information.

JON Absolutely. I mean, Prince Bandar—I don't know if you're familiar with what a 9/11 Commission Memoranda for the Record is. It's essentially just a brief description of an interview given with a witness, and Prince Bandar's MFR—

DAN Right, the 9/11 Review Commission used those, too, and I find it ironic that they call them memorandums [sic] for the record, yet they are not made public, so they're not part of the record.

JON Prince Bandar's is completely redacted or classified, rather.

DAN Like, how is it on record if nobody can see it?

JON Now, I'm going to try to read through what this family member wrote. It says:

"Again, in reading through the Fourth Hardy Declaration, it seems to me that, again, there was a pattern of these Middle Eastern men wanting to be noticed:

These Middle Eastern men had been rude to the postal carrier - such that they were brought to the attention of the Postal Inspector, even though it was noted that they received very little mail. Couple that 'activity' with their sudden disappearance after 9/11 and the package/letter later received by the Middle Eastern woman lessee at that address and returned to the post office with the name, "Saddam Hussein," stamped on it—and to please have her mail forwarded to Saudi Arabia from then on.

Maybe it's hind sight, but this M.O., if you will, sounds much like that of Mohamed Atta et al., where you had Middle Eastern men throwing around money, being seen in strip clubs, arguing with bank loan officers, etc. . . making themselves and their backgrounds, and associations (Middle Eastern, Saddam Hussein, Saudi Arabia, Huffman Aviation) memorable.

Again, who actually resided at the above address [which you already talked about], why are there differing accounts [you talked about that] and why would those individuals, allegedly and suspected to be engaged in plotting terrorist attacks, want to put themselves on the radar of authorities of any kind - never mind leave such obvious trails - prior to the attacks that might have caused the plot to be discovered and stopped?"

Do you have an opinion on that, or?

DAN No, I don't, mainly because I don't, I mean, yeah, I mean, I have heard that, that supposedly happened here, because remember the hijackers, some of them were from Southeast Florida, Sarasota is Southwest Florida. And, as a matter of fact, I don't live too far from a place where Marwan al-Shehhi—it was a story, this was back before I was involved in this directly—I read a story in the paper, probably years, maybe even two years after, it was about how the FBI had traced—and they were going back looking through a credit card receipts to backtrack where these guys had been. One of the

places they went was a Tire Kingdom store, a place where I used to take my little boys to buy a new tire or something—it was pretty spooky.

But to try and get in the heads of these people and understand why they did what they did. I don't—I don't really have a theory about that because I don't know. I'm much more interested in looking at their actions and understanding them from that, rather than trying to psychoanalyze them and understand whatever the religious motives might have been behind all this that caused them to act as they did. But, again, they were apparently doing the same things here. They were reportedly in strip clubs—as a matter of fact, Tony and I worked on a lead that I never wrote about, but he did put his book, in a second edition, it was about a place over in Sarasota that we had heard or could not verify that al-Hijji had taken Atta and one of the other hijackers, maybe more than one—it wasn't a strip club, it was a bar where they'd pick up women and then bring them back in the house. I didn't report on it because I couldn't verify it. But Tony did put it in this book. So, it's out there.

JON

Right.

This is an entry from HistoryCommons. The entry is called "Late September 2001: FBI confused about 9/11 hijackers suspect they left deliberate trail of misleading clues." And it says:

Journalist Seymour Hersh will write in the *New Yorker* in late September 2001, "After more than two weeks of around-the-clock investigation into the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the American intelligence community remains confused, divided, and unsure about how the terrorists operated, how many there were, and what they might do next. It was that lack of solid information, Government officials told me, that was the key factor behind the Bush Administration's decision last week not to issue a promised white paper listing the evidence linking Osama bin Laden's organization to the attacks."

An unnamed senior official tells Hersh, "One day we'll know, but at the moment we don't know." Hersh further reports, "It is widely believed that the terrorists had a support team, and the fact that the FBI has been unable to

track down fellow-conspirators who were left behind in the United States is seen as further evidence of careful planning. 'Look,' one person familiar with the investigation said. 'If it were as simple and straightforward as a lucky one-off oddball operation, then the seeds of confusion would not have been sown as they were.'" The hijackers left a surprisingly obvious trail of clues, even regularly paying for delivered pizzas using credit cards in their own name.

Hersh further reports, "Many of the investigators believe that some of the initial clues that were uncovered about the terrorists' identities and preparations, such as flight manuals, were meant to be found. A former high-level intelligence official told me, 'Whatever trail was left was left deliberately—for the FBI to chase.' Many newspaper reports— (I've always) —I'm sorry go ahead...

DAN I've always thought that it was more they didn't care (Right), because they were going to be dead. You know? It didn't matter.

JON It says:

Many newspaper reports in late September 2001 indicate doubt over the identities of many hijackers. The 9/11 Congressional Inquiry's 2003 report will strongly suggest that the hijackers at least had numerous accomplices in the US. But the 9/11 Commission's 2004 report will downplay any suggestions of US accomplices and will indicate no doubts about the hijackers' identities.

So...

DAN That in a nutshell is what Senator Graham is most concerned about. Are there or were there conspirators or co-conspirators here that have not been caught or identified. And, I think that's a valid concern. He points out repeatedly, that the hijackers that we know of—and there may have been additional hijackers, and I'll talk about that in a moment—a lot of them didn't speak English, they had no knowledge, they'd never been here before, they had little knowledge and culture, and yet, they came here and pulled off a fairly sophisticated plot. And, how do you do that without assistance?

JON Well, my next question—Apparently, the two hijackers in San Diego received support from elements within Saudi Arabia's Government. Both the CIA and NSA seemingly protected those two hijackers. In my opinion, that's the most honest assessment that could be given with regard to what they did.

With regard to the story in Sarasota, we're told that a senior adviser to the Saudi Royal Family may have been connected to the hijackers in Florida. Should we be asking whether or not the system that supported the hijackers in San Diego was used to support the hijackers in Florida? And should we be looking into whether or not those hijackers were seemingly protected by elements within our Government as well?

DAN I think those are legitimate questions to ask.

I can't, personally, I cannot believe that in advance of 9/11, that hijackers were being protected by our Government. I just don't, I can't buy that, that we would aid and abet the slaughter of our own people.

JON Well, it's not— I don't know that it was to do that, but it seems that their actions protected those hijackers, like for instance, the NSA said—

DAN Not so much protecting the hijackers as protecting people who were apparently aiding and abetting them that they found out about later, you know? Like the situation in San Diego. It seems apparent, certainly again, Senator Graham believes that this was a significant operation out there and one of the things he was critical of the FBI was they wouldn't allow the Joint Inquiry to question certain people that had information about all this. Because, again, they were under the FBI's thumb on this. And, apparently, because the FBI was doing the bidding of the Bush administration to lay off the Saudis on all this. That's what it seems, that's how this whole thing seems to have unfolded. And, now perhaps, regrets doing that and they're covering up the fact that they looked bad back then.

JON Well, what I'm referring to here—

DAN That's my theory.

JON Right. With regard to what I'm referring to as far as protection goes, are you familiar with Alec Station?

DAN Ahh, no.

JON Okay, Alec Station was the bin Laden unit, the CIA's bin Laden unit, and they got information that one of the hijackers from San Diego got a U.S. visa. And there were two FBI agents assigned to Alec station—one of them was Doug Miller, one of them was Mark Rossini. And one of them asked the CIA people there if they could send a memo to the FBI notifying them that one of the hijackers had a visa. And Tom Wilshire from the CIA told Michael Anne Casey to tell this FBI agent: "No, you cannot send a memo notifying the FBI." Later in the day, that same CIA official sent out a memo within the CIA notifying them that the FBI HAD been notified.

So, that's one instance—the CIA withheld information from the FBI about those hijackers, I believe, for a while.

DAN Right, but nobody at the time knew they were going to hijack—That's what I'm getting at here.

JON No, but the story that's—or the theory that's being put forward is that the CIA was trying to flip them. That was put forward by Richard Clarke. But I don't know. Or were they working in collaboration with the Saudis to try and flip these individuals? Because, apparently, George Tenet wanted to get somebody in al Qaeda on their side or something to that effect.

DAN Well, I think if they operate under the assumption that these intelligence agencies, which includes the FBI, are constantly trying to flip people and turn them into informants. That's how they operate. That's what they do.

JON I understand.

DAN And, so, that's why you can't necessarily trust. I mean, we sort of think the FBI enforces the law and wants to make—wants to arrest the bad guys. Well, that's only partially true. What they want to do is they want—they want to become and have ever since 2001, wanted to become THE domestic intelligence agency here, which I'm—that's one of the things the review commission talked about. That's one of the things that the 9/11 Commission recommended, which I wonder if that's something we really want.

But, the point is—the old-fashioned notion of hey, you tell them about it, they'll go out and arrest the bad guys is out of date. They're much more

interested in developing sources of information that they can build on and continually use forever.

JON Well, the problem is that if the CIA was trying to flip those two hijackers, they were operating on American soil, which they were not allowed to do. So, that's one problem.

Now, with regard to the NSA and protecting them. The NSA said that they could only identify where the calls that the hijackers were making were going to, which were to the hub in Yemen. They monitored or recorded about eight phone calls. They said they can only identify where they were going to, which was the hub in Yemen. But the fact is, according to NSA whistleblower William Binney and also Thomas Drake, they were well aware where the calls were coming from, which meant that they knew that the two hijackers were in the United States and they didn't tell the FBI. So, that's another—and somebody mentioned or suggested that the NSA and CIA were collaborating to try and flip these people. But, I don't know. I don't know why the NSA lied, you know?

But, anyway.

DAN Well, you had asked a minute, should we be asking whether or not (Yes) the system that supported the hijackers in San Diego was used to support them in Florida? That again is another key question that Graham keeps bringing up. He believes the answer is yes. When we originally, Tony and I, originally went to him to tell him about this, he thought that this seemed to be somewhat of a mirror image as to what happened in San Diego and that this was something that he had suspected for a long time that there was no addition—that there were, excuse me—additional locations around the country where there was support for the hijackers. That's why he thinks this is so significant because it tends to show that indeed that was the case here.

JON Well, the next part of this question comes from a family member.

"To date, we know the FBI still has not addressed the many contradictions/omissions in evidence/plots/suspects/witnesses/whistleblowers, in either the 9/11 Commission's investigation or that of the Joint Inquiry. Thus, I would expect nothing of value to come of their latest investigative farce. And she's referring to the 9/11 Review Commission. It was most likely a waste of time and money and another slap in the face of those 9/11 families still seeking truth

and justice with regard to the attacks. Whose or what agenda did it address, in your opinion?"

DAN You mean the 9/11 Review Commission? (Yeah) It seemed to address the FBI's agenda, frankly. But, I say, they had mild criticism of the FBI and, a matter of fact, Director Comey, after this was released, he basically came out and said what a great report it was, and said: "Oh, by the way, they're criticizing the same things that I've criticized, that we need to do things better." Which is sort of a general criticism. It doesn't mean anything.

So, yeah, I think it was, I think it ended up being turned and used by the FBI to pat itself on the back and make itself look good. Largely. (Right) And also in the case of Sarasota, it was used to discredit a document that essentially, contradicted everything that the FBI had said publicly about all of this. Very strange. I've never seen the FBI repudiate one of its own documents before, nor explain why it released to the public a document that it says was—bad.

JON Well, you released this story today, talking about getting the individual who wrote that report to, I guess, testify—or be questioned?

DAN Yeah, we—right, within our Freedom of Information lawsuit, we—our attorneys filed paperwork today that asks the judge—let me back up for a moment. We asked the Assistant United States Attorney in Miami who is defending the Government on this, whether or not we could interview the agent who has been criticized for issuing what they referred to as a report that was totally unsubstantiated, and this is a person they didn't identify, so we don't know who it is. We have suspicion who it might be, but we don't know who it is. And we wanted to talk to them and find out—why did they tell the FBI that they had no basis for writing this report. It's a fairly detailed report, some of which remains classified due to national security reasons, why would they make something up there? The question the lawyers have here is we need to talk with them to find out, because it's possible that the FBI ordered this person to not talk. That's—there's no explanation there. The whole thing just doesn't add up, okay? (Right)

We will, obviously, talk to whoever this agent is and find out why he said what he said, or what he allegedly said.

JON Okay, now, Paul Sperry just reported that "The Saudi 9/11 connection in Florida was no small part of the overall 9/11 investigation. Yet, it was

NEVER SHARED WITH Congress. Nor was it mentioned in the 9/11 Commission report."

And the *Herald Tribune* recently posted a statement by Paul Wysopal?

DAN *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, correct.

JON Okay. Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Tampa field office. In that statement, he says that: "All the documents and records gathered during the 9/11 investigation, including information regarding the Sarasota home and family, were made available to both the Joint Intelligence Committee Inquiry and the 9/11 Commission." [Laughs]

So, that's the contradiction. Which is it? Did they get it, or didn't they? It doesn't sound like they did, based on what Bob Graham is saying.

DAN Correct. I also talked to Lee Hamilton about this and he hadn't heard of any of this. So, what Senator Graham did, too, was after we reported all this—went to him, reported the first few stories—he contacted the FBI and asked them saying: "Okay, you guys say you provided this to us. Can you help us identify when—tracking numbers and things that will allow us to identify this material, so we can go back and find it and evaluate it?" And they never did. They could not document when they turned it over or how they turned it over or provide any tracking data for that.

JON Well, according—

DAN He went to the National Archives too. There was nothing there about this according to the people at the National Archives. (Wow) That's where their documentation for this was, the Joint Inquiry, I think, was kept.

JON Well, that's where it's also being kept for the 9/11 Commission's documents —(Yeah) at the National Archives.

Now, according to a report by you and Anthony Summers from June 5, 2013, it says: "Graham said the FBI kept the 9/11 Commission in the dark, too. He said co-chairmen Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton and executive director Philip Zelikow all told him they were unaware of the FBI's Sarasota investigation." (Right)

Now, one thing about the 9/11 Commission—I believe with regard to Able

Danger they originally said that they were completely unaware of it, that they never spoke to anybody about Able Danger and it turned out that they did. So, I don't know that I entirely trust what they're saying, but regardless.

DAN Well, the bottom line.

JON Are you—

DAN It seems to me that the FBI has made this assertion, yet they've not backed it up. They certainly haven't backed it up with me. It's like okay, you say you turned this over. Where is it? Why will they not discuss the basis for their statements here? If they—you have to remember, they are saying, when you go back to square one on this—okay, first of all, we have—they conducted a secret investigation into these Saudi folks living in Sarasota at the time. Okay? We did the first story. We spoke with them—or actually, we spoke to them after we contacted the Department of Justice for the story and they declined to comment on it. But, they did not disclose this investigation when they first put out their first statement on this, which was a day or two after the initial story, they confirmed that indeed they had conducted an investigation. However, they said that there was nothing to the investigation. They found no connection to the 9/11 plot or the 9/11 hijackers. And then they also added, in response to Senator Graham—oh, by the way, we've turned over everything to the 9/11 Commission and to Congress on this.

And, well—how come nobody ever heard of this investigation until we wrote about it? They turned it over. They turned it over—they did it in some way that nobody bothered to—nobody could recognize the significance of it, because they showed they were interested afterwards.

JON Are you aware of everything the 9/11 Commission did to hinder investigations into—Saudi Arabia's possible role?

DAN No, I haven't done a thing. You have to remember, I'm a reporter. I cover lots of things. I operate a website in South Florida that looks at local news here. So, no, I have not done a study of the 9/11 thing. All I know is that this particular aspect of it is weird.

JON Well, you're the first reporter that's actually writing current stories about one of the cover ups of 9/11 that I've had on the show. [Laughs] Do you think you might start pointing out to people like—or looking into the

ridiculousness of the 9/11 Commission or some of the lies having to do—

DAN Well, I look at the ridiculousness, shall we say, of the 9/11 Review Commission. But, I mean, the 9/11 Commission itself, no, I doubt if I'll be looking at that, because number one, I write about contemporary news. This is news. These are things that are happening now. Okay, but we also have problems here in South Florida like bid rigging at the local school board and things like that. That's our principal focus here. I got involved in this because Tony came to me and then it's just been this—journalistically it's been the story that's kept on giving here. And, there's been no, as you say, very little coverage of this in the national media.

JON Yeah.. there's none.

DAN Yeah, no, lately there has, I mean—*The New York Times* story—it's funny you see a story that ran on page five or six about how Bob Graham has generated a lot of coverage. I mean, when the story gets in there about stuff—it causes a response, and we report it. Obviously, we're not as well known as *The New York Times*, so it gets around, but it doesn't get around like it does when it's in *The New York Times*. (To me—) I'm hoping it's in my drawer. That's the first time Sarasota and 9/11 were mentioned in the same breath, I think by really—one of the of the biggest papers in the country.

JON Well, stories like this, to me, need to get the attention that say Michael Jackson's death got or Britney Spears' haircut [laughs] gets. And it boggles my mind that it doesn't.

DAN You're preaching to the choir on that one.

JON Okay, good. Are you aware of the history of the United States Government enabling and protecting and collaborating with Saudi Arabia with regard to their connections to terrorism?

DAN Well, I don't know about in terms with their connections to terrorism, but clearly, we have a long and interesting history with them. It seems like the principal motivating factors is we want their oil and they want our arms. When you boil everything away, that's what the whole relationship is about. If they had no oil, we wouldn't care about them, particularly.

JON Well, it's not just the oil. It's also their money and not just for arms. But, you know, the Bush family had business dealings with them. Hillary

Clinton, I understand, is like one of their biggest benefactors for an organization she belongs to. They've got like \$25 million from—

DAN Yeah, that's why it's quite disturbing here that apparently, I mean, keep seeing stories—there was another story today in The Times or somewhere about,—the connections here and the money and ultimately when I use oil, oil equals money certainly, you have to be concerned about the effects of potential foreign influence on our elections in the United States.

JON Absolutely. But, what I'm talking about is like during the 90s, there was an FBI agent who started an investigation into terrorist financing called Vulgar Betrayal and that was eventually shut down, and he was getting close to the Saudis and so forth. George Tenet developed ties with Prince Bandar. He would have meetings with him that his subordinates weren't aware of—what they talked about. And, in fact, were told to kind of back off the Saudis. We collaborated with them as far as arming Bosnian Muslims in the 90s and other things.

And, when George Bush first came into office one of the first things he did, according to Greg Palast, was to tell the different alphabet agencies to back off the Saudis and the Bin Ladens.

So, we've been protecting or enabling them for years before 9/11 and after 9/11.

DAN I don't—I got to tell you, I don't know anything about all those relations. I suppose I've read some of the same things you have, but as a reporter I don't know anything about them.

JON Okay. Now, in a written report from you on July 1, 2014, you write that:

"The April 2002 FBI report contains additional new information, though the deletions make its full meaning difficult to discern. It says that the Tampa FBI office "has determined that (blank) is an antagonist of the United States of America. (Blank) resides in Jerusalem. (Blank) allegedly has held regularly and recurring meetings at his residence to denounce and criticize the United States of America and its policies. (Blank) is allegedly an international businessman with great wealth."

Do we know the name of this individual?

DAN No, I don't. I'd like to know though. (Right) You know, if they're referring to Ghazzawi, I don't think he has great wealth. So, I don't think it's him, but I don't know.

JON Okay.

DAN That's what's so frustrating about the documents that get released, you know? They're released—and, more so than that, the oddest thing of this whole situation, this whole reporting situation for me, okay is—the original stories that we wrote were not based on any documentation. It was based on sources, okay? Intelligence Agent, counterintelligence or counter-terrorist agent that I mentioned. There was a gentleman whose name we did use. His name was Larry Berberick. He was a wealthy guy who lives or lived in that development, but was also like heading up—as an administrator—or heading up security for that. He was the guy that turned over the gatehouse photographs and records to the FBI, which the source later informed us—showed these connections to the hijackers. And, yet, none of that stuff has showed up in any of these documents that we've got from the FBI.

So, it's a real, I don't know, it's a real puzzle when you look at all this information that has been released, information that they originally said they didn't have and then they did release. And one of the things that they did release when we looked at it there when it first came out, this idea where it talked about how there were many connections from this family to the terrorists. We wondered why didn't they release that piece of information, that tidbit of information, because it was so damning of what their public statements had been. It was almost like somebody on the inside wanted to get that out and somehow managed to get it out to us. Again.

JON Well, we need more people like that, obviously.

DAN If that's what happened. That was just a theory that we had. It was like—why was this released to us? And now they're turning around and saying: "Oh, never mind. It was B.S." I don't believe that for a minute, because we used that document as confirming to what we had heard prior to that. It wasn't like that—that was a revelation to us. It was merely a confirm to us that what we had been hearing was correct. (Right)

When the 9/11 Review Commission sought to pooh-pooh it and didn't

bother to look at any of the other stuff that we had reported—they didn't mention Bob Graham's allegations that none of this was ever told to Congress. They didn't look at any of the other allegations. They didn't look at the fact that the original story dealt with sources saying all these things had occurred. They didn't question the fact that the FBI says there's nothing to this, yet doesn't produce the gatehouse records that the source told us DO show these things. Why not—if there's nothing to this, then why not just come out and show us. And if there's nothing to this, why are you censoring documents citing national security?

JON Oh, the same thing with regard to the 28-redacted pages that apparently—the 9/11 Commission looked at the allegations within the 28-redacted pages and found that they were lacking. Okay, if there's nothing to what's in those pages, why don't you release them?

DAN Exactly, it's the same argument. It doesn't make sense. By the way, we are involved in a legal push, a parallel legal push, in addition to the FOIA lawsuit, which is focused specifically on getting access to the FBI files on what happened in Sarasota—we've also been pursuing for the last year and a half what's called a mandatory declassification review. It's a little known—I didn't know anything about it—my or Bulldog's great first amendment lawyer, a guy named Tom Julin, who's in Miami, was aware of this and it is kind of a Freedom of Information like device in which you can request that agencies reconsider certain documents and move to declassify them. And, so we filed this. We got to go through the agencies that have the documents. In this case, the 28 pages, it was determined the FBI had them, so we asked the FBI. They ignored us. After a certain time period went past, we went to the Justice Department. They ignored us. After another certain time period passed, it landed before what's called the Inter-Agency Security Classification Appeals Panel (Laughs), which is a mouthful. Right.

But, it's basically made of members from various agencies, including the Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Department of State, also the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, National Security Council, and also the National Archives. Tom did look at them and found they are not a rubber stamp okay? Which was interesting. They released a bunch of information. Matter of fact, they released some new 9/11 information just a couple of weeks ago.

Anyway, we are waiting for them to decide whether or not the 28 pages should be recommended for release, and if they decide that that's the case,

then they will recommend that to the President, and that should shake things up a little bit here.

JON I spoke to or I interviewed Brian McGlinchey who is the founder of 28Pages.org and he spoke about what you just spoke about. And he said that he doesn't have a good feeling about it because of the individuals that are involved in the process.

DAN Right, yeah, well we don't—the bottom line is we don't know. All we can do is look at the track record that they don't routinely just say no, no, no, no, no. They do say yes. As a matter of fact, one of the things that they said yes on was what I personally found kind of interesting. It's a little bit of aside. It has nothing to do with the 28 pages or Sarasota, but they released a couple of weeks ago, and you can go on their Web site and see it, a number of documents that have been requested, I think, by HistoryCommons, regarding what appeared to be the efforts or the lack of efforts to stop the planes—the hijacked planes, intercept them. And, one of the things, there was an interview with a general, a guy who was in charge of the first Air Force Command, and in that thing, the part of it that I read, he was talking about the fact that how fortunate it was that the FAA—Federal Aviation Administration—grounded all planes back then or he said surely there would have been more loss of life because they believe that there was at least another plane that was about to be hijacked. And said that they found boxcutters and stuff. Now, there's been stories out there about—the possibility of another plane. In fact, Tony Summer's reported on that in the 11th day. There was, apparently a plane at JFK—I think it was United 23—and there were four Middle Eastern men that were on that plane that were not happy when the plane didn't take off, and initially refused to get off the plane and ultimately left the place before the cops could show up.

So, it's interesting that there's new little tidbits out there that continue to come out and, in this case, came out because of what they call ice-cap panel. And, so we're hopeful. We don't know, but we're hopeful that because given all the statements that we've heard about the 28 pages, from everybody, all these different legislators who have read it, including Graham and Senator Shelby, who was his co-chair back then, there's nothing or very little in those 28 pages that is about national security and that's a legitimately—should remain outside the public purview here.

So, we are hoping that they give a good look, that they'll give a fair look, and they'll say: "Hey, let's open this." And, in fact, it could be possible that

this would be a device that the administration could use to release it and do it in a way that wouldn't alienate the Saudis.

JON Well, from what I understand (We'll see) this process that you're talking about, they can only recommend really that they be released. (Mm-hmm) Is that correct? (Yeah) And the President would then have to decide—the President can release them any time he wanted to. From what I understand.

DAN Correct. This would perhaps give some political cover, shall we say?

JON Right, but he's already promised 9/11 Family Members Kristen Breitweiser (I know) and Bill Doyle that he would release them and—his administration fought against the families or sided with the Saudis over the families regarding a lawsuit years ago (Right) by having Elena Kagan go to the Supreme Court who was the Solicitor General at the time and tell them not to hear the case, and so on and so forth. (Right) That goes back to the protection of the Saudis that I was talking about.

DAN Right. But, if it turns out that the President would like to be able to release this, honor his promise to them, this might offer a way for it to be done and have some deniability there: "Hey, this is what the panel said. I felt I had no choice—who knows?" (Right) Those are situations that are well beyond my pay grade here.

JON [Laughs] Is there anything about this story, the Sarasota story that we haven't addressed that you think people need to know about?

DAN Well, I think I've talked about as much as I know about it. I think there's more to know. There was a sidelight that came out in one of the documents that I wrote a story about a year or so ago about in the nearby city of Bradenton after—about a month, I think it was on Halloween of 2001. There were—cops found some other materials that had been abandoned by some guy from—had been thrown in a dumpster by a guy from Tunisia. That—indicated that he might have been a hijacker or was thinking about doing a hijacking of some kind. There was information that was in there that they put out. But we don't know the name of the person. I tried to run it down a little bit, but I couldn't. But there's a story on FloridaBulldog.org if you do a search, you can find it.

JON Are there any actions people should be taking with regard to this issue?

DAN Senator Graham has been urging people—as a matter of fact, he wrote a column that appeared in the *Tampa Bay Times* about this over the weekend explaining what's going on and urging people to contact their Congressmen to let them know about this—essentially, put in a vote for opening up the 28 pages. That sounds like a good idea to me.

JON Yeah, it sounds like a good idea. And one of the things that 28Pages.org has been pointing out is that there are so few representatives that have been willing to go even read the 28-redacted pages. So, obviously, more need to do that.

DAN Yeah, well, that's depressing if that's true. (Right) You would think that people would care about this.

JON You would think.

DAN And you would want to find out what's happened here. I mean our people were murdered, and we need to know what happened. We need to get to the bottom of this, and we don't need to be lied to by our Government. (Exactly) And that's—I'm a guy, look—now, this may sound a little sappy here, because I'm this tough investigative reporter—but, I have always felt that I was hearing things straight, for the most part, from law enforcement when I dealt with them. There were always some certain exceptions to that. But this goes way beyond anything I have ever seen. I mean the FBI is taking extreme steps to, frankly, cover this up. And that goes from, basically, denying—number one hiding this investigation in the first place for more than a decade until we reported about it, Tony and I. And, then to come out and say that there was nothing to it when quite obviously there was something to it. And, most recently here's this 9/11 Review Commission entity that comes out, and basically tries to discount all this in a very disingenuous way. They did not look fully at the evidence that we had presented on this.

And, by the way, when I tried to—after the report came out and I did a story about having come out from under the FBI's thumb, I contacted—I called the executive director; I called the three commissioners; and others trying to get them to talk about this. I didn't go in with any preconceived notion. And they wouldn't talk to me. (Laughs) Just like, I had the guy—one of the guys is a guy named Bruce Hoffman—he's a professor of security studies at Georgetown. A guy who teaches for a living, who you would think would be interested in explaining his rationale for stuff. And I

called him up and he said, I told him my name. He obviously was aware of it. He said: "I'm not interested in talking to you. And hung up on me." I mean, that does not inspire confidence, you know, we're getting a fair shake, you know, the American public here.

JON I always ask people what qualifies as suspicious behavior. [Laughs]

DAN Well, that qualifies.

JON Exactly. There's so much—there's so many actions like that with regard to 9/11 that it just boggles the mind.

Anyway, Dan, I want to—

DAN I just want to say, there was one other thing that was interesting and it even made it into an editorial in the Sarasota Tribune. I don't have it in front of me. But, I believe, that the title of this was, and this was after the 9/11 Review Commission did its thing—they wrote an editorial that is headlined: "The FBI's Suspicious Behavior." I believe that's exactly what they said. (Laughs) And that was a remarkable thing to see. It ended up prompting that Paul Wysopal guy, or however he pronounces his name, the special agent in charge of the Tampa office, to come out and—dispute that. And, frankly, in a what they refer to as a guest column that I would THINK had to be cleared by Washington. I wouldn't think that the head of the FBI office would do anything like that without getting clearance from Washington.

JON It was probably ordered by Washington.

DAN Could have been that too, I don't know. Let's put it this way. I have never, ever seen anything like that before (Right), nor has my attorney or Senator Graham. All these very unusual things that are happening about all of this. And that's part of the mystery here. Why is all this happening? We don't know.

JON Well, they're covering incompetence, criminality. I mean, who knows? That's the thing is that there has been such a lack of accountability with regard to the 9/11 attacks. You want to talk about the intelligence failures, quote failures, before 9/11? Nobody was held accountable for any of these things. People that didn't deserve it were rewarded and promoted in many cases. It's just, again, it's such a weird situation. Such a suspicious situation

with regard to the 9/11 attacks.

DAN Yeah, and if I might just add one other thing, too. It's not just about Sarasota here—okay, this 9/11 Review Commission—they went through it. If you look at the report and you see, basically, what I refer to as sort of mild criticism and, basically, hey you should be doing things faster. But other than that, you're doing things pretty well. And then they also went off on Sarasota and some other lead.

But I didn't think that that was an honest evaluation of the FBI's performance here because one of the things they didn't talk about were all the significant troubles, reported not by me, but by others, by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*. In their transformation here into more of an intelligence agency, one of the things that they have done was they apparently spent hundreds of millions of dollars on a new system to find documents and things like that. It's called the Sentinel System. And that whole thing was a giant mess up for quite some time, and I still don't know if they got it down. I still think there's problems with it.

But it's like this is their central document tracing system. And yet, it's not functioning the way that it's supposed to or certainly wasn't until very recently. And, yet, there was not a word that I saw of critical analysis of that in this basically cheerleading report by the 9/11 Review Commission. Which to me, tells you what the 9/11 Review Commission was all about.

JON Well, if you remember, I mentioned that FBI Director Robert Mueller put on a charm offensive with the 9/11 Commission after being so uncooperative and so forth. And this is from Phil Shenon's book. It says:

"Mueller... was also aware of how much fear the FBI continued to inspire among Washington's powerful and how, even after 9/11, that fear dampened public criticism. Members of Congress... shrank at the thought of attacking the FBI.... For many on Capitol Hill, there was always the assumption that there was an embarrassing FBI file somewhere with your name on it, ready to be leaked at just the right moment. More than one member of the 9/11 Commission admitted privately that they had joked—and worried—among themselves about the danger of being a little too publicly critical of the bureau."

So, there are a lot of problems with the FBI. I mean, we can get into the entrapment issues with regard to terrorism and a whole bunch of things. Supposedly, after 9/11, John Ashcroft reinstated COINTELPRO, which was a bad thing. So. (Yeah)

Anyway, Dan, I want to thank you very much for all of the reporting that you're doing. I want to wish you luck with future endeavors with regard to that reporting and I want you to keep it up. And I want to thank you very much for taking the time today to be on my show. Is there anything you'd like to say?

DAN Not really, except to remind folks that they can see us at FloridaBulldog.org. And, to also, just tell them that hey, we are a not-for-profit, essentially, a charity and we rely on contributions. So, if there are folks out there that can help us. We'd like to hire more staff to break more stories and also, perhaps, free me up a bit to be able to do more of this 9/11 report. So, if the folks out there that have the means can help us out, they can send a check to the P.O. Box that's on our website. There's even a button on the site where you can actually use credit cards to donate like that.

JON So, there you go. You can go and support the Florida Bulldog and their reporting on this very important issue.

All right, Dan, thank you very much for your time today.

DAN Hey, Jon. Very nice. Thanks for inviting me.

JON All right, have a good day.

DAN You too. Bye bye.

JON Bye bye.



Chapter/Episode 27 – Abby Martin – April 30, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Abby Martin (ABBY)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week we're going to talk with someone who has a far-reaching voice, that has a history of advocating for 9/11 justice, and how that advocacy was used against them in an effort to discredit them—a big problem that causes others with a voice not to speak out about the lies of 9/11.

Hi, this is Jon, and I'm here with Abby Martin. Abby, how are you doing today?

ABBY I'm doing great, Jon. Thank you so much for having me on.

JON Thank you very much for being on today. All right, so, I'm going to read your bio for everyone.

Abby Martin is an American journalist and former host of "Breaking the Set" on the RT America Network working from the Washington, D.C. Bureau. Before hosting her show, she had worked for two years as a

correspondent for RT America. Martin is also an artist and activist and helped found the citizen journalism website MediaRoots. She serves on the board of directors for the Media Freedom Foundation which manages Project Censored. Martin appeared in the documentary film *Project Censored the Movie: Ending the Reign of Junk Food News*, which came out in 2013, and co-directed *99%: The Occupy Wall Street Collaborative Film*, which came out in 2013.

That's her regular bio. Now, I wrote a little personal bio for Abby and I'm going to read that now. Okay, it says:

I remember when she first came into the "9/11 Truth Movement," there's a picture of her on a corner holding a sign that says: "Google 9/11 Truth." She helped to found San Diego 911 Truth, and I always thought that they were one of the better 9/11 Truth groups in the country. I remember them posting a video where they talked a lot about the families and I was very proud of them. Over the years, I have seen Abby grow as an individual and as an activist. I remember when she smashed her first television, and was doing news segments while she was working for YourNetwork.tv. I remember when she started MediaRoots. I remember her footage of what took place in Oakland, and I remember when she was first hired by RT. I've known her for years and, sadly, have only met her once and very briefly. I want everyone to know that she has an enormous heart, a great mind, and she is an excellent speaker. I want her to know that I am extremely proud of her for her many accomplishments over the years.

ABBY Aw, Jon. That's so sweet. You're going to make me cry. That's very very nice. Thank you so much.

JON Thank you for everything you've done.

All right. So, we're going to get right into the questions.

ABBY Yeah, let's do it.

JON What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

ABBY It was a horrible day like it was for everyone. I was in college. I was a junior, I think, and I was in my art class. Mr. Nico's art class and I just remember the TV turned on and we just saw these buildings burning and it was just shocking. Everyone just didn't know what was going on. It felt like

—I remember listening to Howard Stern that day and he was just like: "It's the end of the world! It's the end of the world!" Of course, he was also saying: "Let's nuke Palestine," which I didn't really catch the first time around. My brother showed me that later on. I mean, he was just going off the rails with a bunch of racist stuff.

That was a horrible, horrible day. It changed my life forever, as it did many people. Mine, mostly for the fact that my boyfriend at the time actually joined the Army because of 9/11. So, that kind of got me on the road to figuring out how our policies affect the world—blowback and just that whole ball of yarn and can of worms, Jon.

JON It's interesting that you were listening to Howard Stern that morning, because I was listening to him as well. And, you're right, he was very—let's carpet bomb the Middle East (Mm-hmm) and just get rid of everybody who's an Arab. He was very hateful. You know what, on the day of 9/11, or after 9/11, I was very much like that, as well. So, I understand the mindset, but I, obviously today, I don't agree with it at all. (Yeah, yeah)

Anyway, what was the first thing that you questioned about 9/11?

ABBY So, that was the day, and in the weeks following 9/11 I remember, of course, the media—looking back on it, I mean, it's absolutely vile. My brother and I collected all these Newsweek's from the weeks after 9/11. I think my mom actually had them and we found them in her attic. And, I mean, they are just unbelievable propaganda. It is unreal. I mean it's like dudes dressed in biohazard outfits saying like this is the new America, like prepare yourself for the police state. I mean, that kind of stuff, like we live in a—I mean, it was just every single page was just saying it's going to get worse, it's going to get crazier. Within minutes they had everything lined up of how 9/11 happened and why. Which I thought was really interesting. I mean, of course, at the time—this is all looking back on it now—but, at the time, I didn't think that that was strange. I remember everyone got sucked into the media because that's when we first saw the media become a 24/7 news cycle.

So, they took advantage of that attack to basically create that 24/7 model. And, so, they were just filling it with time, filling it with just 24/7 disaster porn coverage showing the buildings being blown up, showing the buildings falling, showing the buildings on fire, showing the planes hitting the buildings over and over and over again.

I mean, thinking about that on a psychological level, like man, what is that doing? What does that do to us? How did that traumatize us? Not only just the event itself but then being brainwashed and propagandized for weeks and weeks and weeks. I mean, everyone was glued to their television sets for weeks, if not months. But I remember just thinking how—I just remember crying, thinking about the people that had to choose to jump out of the building or (Oh, god, yeah) burn. And it's just such a horrible thing to think about still, but I guess the first thing that I started questioning about it, I mean, I just was really anti-Bush.

And, once my boyfriend at the time joined the Army, and he was all about going to war and killing people and stuff, I was like this is awful, because we had the Bush administration taking advantage of this tragedy and using it to go to war. So, it wasn't until around 2005, I would say, that I even just saw the first piece of footage and it started with unanswered questions. The Guerrilla News Network video with Nafeez Ahmed, and a couple other very credible journalists and scholars in there, and they were just talking about the air defense and they just talked about why was it that the air defense failed so disastrously on this day? And I was just like, you know what? That is a really crazy question. And that was, actually, the first time I saw Nafeez Ahmed and I was like, man, this guy is just super on point.

So that planted the seed. Of course, it all starts with the seeds. And then, I think, just a couple of months later I saw Loose Change and of course, Loose Change has serious problems, especially the first one, and it was just a bunch of guys getting together throwing together research, you know. But there are morsels of truth that were really damning and, definitely, the end stood in contradiction to the official story. So, of course, if you watch that and if you're a critical thinker, you can discern here's something that I was lied to about that I didn't know about before. So, kind of all of those things just started building up and I was like you know what, this is unbelievable that we don't know the truth about this horrific attack that has led us on a rampage of endless war and bloodlust.

And then you start to ask like why? Why don't we know this? Why isn't the media covering this? And then it just opens that whole Pandora's box of—just the complicity across party lines and the whole corporate media establishment and apparatus and how they work in conjunction to sell war and it's really devastating.

But, after finding out these facts about 9/11 and that we were lied to, and I remember going and trying to embed myself like, as a citizen journalist back in the day like in 2004, going in and sitting in Greg Palast lectures and, trying to talk to Ralph Nader and stuff about it and he kind of shut me down, and I was just trying to bring up the fact that we were allies with bin Laden and like—none of it made any sense to me. And I was just trying to like sort it through, but it was just kind of me shouting to the sky—like I didn't know where to go with it.

And one day I saw this little booth at one of the events that I was going to, and it was a little booth with Nelisse and Ted, and it said: "9/11 Truth" and I was like oh my god! I was like, wow, there's actually a group that is doing something about this. This is so cool. And, so I went over and just, at that moment, I kind of became like the youth organizer for trying to get justice for the 9/11 victims' families and worked with Nelisse and Ted, and we did some really great events and brought a lot of attention to the cause, but you know what, Jon, I have a lot of regrets, too.

JON

Right. You know, we all do. There are many things that I have done or promoted over the years that I have regrets about—when I first came into the movement. Well, actually, it's interesting that you stumbled across this table. They were saying the same things you were saying (Yeah) and, questioning the same things you were and you're like oh my god! There are other people doing this?

I had a very similar experience where I came into this all on my own. (Mm-hmm) It was January 2002, when news of Bush and Cheney asking Tom Daschle to limit the scope of the investigations. And I asked why would the President and vice President, of all people, not want to know exactly how this happened. (Laughs. That's weird) You know, to make sure it could never happen again. I couldn't understand that. So, I paid a little bit more attention to 9/11, and then in May of 2002, news of the August 6 PDB came out (Mm-hmm) and, as you know, we were told repeatedly that there were no warnings, that nobody had any idea that anything like this was going to happen. And, then we had a warning (Mm-hmm) and so they lied. So, I was off to the races at that point.

But I never came across anybody in the "9/11 Truth Movement" until June 2004. I came across them—I used to watch the 9/11 Commission hearings after work, late at night, because they would be rebroadcasted. And, one night they had 9/11 CitizensWatch holding a press conference. And for

those who don't know, 9/11 Citizens Watch was a watchdog group that was watching over the 9/11 Commission making sure they were doing their job. They were also working with the 9/11 Family Steering Committee. (Mm-hmm) They were founded by Kyle Hence and John Judge. And, as soon as I saw that press conference, the very next day I called Kyle and said: "What can I do to help?" I couldn't believe there were other people, you know?

ABBY Yeah. You know what? I just thought of something. Actually, the seed planted was with *Fahrenheit 9/11*. That's when the first seed planted. Because that--I don't know, man, maybe that was just like amidst a journey that I was like what the hell is going on? Like with the whole Saudi, you know, fly out of all the Saudi Arabian princes and stuff, and I was like what is going on? (Right) So, I think Michael Moore did a good job kind of introducing the subject. But, go on.

JON No, Michael Moore did a great job. (Mm-hmm) In fact, I used to joke with people and say that if you look at *Fahrenheit 9/11* and watch the scene where Andrew Card goes up to Bush (Mm-hmm) and whispers in his ear (Mm-hmm) and imagine him saying that: "Everything is going according to plan." (Laughs) That movie becomes a very different movie. Anyway, I don't think that's what happened. I'm just joking.

Your first foray into activism, wasn't it to support John Kerry against Bush?

ABBY Yeah. So, 9/11 stuff was not my first foray into activism. I started—it was the Iraq war lead up. I was taking sociology in class. This was when I first went to college now from high school. So, in high school I was kind of rudely awakened, like holy shit—I'm sorry, can I swear?

JON You can say anything you want.

ABBY I was rudely awakened and said: "Wow! There's something outside of my selfish existence that is happening in the world." And so that was kind of my first window into that. I mean, of course, going to college, having my boyfriend be training to go to war, taking all these classes where I was like: "Whoa! The U.S. military is destroying the planet! Oh my god." It was just one after the other because it was like a fresh mine. I mean, it was like this *Tabula rasa*—I'd grown up in a Democratic family, but never kind of rudely awakened to the horrific effects of militarism, imperialism, hegemony. And I remember reading Chalmers Johnson's book *Blowback* in Sociology 101, and I just became so obsessed with these microcosms and studies of what

U.S. militarism has done to just different pockets of society across the planet.

So, that was—that was just insane. And then through there I got involved in Amnesty International, and I was trying to call attention to like, human rights abuses and, of course, the civil liberties thing with the Patriot Act. And, so, all of these things were going on at the time and I just started forming allies with these different groups. But, and then, once again, I was still wrapped up in the two-party paradigm. I still like didn't get it that the Democrats were complicit. And so, at that time, I think, the lead up to the 2004 election, I was just so upset with Bush and I just wanted to do everything I could to make sure that John Kerry won. (Laughs) Because wow! the country would be so much better if John Kerry were President. [Laughs] Right?

So, I went on the swing state trip for him. I mean, it's just embarrassing to talk about. But it's like we've all been there. It all takes us on that personal journey to figure out that it's a sham. I went to Yuma, Arizona, which was so weird because I remember it was like 90 percent Republican and I was like why are we here? Like what is—who strategized this? Like we're just wasting our time. I remember, every door would just get shut in my face. I mean, it was just like a really awful time. And then—

JON Do you remember everybody came out in record numbers to vote against Bush. And he still won. (Mm-hmm) It was just—it was a dirty election is what it is.

ABBY I think it was totally—no, no, no, it was completely stolen. I mean, Mark Crispin Miller has meticulously researched this in his book. The 2000 election—obviously, that was a ruse, right? The Supreme Court. The Supreme Court decides our election? That's great. And then the antiquated Electoral College bullshit.

So, then fast-forward to 2004, John Kerry is like: "We're going to have lawyers on the ground in Ohio. Give me your millions of dollars everyone. I'm going to stand with the—I'm going to go down fighting blah blah blah blah."

I remember earlier in the day the exit polls—because, obviously, middle-class, working-class people vote after work, so that it tends to be where more Democratic voters will actually come out after like 5 or 6. So, earlier

in the day the exit polls were actually way in Kerry's favor, and I was like: "This is an awesome sign." Because even if they drastically flip, like a couple percentage points because that's really statistically only like the room for margin of error, and it's obviously more Democrats are going to vote later because they're getting off work and stuff. And the opposite happened, where the margin of error flipped to favor Bush later on. And I was like something is wrong.

JON I remember that.

ABBY I was like this is absolutely not reality. I was like something's going on and I was like, you know what? Kerry will save the day. I was like Kerry will come out and dispute this charade. And then what happened? He conceded within the hour and then he left. He literally just left—for years. And then comes back and he probably was told—I don't even know—this is just my conspiratorial mind, but he was probably like: "Look dude, take the dive, come back, we'll give you the Secretary of State position." [Laughter]

JON Yeah, who knows? But it was so weird how he just conceded so quickly, and it seemed so dirty. (So hard)

But I want to get back to something you said about regrets. (Mm-hmm. Yeah) Now, I have promoted things—when I first came into the movement. That's what I wanted to say is that I—I listened to people like Karl Schwartz who said that he had video of a different kind of plane hitting the towers than what we were told. And, I told my friends at work about it and when I found out he had nothing, I looked like an idiot in front of all those people. (Mm-hmm) There were instances like that in the beginning. So, I had regrets. So, what kind of regrets do you have?

ABBY Man, I have a lot of regrets now, because as an activist you're not thinking about journalistic integrity, you're not thinking about journalistic ethics. And I was just, I was just shouting from the rooftops, Jon, I was so pissed and angry that I would just go up to people and yell at them. I mean, I have so many regrets of how I acted as an activist. Let alone the affiliations that I allowed myself to be—affiliated with to this day. And I'll get into that in a second.

But, I mean, just the tactics and strategies that I would use, personally, were really awful. It was all a learning curve, but at the same time, I mean, I got like, jumped in front of a Padres game holding a sign saying: "Question

9/11" by a bunch of guys and, I think, it was at that point that I realized that I needed to rethink my approach. [Laughs] It was like, why am I standing outside of a Padres game in San Diego with thousands of drunk, probably army people, with a sign saying "Question 9/11?" It's like am I trying to get jumped? Am I asking for this? I mean, I know you're never asking to get hurt, but it was just like I was provoking an unnecessary provocation. You know what I mean? It didn't make any sense what I was doing.

So, all of those things I regret. I regret linking up with people who were total frauds. I mean, there was a point during my antiwar activism that I was so burned out that anyone who would come into the group I would just be so grateful that there was new energy, and there was a total fraudster who ended up using me to sell shirts and say that he was giving money to 9/11 victims, family members, and firefighters who were dying. And I was going around allowing myself to be affiliated with this person and he turned out to be a complete fraudster and liar and never gave a dime to the first responders, so I was then tainted by my relationship with him.

And so that was one horrible thing, and then—a lot of people in the group like, for example, Webster Tarpley. I mean, God, if I could take one thing back, it would probably be having anything to do with that person. He's a disgrace. He is terrible. There's so many people who I regret even affiliating with or like, I mean, Alex Jones. (Right) Alex Jones and Webster Tarpley. It's really unfortunate, Jon, because—

JON It's sad because when somebody who questions 9/11 (Mm-hmm) on their own, they get into this on their own, and they go on the internet (Mm-hmm) and they type in 9/11 truth, or whatever (Mm-hmm), they get pummeled with PrisonPlanet.com or InfoWars.com, and they start to listen to what people like that are saying. (Exactly) Because it kind of goes along the lines of your mindset.

But, I want to talk about this guy you mentioned (Yeah) that got you into the T-shirts thing. (Mm-hmm) Just so everybody knows, I was a very big, or am a very big advocate for the 9/11 first responders, and I was working with the FealGood Foundation and I heard from John that—they never got money from this one organization (Mm-hmm, mm-hmm) who said they were going to give a dollar for every T-shirt sold. And—

ABBY Which is nothing, also. It's like—

JON Right, it's nothing. And Abby—I called Abby—and Abby out of her own pocket, sent money to the FealGood Foundation to resolve that issue. So that's the kind of person that Abby is.

ABBY Aw, Jon. It's just embarrassing, you know? And another thing that embarrassed me, and this is what, obviously, we're going to talk about next, which is the whole Crimea upset and what was exposed afterward. But, at that time I was so sure of everything in my world view. I thought that I had all the answers. I, basically—my mind was like a sponge. I was very invested in my own preconceived notions about what I thought 9/11 was (Right) and who I thought was responsible.

So, I—being in that very juvenile mindset, was basically saying it was an inside job. I was going out there saying it's an inside job and I was also just, really just—saying that the buildings were blown up, saying like I didn't know what happened at the Pentagon, all this stuff. I mean, obviously, I didn't know (Right) and I still don't know. I do think that a plane hit the Pentagon. I don't know—I mean, the building thing—I totally have zero like professional opinion on that, because I am not an expert in that field. I think it's definitely strange about Building 7, but I'm not going to sit here as a journalist and say this is what happened. This is how it happened. All I can do is ask questions about what doesn't make sense to me, and the things that we can prove. (Right)

And, so back in the day, back in like—2005 and 6, I mean, I was just running around saying all this stuff not thinking about, hey, like this is actually really irresponsible and not only is it irresponsible, it turns people off—because people act completely bat-shit insane—free to run up to someone and be like: "Do you know buildings were blown up on 9/11?" It's like: "Holy shit! That's crazy. Stop." Now, when I see people doing that, I'm like, you need to seriously stop. I'm like, because if you care about the truth about 9/11, like you need to focus on what's provable, and it's like so weird, because I was that person 10 years ago. But I just didn't know, and I was young, and I was immature, and I was completely ignorant of how the world actually works.

It was, obviously, before I moved to D.C. and saw the Government, you know, how it really operates, like the giant bureaucracy that we live under and really the nuts and bolts of that. So, I regret all of that. I don't adhere to it anymore. I said things that I do not stand by today. And I hate when people look at politicians and they're like he's a flip flopper. Well, you know

what, if you're not changing your views, then you're not evolving as a human. Like I give tons of leeway to people who change their opinions. I said stuff on air a year ago that I regret, that I changed my opinion on today. It's constant change. Life is constant evolution. You have to admit that you were wrong. You have to admit your mistakes.

It's just, it's just really, yeah, yeah I just regret a lot of things that I said, especially on camera. I should've stuck with what I knew in my heart was true, which is that we were lied to. Here is what we were lied to about, and here's why we need justice.

JON Oh, I definitely got burned over the years promoting the work of others thinking that it was credible and it wasn't. With regard to the buildings—(Mm-hmm) There's nothing wrong with questioning how those buildings came down. (Mm-hmm) I mean, that's where the majority of the people were murdered that day. (Right) But, when you admit that you don't know what happened on 9/11, or who was ultimately responsible, it makes you a better advocate for 9/11 justice. (Mm-hmm) It really does. When you ask good questions of people, when you plant good seeds. That's what you want to be doing. (Yeah) You don't want pushing people away.

And, the corporate media spent years trying to depict us as people who think that there was a controlled demolition (Mm-hmm), that a missile hit the Pentagon, that Flight 93 was shot down, that there was a stand-down order, that there were no hijackers, that the planes were remote controlled. (Mm-hmm) The media spent a long time depicting us as that. So, then when people go out and act exactly as the media who is trying to attack us, you know, if they go out and act exactly as they portray us, they're not really helping.

ABBY Oh, a hundred percent, no, a hundred percent. You just hit it on the head. And it's like, it was like reality manifesting itself. I was like—you know what I mean? It was like the media put out this narrative and all the "truth activists" just became that. (Right) And, unfortunately, today, you see all these like newbie idiot ASSHOLES that are jumping on board and all they do is talk about Israel and the buildings, and it's like, you guys need to shut the fuck up, seriously, because a) you have no idea what damage you're doing; b) where have you been for the last 10 years? Why don't you try to get in from the beginning, and then (Right), you know what I mean? Like, do not tell me—you know, all these people saying that I'm a sellout and stuff. You guys can seriously go F yourselves, because you have no idea

what we've been through from the beginning.

JON Exactly.

ABBY People like you and I and all the Family Members, and the Family Members would be disgusted by these tactics and behaviors that some of these trolls—and they, basically, might as well be working for the Government. They're basically doing the same damage that Government is doing.

JON The results are the same.

ABBY Exactly, they're muddying the waters. They're poisoning the well. They're changing the goalposts all over the place. And, honestly, those kinds of people made me want to distance myself because it's so bad, because they've tainted it so much that it's like you can't even talk about 9/11 now without people saying: "Oh, so you believe that space beams blew up the towers?" And you're like what? (Exactly) Like, what are you talking about? I'm just saying that there were warnings. [Laughs]

JON You spoke about evolving. And I've done the same thing. I've tried to distance myself from that group of people over the years. I've changed from saying I'm a 9/11 Truther to being an advocate for 9/11 justice. And my book is called *9/11 Truther* and that's only because I coined the phrase and I thought it would be controversial and I thought a lot of people would buy it because of the controversy. But that didn't happen. [Laughs] (Yeah) But it's the first thing I address in my book. How it's been depicted and so forth.

Now, is there anything that you did as an advocate for 9/11 justice that you're proud of?

ABBY Oh, absolutely. I mean, we'd organize, you know, Cosmos started 9/11, or I think it was like you and a bunch of other people started that day of action. And, so, we did that every week, we got so much. I mean, we were one of the biggest groups in the country because of my tireless, and Nelisse and Ted's tireless work—Laura. And we were out there every single day. You know, just doing outreach.

We did an amazing, like thousands of people marched in Balboa Park, which was one of the most gratifying days of my life, because I was just really proud of the diverse group of families and everyone from all walks of

life marching for this cause, which was that we were lied to and that 9/11 victims' families deserve answers and justice. And that was just really, really gratifying for me.

And, of course, just meeting everyone in the movement and meeting John Feal, and just being around people who really care. It was just a really gratifying thing. It really helped shaped me as a person. I learned a lot. It was also scary, because you see how these kinds of movements gravitate toward where they just are all encompassing. So, now every conspiracy, it's like the same kind of people just gravitate to the next one (Right) and that's what's kind of sad to me is that I thought that this movement was based on the facts. I thought it was based on really credible research that contradicted what we've been told, but, unfortunately, about I think like 80 percent of the people that I was around—just kind of got sucked up into the next quote unquote "whatever," you know?

JON Well, I think a lot of that had to do with what I call the conspiracy theory industry (Mm-hmm) Like Alex Jones, for instance. He'll talk about 9/11, but he'll also talk about all kinds of other things and people pick up on that. And I've been VERY focused on 9/11, and you did a segment once on your show when something bad happens that people coming out of the woodwork within hours (Mm-hmm) to say that it was a false flag attack. You know, we have a hard enough time convincing people that we were lied to about 9/11. (Right) We don't need to be the boy who cried wolf. You know, that makes it even harder.

ABBY And that's exactly what—

JON And especially because it's irresponsible. Huh?

ABBY I said that's exactly what all these people became.

JON Yep. It's sad. And, it's unfortunate. I don't know what to tell people, but the world is a chaotic place, and guess what? Sometimes shit really does happen. (Mm-hmm) And it's not always a conspiracy. And you bring more credibility to your—I mean, question everything, but do so responsibly.

Anyway, when you when you famously spoke out against Russia invading Crimea, who came out of the woodwork to attack you, and what did they use to attack you?

ABBY

This is a horrible moment of my life, but it was it was—the only reason it was horrible is because it came so quickly. But, I guess, that's the way life works and you can never predict when the smear is going to come. I knew that the day would come where people would resurrect my 9/11 Truth past, obviously. Like it's not like I've been hiding it. I'd talked about it openly on the show multiple, multiple times. But I'd changed, obviously, my strategy which is because I realize that I don't know what really happened, so I can't claim to know what happened. All I can do is ask questions.

Of course I knew that there was footage of me back in the d-d-day—the dizzy day— (Laughs) saying some shit that I don't stand by today. But, you know, lo and behold, of course I speak out against the Crimea saying—and it was this amazing kind of moment because a) it brought all this attention RT; b) it kind of gave this credibility to my show, and it was just a really great thing. Because I was like: "Look, I've carved out this editorial freedom on a Russian network speaking out against Russia." And like so at that point, RT couldn't fire me and the mainstream media had to like pay attention to RT. So, it was like a really great thing. But, of course, the establishment can't have that. (Right)

And, so, you have the Neocons who are still very, very here. [Laughs] Like they didn't go away. They just rebranded themselves just like Blackwater. So, they are still working behind the scenes ferociously to try to hijack narratives. They have all these letters that they publish to try to shape foreign policy and the Tom Cotton letter, etc.

So, the Project for the American Century, which I'm sure people are listening to this know what that think tank was with all the Bush crew and so it's now the FPI. And, so after the statement, the next morning I woke up to this amazing article written by Glenn Greenwald about—this is what it means to have editorial independence, and this is like really cool what Abby did and da-da-da.

Then, that night—I was like on cloud 9 all day. I was like this is amazing, like people like get it—and then that night Jamie Kirchick, a very interesting person in D.C. He's a gay Neocon. He's like a performance artist. He's like a James O'Keefe type dude—the guy who dressed as a pimp and tried to let go on Planned Parenthood—like this guy disrupts things. This is a disrupter. He doesn't actually believe what he's doing, but he's like Bill Kristol's henchman, little henchmen. So, he also was a state propagandist. He worked for Radio Free Europe, which is under the

umbrella of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, the U.S. State Department apparatus which is kind of the counterpart of RT, except it has tens of million dollars more in funding.

So, he goes on Lawrence O'Donnell's show THAT night and just trash talks me the whole time. Like it was—it was amazing, because Lawrence O'Donnell didn't even ask ME to come on. So, what I thought was curious was that they asked Jamie Kirchick to come on. Mind you, this is MSNBC, which is supposed to be like a liberal leaning—you know what I mean? (Yeah) So, like why would—they didn't even ask me to come on for an interview. Instead they asked this like performance artist troll with zero followers here, to come on just to bash what I did.

So, it kind of goes in line with like—those two parties selling of the narrative, which is like Russia is this enemy. So, they can't dare have RT gain any sort of credibility. So, I thought that that was really insane. And what the guy was saying was fucking awful. I mean, he was saying that I was a crazy, I was a lunatic, I was a conspiracy theorist, I think that 9/11 was an inside job, da-da-da. So, I was just like damn, well here it comes. Like I knew at that point here it comes. And this is going to be the beginning of the avalanche.

And lo and behold, I remember waking up the NEXT day to *New York Times*, RAW STORY, BuzzFeed. Glenn Greenwald praises Abby Martin and THEN *New York Times* outs her as a 9/11 Truther—like that's like the kind of like bizarre like buzz-wordy headlines, you know. And I was like, well, and I just like tuned it out. I was like, you know what? I just got to ride the storm man, I just got to ride it. I knew this was coming. What was so fascinating was that it had nothing to do with what I did. (Right, exactly) It was just a way to delegitimize me. It was like—it was like, wow, great.

So, yeah, I question things that were told about 9/11, which by the way, we've been lied to about every single impetus of war in the history of fucking war!!! So, if you're telling me that we weren't lied to about 9/11, then you're an idiot. So, I'm sorry that I just question what the Government tells me because they lie to us about everything!!! So, yeah, sorry that makes me a critically thinking American and the rest of the people in the world agree, even though Americans have their heads under a freaking rock about this thing. It's like this Holy Grail.

JON

When you spoke out against Russia—first of all, at the time, I didn't know

if Russia actually invaded Crimea or if they just activated troops (Mm-hmm) that they already had in the Black Sea, and that was one of the first times I really took notice to the propaganda wars that were going on (Right) and realized that I really had no idea what was going on. (Right)

So, it was that incident that—caused that for me, but I didn't understand—you were essentially saying exactly what the corporate media of America was saying, that Russia invaded, they shouldn't have. So, why would they come out to attack you? And you explained it yourself, because it brought credibility to a Russian network which they couldn't have.

ABBY And, because I called out the U.S. in a statement. So, they all used a very small clip of the statement where I was just calling out Russia. But I also called out the entire U.S. media apparatus. I called out the political establishment for it's incursion—NATO incursion and build up. So, and I said I was disgusted with all sides. And that doesn't bode well for the narrative either, because that would implicate them.

And, so once, I think, they kind of realized—they didn't, they had NO idea who I was. Of course, the news doesn't think. [Laughs] They just want the story first. So, they all picked up the story before knowing anything about me. And once they realized I was a pretty controversial figure who mostly spent my time trashing—criminal activity from our Government and exposing war crimes, then they kind of got a little bit scared and, so they had to find a reason to take me down. And, but—and then, of course, I made a statement saying like: "I don't think 9/11 was an inside job." Because, here's the thing. I don't. I don't come out there and say: "This is what happened." When I hear inside job, that is an insanely on-purpose loaded term to marginalize people who are questioning 9/11. (Mm-hmm) And to undercut what we're trying to say.

So, I tried to explain that really—I, actually lucidly tried to explain that and I posted a statement on Blogger, because I knew that people were going to fucking freak out and be like: "She's a Charlie Veitch" and I wanted to be like: "Look, here's the deal. I am saying this because of this. Because I'm a journalist and I'm a professional. And I think that this term is actually super damaging. And, also, I don't think—I think multiple Governments might have been involved." (Right) So, how can you say it was an inside job. [Laughs]

JON Right, exactly. Well, to me, the phrase "9/11 was an inside job"—when

people go around saying that—to me, they may as well be screaming that Elvis is alive. (Exactly) That's how it reaches people.

With regard to Robert Mackey—

ABBY Mm-hmm, that's the guy who I was talking about.

JON Right. He's the guy who wrote the blog in *The New York Times* and he called it: "Russia Today host has roots in "9/11 Truth Movement." (Mm-hmm) And I asked Robert Mackey about it and he said it was—I said: "Why did you attack Abby Martin?" And he said it wasn't an attack, but as I've pointed out several thousand times, the phrase "9/11 Truth" or "9/11 Truther" has been made the equivalent of a baby killer (Mm-hmm) or a dog torturer. (Mm-hmm) So, if you link someone to that in the media, it's not to make them a hero. (Oh, no) It's the exact opposite.

ABBY And look at what they say about Sandy Hook truthers—like everything's a *truther* now.

JON Exactly. And, the way they attacked you, there are different ways that big names or people with voices get attacked. And, there have been people like Cynthia McKinney, Richard Falk, Van Jones, Kevin Bracken, Rosie O'Donnell. (Mm-hmm) The list goes on and on, and when a celebrity who has spoken out about 9/11—they've been attacked in unison (Mm-hmm) by the corporate media. What they did to you is kind of like—what I call a "Van Jones." [Laughs] They looked into your past and found you questioned 9/11 at one time, and used that against you. Do you remember what they did to Van Jones, or not? (Oh, yeah) And I'm not a fan of Van Jones, but they got him out of the of the Obama administration because he signed a statement years ago in 2004, advocating for 9/11 justice. So—

ABBY Unbelievable.

JON You know, and this is, I think, one of the reasons why people with a voice won't address the lies of 9/11, because they don't want to be painted with the 9/11 Truth brush. They don't want to lose their pulpits and, these attacks are a big reason why, I think.

ABBY Oh, Jon, I can guarantee you that's why. I've lived in D.C. now for three years. I've talked to dozens of journalists, lobbyists, State Department people about this issue, and I will guarantee you that half of them, off the

record, will agree with me. That's what's so amazing. I even talked to this—in Guantanamo Bay, of all places—I was with an AP reporter, seasoned AP reporter, who was there at the beginning. I mean, he was on the ground in the earthquake; he was there when the first prisoners were brought to GITMO. I mean, this dude is like really baller. And he was just—he's the one who brought it up, oddly enough, and we're just sitting at this table, and he brings up—just questions that you have about 9/11 and he was like: "It got to a point where I had to stop." He was like: "Because I realized I couldn't do my job. If I didn't believe what the Government was telling us about 9/11." And I was like, dude, that—you're just like, you—not only is it avoiding the third rail, like you know, a lot of people avoid Israel because they know it's not good for their career—not only is this like the ultimate third rail issue, which is that you just don't touch 9/11, but I think that people honestly, psychologically, can't. Especially, if you're working remotely near the establishment. But, I mean, hearing what this guy said and talking to just dozens of people here, everyone agrees. It's just that who's going to take the risk? They're not going to go out there then and be like all right, like now I'm going to do a story about it. No. They just agree off the record silently and they move on like they're not going to risk their careers. And they also, in the case of this AP guy, didn't even want to go there.

JON Well I've risked so much. I'm a nobody and I've risked everything for this. (Right) And it boggles my mind that people like [sighs] Chris Hedges, Noam Chomsky, Glenn Greenwald won't—they'll talk about everything else in the post-9/11 world, but they won't talk about the fact that we were lied to about the event that justifies that world. And it just boggles my mind.

One of the other—

ABBY Because to them, they think it's a moot point, Jon. They think it's a moot point because it's done, all we can focus on now is what's to come. But the problem is that when you're omitting that world view, and the realistic implications of actual state crimes against democracy, which is what Lance deHaven Smith talks about in his book, that is omitting a huge portion of our reality and that is really damaging—because it's going to happen again. And we need to acknowledge facts, as hard as it may be. Otherwise, we're not doing our job as journalists.

JON They're able to write the history and they're writing a history that is simply

wrong. It's damaging. (Right) The myth of 9/11 is dangerous to everyone on the planet. The truth about 9/11, from what I gather, is dangerous only to a few. (Exactly) And, they need to start addressing this. It terrifies me that children go to school and they learn about 9/11, but they don't learn *really* about 9/11. And, so they grow up with this myth about 9/11 that is just wrong. And that's so dangerous. (Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm)

Let me see—I'm looking over the questions—

ABBY Yeah, the whole Crimea thing was so sad because here I was trying to do something really good. I was like trying to stay true to my moral compass. I was like really just trying to start this dialogue how we shouldn't be reactionary. We shouldn't be pro-Russia. We shouldn't be pro-U.S. We should really like discern that everything is very convoluted and like militarism is bad and the way that both countries are going about it was disagreeable in my point.

And then, of course, the entire narrative just got shaped that I'm a crazy lunatic for questioning 9/11. And I was like, whoa! This is typical because I've seen this happened so many times. I saw it happen to Ron Paul. I saw it happen to Van Jones. Like you've seen it happen and then when it was happening to me, it was just sad, because I was like this is just so sad because people—it's like my message got lost. You know, my original message got lost. And what are we even talking about.

JON The other thing that was sad was because of the fact that you defended yourself and evolved and stopped using language that doesn't help this cause, you got attacked by members of the so-called "9/11 Truth Movement." You know, and I say shame on them. Shame on the people that attacked you, because, my god, how many times on your show have you addressed the 9/11 issue?

ABBY I probably did about 12 interviews about it at least. And the Rachel Maddow thing, Kevin Ryan, you, I mean, everyone. I tried to touch it as much as I could.

JON Exactly. You brought more attention to the 9/11 issue than anybody else on the television. So how dare they come out and attack you for trying to defend yourself that—they should be ashamed of themselves. Then they do, as far as I'm concerned, everybody that did it owes you an apology.

Now, people that question the 9/11 attacks as a whole have been misrepresented, attacked, slandered by much of the corporate media for years. And why do you think that is?

ABBY Well, it's pretty obvious, but I think it can, if you want to trace it back to historical nature, I think you can look at Water—not Watergate, sorry. Oh, my gosh, the Warren Commission, because the CIA—and this is another thing that Lance deHaven Stevens talks about—the CIA actually had a campaign that's traceable, that infiltrated the media, not only with Operation Mockingbird and The Cold War stuff, but to discredit the term conspiracy theory and to muddy the water about people who were questioning the Warren Commission.

So, this was back in the day and it just worked with wonders, I think. And it started to shape this kind of dueling reality in this country where we always project these political assassinations, or fore-knowledge of events, or outright false flags, or manufactured war pretenses in other countries. But, if you ever question that here, then you're a lunatic. And it really does come from ethno-centrism; it comes from American exceptionalism; and it comes from this kind of brainwashing media campaign that was in conjunction with the CIA back in the 60s. And it's just permeated so much that we live in a society now where we can't even talk about facts. (Right) And people are so scared that it's not that journalists aren't thinking about it, it's not that they don't care, it's that they know the way the system works and they just know that they can't touch it—and they've known that since the beginning. So, why would come out now and break that mold?

JON After 9/11, a lot of people say—a lot of journalists say they dropped the ball because they didn't want to come across as unpatriotic and so on and so forth. And I think that's true for some people. But then there's what you were talking about.

Now, there were the journalists that did openly question 9/11. One of them was Robert Scheer from the *LA Times* who wrote an article called "What We Don't Know About 9/11 Hurts Us," and it wasn't long after he wrote that that he was gone from the *LA Times*, and he started his site TruthDig. So, that was one reason why you know journalists don't cover the issue. They don't want to lose their jobs.

ABBY They also don't want to be called, like—it's not only that. I just thought of this. Remember after 9/11 when Bush was like saying that, I mean, he

immediately started talking about conspiracy theories (Right) and how insane people were. I mean, they knew from the beginning that they needed to get that out there real quick. So, they tainted the water immediately and, made it outlandish for anyone to question anything that they were doing. And once—and they were so untransparent and secretive that it was like, of course, theories are going to pop up. Like, you couldn't be any more secretive about everything that's going on. (Right) But, of course, if we question anything that you're saying, then we're crazy.

So, I think it was like this complete—it was like the burning tires thing. It was exactly what Dan Rather said. It was just like South Africa. You were basically symbolically lynched, like you—had a tire thrown around your neck, and you were just hung out to dry. And that's the culture and climate of fear, that you didn't question a single thing. And not only with 9/11, but I mean, that's obviously how we got into Iraq, too. (Right) And it lasts till this day with this kind of compliance and unquestioning stenography going on. The Richard Engle thing, this NBC journalist who said that he was kidnapped by Assad forces, and then it turns out he was kidnapped by the rebels, and NBC lies on behalf of the State Department to sell a war! (Yep) This is the reality we're living in now, Jon.

JON Well, Bob McIlvaine, 9/11 Family Member Bob McIlvaine, was approached by a Philadelphia paper and they wanted to report on his story and, I think, they ultimately said—actually, no, the reporter was a friend of his son's and they wanted to do a story and they said to him that the Pentagon would never allow this to run. So, I thought that was very interesting.

ABBY That is very odd. So weird.

JON What do you have to say to people who have a voice, who speak about issues pertaining to the 9/11 world, but don't address the fact that we were lied to about 9/11?

ABBY I'll say two things about that. The first is that—to the people who do agree with us and are scared, look, what I've realized coming out of this entire experience for me, which is growing, evolving, changing my opinions, solidifying my beliefs, but also staying true to the fact that we were lied to and I still want justice. And I think that what we were told was complete bullshit.

Coming out of that stronger than I ever have because of the support of tens of thousands of people, not only here but around the world, Jon. I mean, anyone who's traveled outside of this country knows no one else in the world buys this shit. Everyone has questions. Everyone knows we were lied to. And people here support it, and they stood with me and the people who are true and they know what's going on, they see through it. So, I would only say that you have the majority of people on your side.

It's just that the media doesn't let it know, they don't show it. (Right) So, you feel like you're isolated in this belief. You feel like you're insane, you know? You're like, wow, am I crazy? But, you're not. The majority of people agree with you. (Exactly) And that, that's a beautiful thing. And it's so beautiful because I came out of this whole experience being reaffirmed that I'm on the right side of history and that everyone really appreciated—that people like you and I haven't sat down and we still remain true and stuff like that, and they appreciate that we're out there saying this stuff because they feel like maybe they can't.

But to the people who do not address the lies about 9/11—who continue to talk about just everything that happened in the post-9/11 world, I mean, once again you're not addressing a realistic view of how the political establishment works. And I'm not even talking about all that crazy shit. I don't believe in the Illuminati. I don't believe in New World Order. I don't believe in any of that stuff. And that's not where your mind needs to go, if you're talking about that there might have been inside complicity in terms of Cheney leaving the back door open. That's not what I'm talking about. And we need to differentiate between a vast criminal conspiracy of unnamed—not seen people in a smoky room with just like people out in the blue.

JON Well, we know people have lied. We know documented lies and none of those people were held accountable. (Exactly) Why can't they talk about that? And, you know, they're afraid—we spoke about how they're afraid of being painted with the 9/11 Truth brush and losing their pulpits. But I guarantee because of what YOU said that if they started to address even the slightest bit the fact that we were lied to about 9/11, I guarantee that the people that follow them would multiply—exponentially. (Mm-hmm) And so they wouldn't lose their pulpits. If anything, their pulpits would grow.

ABBY It's just really, exactly, a lot of these scholars—a lot of these philosophers talk about the conventional wisdom and they really eviscerate the concept

of American exceptionalism. But then they still adhere to that by not addressing the clear fact that we were lied to, and clearly someone from inside the establishment knew. That really bothers me, because that's almost as ethnocentric—like projection unlike: "Oh, but still our Government wouldn't allow that to happen." At least that's what they're putting out there, even if they disagree with that personally. That's what their work tells people. And that I think is really damaging.

JON What I told somebody— what I told Jonathan Kay is—our elected officials are human beings just like you and I. They're capable of greed; they're capable of jealousy. (Mm-hmm) They're capable of murder. And every other horrible thing that human beings are capable of doing. Don't put these people on a pedestal. It's their actions—You know, I look at 9/11 as a crime and not as an act of war. (Mm-hmm) And as with every crime there are suspects for that crime. (Mm-hmm) And along with people like Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, people—elements within our Government and other Governments—have more than earned the title of suspect for the crime of 9/11 by their own actions. It's not like we made this shit up (Right!) It was their own actions that that gave them this title. So, it would be irresponsible of us as citizens to ignore that, that truth, I think.

And the fact that—even if you don't think they earned the title of suspect, there are many lies out there that need to be addressed. (Absolutely) So, I think it's irresponsible if you don't, especially if you have a voice.

Okay, my last question. What are your plans for the future and is there anything that you would like to promote at this time?

ABBY Plans for the future is I'm trying to figure out my next move. So, starting a show, but I'm not going to give away anything yet. It will either be independent or hosted by a network—trying to figure that out. But in the meantime, I'm doing regular podcasts and article postings on MediaRoots.org, which is my citizen journalism project that's been ongoing for about a decade now. And then I am also just participating in stuff. I'm finally able to go out and be a part of forums and protests and stuff, so that's fun to not be trapped in a studio. And trying to either move to LA or New York. So, a lot of exciting things ahead. Everyone stay tuned. Check out my art, as well. AbbyMartin.org and my brother and I's podcast on Soundcloud.

JON Who did that piece of artwork? The new MediaRoots logo thing that I saw?

ABBY So, that's this guy Leo who runs a lab in Ventura. It's really amazing. He's great.

JON It's excellent. And I love what you and Robbie do with your podcasts. When I listened to your GITMO show, I cried when you cried. (Awww) I mean, it really was very touching. And, again, Abby I'm really just so proud of you for everything that you've done over the years. And I want to thank you very much for everything that you've done. And I want to wish you well in all of your future endeavors. I hope you smash another television.

ABBY [Laughs] I don't think it will be the last one. I think I'll definitely have more to smash.

 Jon, thank you so much for all of your tireless work and just for staying true to the message this whole time in the face of so much bullshit. And I just really admire your steadfastness and really appreciate it, man.

JON Well, thank you very much, Abby, and good luck with all of your future endeavors, and thank you very much for taking the time today to come on the show.

ABBY Thank you so much, Jon.



Chapter/Episode 28 – Jon Gold – May 22, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Robbie Martin (ROBBIE)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." This week I am not your host. Instead, Robbie Martin of Media Roots has graciously agreed to be our guest host. This show is part of The Soapbox People's Network. This week we're going to focus specifically on the Presidential Daily Briefings or PDBs that the Bush administration received prior to 9/11.

ROBBIE And, since Jon has already been a guest, we're going to forego his bio. I hope that's okay with you, Jon. And the first and second questions he usually asks his guests, which is basically what were you doing on the day of 9/11? And if you want to hear it, if you want to hear Jon answer those questions and explain his own personal experience, listen to Episode 15 where Mickey Huff guest hosted. And you can find your episodes on YouTube, right?

JON You can find them on YouTube, on Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox, or they are available on iTunes.

ROBBIE Okay, I didn't know that. Awesome.

So, I guess maybe we should start out by just clearing past some of the very recent stuff that has happened. You know, there's always— seems like there's always something in the media once every couple months like clockwork that reminds us again of 9/11 and why—we should supposedly be fighting in this war on terror and, I guess, the most recent thing is probably this bin Laden—the bin Laden raid story by Seymour Hersh. And—and then what came out after that by the Government was a list of his books, sitting in his bookshelf. I'm just wondering if you had any thoughts on or reaction to that because that was super strange, you know, that he had actual "9/11 conspiracy" books and then sort of like the greatest hits of some of the best liberal books written, actually.

JON

I think it's funny that—you can't make this shit up. But I guess you could. But—the whole Seymour Hersh story. I have many questions about it. I don't think that it's—the absolute truth. I mean who knows who his sources were. Maybe they had an agenda of some kind. But, he's a respected journalist for the most part. I mean, everybody used to love him.

But I heard him on an interview the other day with The Real News Network where he praised Obama and said he voted for him two times, and it kind of showed that Seymour Hersh is like a partisan guy. But this article, obviously, doesn't make Obama look good. But I have many questions about it. He said that essentially Pakistan was harboring Osama bin Laden, and the Saudis were paying them to do it. And the reason that they did it was so that—the U.S. would not capture Osama bin Laden and find out from him—who is funding him and so forth. And we've known for years that Saudi Arabia or elements within it have been funding Al-Qaeda. We've protected that knowledge—prior to 9/11, after 9/11. So, that part didn't make any sense to me.

And, you know, with regard to the books, I thought it was funny, you know, Osama bin Laden was trying to figure out how 9/11 happened.

ROBBIE

[Laughs] Yeah, because what's interesting to me is that very originally out of the gates it was sort of proposed that bin Laden was almost like the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, and more recently, you're starting to see—well not more recently, this sort of narrative evolved over time where he was merely the financier of the attacks or whatever. But, I mean, it turns out that the only places we can trace a lot of the finances

back to are people within—the Saudi Government or the Pakistani Government, really. So, to me, that's kind of funny, because no one's ever really connected the dots even just—I'm not even talking about a conspiracy theorist. I'm talking about someone who is completely on the side of the sort of narrative of the war on terror. No one's ever sort of pointed out the dots of okay, here's where the money came from, where bin Laden got it, here's where it was dispersed to these—19 hijackers. No one's ever laid anything like that out that I know of. And I think that's kind of interesting that it just—it's like almost like the case against bin Laden just keeps getting weaker and weaker. So that now he's merely just this financier who was just as curious about 9/11 as a lot of other people that we know are [laughs] allegedly.

JON Or his books. I mean, I used to—think that the story might possibly be true, that he was in Pakistan and so forth. But over the years, I've come to think that it's possible he was not there. I have no proof. I have no proof, whatsoever, that he was there.

His wives—apparently the ISI spoke to them, but the FBI couldn't speak to them. Has any reporter even tried to get in touch with them to—find out their story, and what was it like being married to Osama bin Laden?

ROBBIE Yeah, isn't that fascinating? You would think that would be almost like the story of the century. (Right) These were bin Laden's wives. I mean, and that was another part of that same Seymour Hersh interview you're talking about with, I think it was with Paul Jay of Real News (Right), it infuriated me when Paul, I think he almost opened up the interview with asking a question that Seymour Hersh didn't address in his article, which was: "Why did the administration decide to kill him instead of capture him?" Why was that the—

JON Well, that's a *pretty big* lie, because one of the first things the Obama administration said was that they were going in to capture him and bring him to justice. But that was not the case at all. If he was there, the order was to kill him outright, just kill him, assassinate him.

ROBBIE Which is incredibly strange considering that it would be one of the biggest windfalls of like, intelligence to have someone that valuable in captivity.

JON Yep. Well, Ray McGovern opined once that the reason they wanted him

dead was so that he wouldn't talk about his relationships with the CIA and so on and so forth.

With regard to being the mastermind. It's always funny to me—it goes back and forth between Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Osama bin Laden, as far as the corporate news is concerned. Whenever Osama's in the news, he's the mastermind. When Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's in the news, he's the mastermind.

ROBBIE Yeah. [Laughs] I mean, and then what happened to Zawahiri? That's the one thing I always wonder is why doesn't anybody talk about him anymore? If he's even above bin Laden, and he was the originator of a lot of the stuff that bin Laden ended up being influenced by—the supposed head of Al-Qaeda—it's just nobody seems to care where he is or where he's hiding. And I find that odd because that's—why? What's going on with that?

JON I don't know.

ROBBIE But the idea, yeah, the idea that they didn't want him to talk, I mean, it's just incredibly odd that even just the liberal media didn't even really go after that. When the Osama bin Laden raid first happened, barely anybody was sort of asking that question. And Seymour Hersh just totally dodged the question and told Paul Jay: "You're putting the cart before the horse. Let me like finish my point first and then I'll get to that." And he never gets to it.

And, I think, I saw someone else ask him the same question and he dodged it in a similar way. And, yeah, I can't imagine that someone like him wouldn't be curious about that. Unless his loyalty towards Obama is just that big that he just doesn't see anything wrong with that. A lot of people don't see anything wrong with just killing him in cold blood. You know, he of course, he was the—he was the guy behind the 9/11 attacks, so, why not kill him? But, I mean, it's missing the point of well, think of the intelligence we could have gotten from him.

JON Yeah, exactly. And the funny thing is is that—when the 9/11 Commission Report was released, on the day of, there was a press conference held by the 9/11 Commissioners, and somebody asked about—are you satisfied? Are there any unanswered questions and so on and so forth? And Tom Kean said: "Yes, of course—there are some unanswered questions. The

people involved, they died. But—someday when we capture Osama bin Laden, he'll be able to answer some questions for us." Or something to that—

ROBBIE Wow, wow. So, he—I mean, that just makes me think he was—that's a really naive thing to think that that would actually take place. I mean, but that would—I mean, if someone was genuinely interested in what happened on the attacks, that would be a great opportunity to be able to have him in a jail cell.

JON And to put him in a courtroom. Let's see the evidence, you know. And I've theorized about this before and I've said this openly before—I cannot tell you definitively—when Osama bin Laden was killed. I know that after 9/11 he was going around saying—he was denying any involvement in the attacks. I think he denied it on three separate occasions. And then we had the questionable confession video that came out.

But I don't think that they could allow him to roam free. If he's going to continue to go around saying he had nothing to do with 9/11. So, I think it was in their best interests very early on to either kill him, or to—lock him up. Put him in a position where he doesn't have—he can't roam free and say whatever the hell he wants.

So—there are two possibilities. Either he died early on or they captured him early on, like when they supposedly allowed him to escape into Pakistan from Tora Bora. Maybe that's when he was picked up by Pakistan and held—however long. I don't know. I don't know. And that's the part that *sucks*, is I don't know and I hate not knowing.

ROBBIE Yeah. And it's not, it's not being a kooky conspiracy theorist or—being conspiratorial to think that because—we simply weren't given any proof, and so many things about it were obvious lies. (Yeah) I mean that's not even—that's not even a—

JON Big lies too!

ROBBIE That's become mainstream now that, I mean, thankfully because of the Seymour Hersh article, regardless of if what he wrote is true or not, a lot more people out there are now understanding that a lot of that raid—was a lie or how it was told to us was a lie. So, that's, I guess, a good

outcome of it.

JON Well, what it's doing is it's getting people to actually question what happened and that's a good thing, so—

ROBBIE Yeah. And, yeah, I mean, there was another interesting component to that that you pointed out to me that someone actually wrote a very similar article to Seymour Hersh back in 2011, I believe. Was it? And what was her name?

JON I don't remember her name.

ROBBIE But she allegedly got the same story pretty much from this, probably the same sources that he did, and it just didn't get coverage at all.

JON Right. And if he was in captivity or being harbored by Pakistan, since what was it? 2006? That's when Musharraf was in power. I do not think that the U.S. would be unaware of it. And there's a reason to think that we were aware of it. In 2008, I think her name as Christine Amanpour, said that she knew that Osama bin Laden was not in a cave but in a villa in Pakistan. And according to U.S. officials or—intelligence sources, so there is an indication that if he was in Pakistan we were aware of it.

ROBBIE And, there's interesting holes also that go back before 9/11 about bin Laden like that one—that one story that a lot of people trot out as proof that he was still somehow working for the CIA right up until 9/11. I don't know if that means that, but that newspaper *Le Figaro* reported that he was getting dialysis treatment in, I believe, Qatar. Was it?

JON I thought it was Pakistan.

ROBBIE I think it was either Qatar or the United Arab Emirates. It was like a more Western-friendly country out there. And, yeah—that was reported in a mainstream French newspaper, but a lot of people here have written it off as being sort of a kooky conspiracy theory badly sourced.

JON Are you talking about when the CIA met with bin Laden at the hospital? (Yeah) Oh, that story is actually pretty well corroborated. I don't remember all of it off the top of my head, but I DO know that Anthony Summers in his book *Eleventh Day* actually thought there was more credence to that story than not. And that book was sold by—people like

Miles Kara who's a former employee of the Joint Congressional Inquiry, and the 9/11 Commission who became a debunker. He said it was like part two of the 9/11 Commission. So, if he's saying that and—in that book it actually gives credence to that story then, you know—

ROBBIE Well, that's incredibly strange then that, I mean, someone like that would give credence to a story like that. I mean, just how does that not flip upside down the entire paradigm? I mean, you know?

JON Well, what his reasoning was that of course, you're going to meet with your enemy at a time when they're threatening you to try and get them to not attack you.

ROBBIE Are you crazy? That's insane. What the f***? (Right) What?

JON My feelings are—this is the most wanted man in the world supposedly. And—if the CIA had a chance to meet with him—if this meeting didn't work out the way they wanted it to, wouldn't they have a contingency plan to capture him anyway? You know, there's no such thing as fair play.

ROBBIE It makes no sense at all. I mean, if the Clinton administration was going through the trouble of flying out drones to take pictures, and to find out where he was in Pakistan, I mean, apparently, they kept seeing him—I mean, not in Pakistan. I'm sorry, in Afghanistan, during the Clinton administration, they had actually had aerial photographs of him. The only reason they claim they didn't attack was because they weren't sure they would—not kill civilians in the process.

JON We don't care about that.

ROBBIE It's fascinating. I mean, if that actually happened it just completely contradicts almost everything we've been told. Almost like 100 percent.

JON I thought the story was that they called one of them off because there were Saudi royals in the vicinity or with him at the time.

ROBBIE I think Michael Scheuer claims that—well this is the Michael Scheuer version—is that Richard Clarke called off one of the attacks because it was, apparently, there was some United Arab Emirates like royal family member with bin Laden. (Right) And I guess he had some ties or he was friendly with them or something.

JON A lot of people don't trust Michael Scheuer or they do trust Michael Scheuer, I don't know.

 Anyway, do you want to get into this topic? There's a lot of information to cover.

ROBBIE Yeah, yeah, let's get into the whole premise of the PDBs. And for those who don't know what the PDBs are, they are Presidential Daily Briefs that are internally circulated. They're not meant for public consumption, but some of them actually leaked, or one of them actually leaked right after 9/11, that sort of created a big—a little bit of a firestorm for a bit where the mainstream reacted saying that—well, Bush lied. He did know that this was coming, etc.

JON For this episode, we're not going to focus on the multitude of warnings we received from multiple countries and every other indication that an attack was coming. You know, like Able Danger identifying four of the hijackers a year prior to 9/11—all that stuff. Instead, we're going to focus specifically on the Presidential Daily Briefings.

 So, you're right, after 9/11, actually, it was May 2002—the August 6th PDB was partially leaked and the *New York Post* ran a huge story on the front page that said: "Bush Knew." But, we'll get back to that, actually.

 Do you want to—do you have the questions in front of you? (Yeah) Okay, go ahead.

ROBBIE Yeah, so, I mean, after 9/11 we were told repeatedly by members of the Bush administration and by a lot of other people, also defenders of the administration, that there were no warnings. What examples are there of Bush administration officials or other people saying this, sort of echoing that talking point.

JON Okay, well, on board Air Force One on 9/11 2001, at 1:47 P.M., Ari Fleischer had a little press conference and the question was:

 "Q: Had there been any warnings that the President knew of?

 Mr. Fleischer: No warnings.

Q: Does the President . . . Is he concerned about the fact that this attack of this severity happened with no warning?

Mr. Fleischer: First things first—his concern is with the safety of people who have lost their—the health and security of the American people and with the families of those who have lost their lives. There will come an appropriate time to do all appropriate look backs. His focus is on events this morning."

So, I think that was the very first individual saying there were no warnings. Here's a quote:

"In the first 24 hours of analysis, I have not seen any evidence that there was a specific signal that we missed. In this case, we did not have intelligence of anything of this scope or magnitude."

And that was Colin Powell on September 12, 2001.

"There were no warning signs that I'm aware of that would indicate this type of operation in this country."

That's Robert Mueller.

ROBBIE Let me stop you really quick. It sounds like when you're starting to go through these and in chronological order—the very first one by Ari Fleischer seemed like it was sort of maybe off-the-cuff. They didn't think about it too much before they answered, and then as time passes, it already sounds like they're revising the statements to sound more (legalese) yeah, so that they can—it's like they're adding words like "magnitude," "specificity," like things, extra wording to it—to make it actually be technically true. You know, in a weird way.

JON Right. We had absolutely no warning that four planes were going to be hijacked that morning, and one of them was going to crash into the World Trade Center at 8:46. (Yeah) (Laughs) That kind of specific warning. That's exactly what they started to sound like.

I have a couple of more:

"No specific threat involving really a domestic operation or involving what happened, obviously—the cities, airliner, and so

forth." That's Dick Cheney on September 16, 2001.

And, here's one:

"Never (in) anybody's thought processes . . . about how to protect America, did we ever think that the evil doers would fly not one but four commercial aircraft into precious U.S. targets . . . never." That was George Bush September 16, 2001.

"No one can imagine someone being willing to commit suicide, being willing to use an airplane as a lethal weapon." That was Jane Garvey of the FAA September 25, 2001.

You know, these kinds of statements were repeated throughout the corporate news, and 9/11 was treated as a surprise attack. I believed it, many people believed it—that there were no warnings whatsoever, and it was a complete surprise attack. Do you remember that?

ROBBIE Of course, I mean, that was what they were putting out immediately. Yeah, I mean, I don't remember if I felt like I entirely bought the idea that it was a surprise attack. I remember I think I was more, at the time, I was more just confused about why our air defenses didn't escort or reach any of the planes, because I knew about that concept before 9/11, and that's sort of where my mind went at the time. And I don't think I was really paying as much attention to what Bush was saying at the time. I looked into all that stuff after the fact much later.

JON Right.

ROBBIE Were there more?

JON Were there more what? Denials? There's a whole—if you go to HistoryCommons.org and go to the Complete 9/11 Timeline, there's a section called "911 Denials." Just click on that. That where I got them from, except for the first one, the Ari Fleischer one. I had that stored somewhere.

ROBBIE Yeah. And, even when Bush left office, in his very final press conference, he goes back to that moment in time where the press was was, well, I guess we'll go into that in the next question. I mean, why don't you talk about what the August 6 Presidential daily briefing was.

What did it say?

JON

Well, and we have to remember that, as you were getting to say that Bush—he even made statements like: "If I had any inkling whatsoever that an attack was coming, I would have moved heaven and earth" or whatever the hell he used to say.

The August 6th PDB. Actually, it's interesting, the release of the August 6th PDB is what made me go off to the races with regard to 9/11. I found out,—I thought there were no warnings. And then there was a warning, and so we were being lied to and all this crazy stuff was happening and—I was off to the races.

Now, with regard to the August 6th PDB, which was titled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in the U.S." The tidbits that got the most attention are as follows:

"We have not been able to corroborate some of the more sensational threat reporting such as that from a [redacted] service in 1998, saying that bin Laden wanted to hijack a U.S. aircraft to gain the release of 'Blind Sheikh' Omar Abdul-Rahman and other U.S.-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 U.S. that it considers bin Laden-related."

Now, with regard to that number of 70 full-field investigations taking place in the U.S., the 9/11 Commission will say:

"The 70 full-field investigations number was a generous calculation that included fundraising 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."

ROBBIE When was this PDB leaked?

JON It was leaked in May of 2002, and when the PDB was leaked, Condoleezza Rice said that it was historical in nature, and she repeated those claims in front of the 9/11 Commission. But the information within the document was clearly present tense and—when it was leaked, people like Hillary Clinton, Christopher Dodd, Senator Paul Byrd, and Tom Daschle were essentially asking—what did the President know and when did he know it?

And I have actually videos of all those guys saying that on my YouTube channel which is Gold9472. And, as I said, the *New York Post* printed a front-page article with Bush on the cover that said: "**BUSH KNEW**" in big bold letters.

ROBBIE Yeah, and the *New York Post*—a lot of people don't know, maybe don't know this, but the *New York Post*—and this is completely unrelated to that, but they also received an anthrax letter addressed to their sort of main address. But, it's odd, because they're one of the most—I mean, they are owned by Rupert Murdoch's corporation. Is that true?

JON Mm-hmm, News Corp.

ROBBIE News Corp. So, it's really interesting to me that around that same time Fox News was the one beating the war on terror hysterical drum the hardest, while the other—one of their other papers owned by News Corp, *New York Post* was actually running one of the most sensationalist headlines, shall we say, about how basically Bush lied about not knowing.

JON And, the funny thing is, today, is that the *New York Post* "hates" 9/11 Truth or Truthers.

ROBBIE Yeah. And Truthers will still use—I mean, I see tons of Truthers still

using that front-page screenshot (Right) of their newspaper, so.

JON You know it's the thing that set me off, so. And it's funny, it's also the thing that set Paul Thompson off, and what he did was he created the timeline. I went off like an idiot and was contacting my representatives and the local media trying to get them to do their job without realizing that they don't do their jobs. [Laughs]

ROBBIE Now, this might be a more obscure question. But, do you know if there was a very first media organization that got that leak that reported it before anybody else?

JON As far as I know, the *New York Post* was the first to report it.

ROBBIE And do you know who that was?

JON No, I don't know and I don't know who leaked it either.

ROBBIE And nobody knows still, but it's been speculated, again, that Richard Clarke might have been the person who leaked that somehow. But I don't know how he would have had access to the PDB necessarily.

JON Well, he wasn't a principal anymore. There's something called an SEIB, which is like a PDB, but it's for the subordinates and it doesn't contain as much information. That's the kind of thing that he would get. I would think. But I don't know. But, I don't know who speculated that? That it was Richard Clarke that leaked that?

ROBBIE I don't know who speculated it either. But I remember seeing it somewhere. Could have been just a total baseless speculation.

But what is—can you explain how the White House fought against giving the JICI and the 9/11 Commission access to the PDBs, the rest of the PDBs, not just—the August 6th one, because at that point it had already been leaked publicly. Everybody already saw that.

JON Only parts of it were leaked publicly.

ROBBIE Oh, only parts of it?

JON It wasn't until later during the 9/11 Commission when, I think—actually,

I think, even that was redacted. Whatever was released during the 9/11 Commission, I think was also redacted.

ROBBIE But, correct me if I'm wrong on this, but it was mostly the title of the PDB that the public was familiarized with.

JON Right. "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S."

ROBBIE And what you read off earlier, was that originally leaked as part of the PDB or was that something revealed later?

JON I don't remember what the original story was. I got that information from HistoryCommons. (Okay).

All right, now your next question with regard to what the White House did. I have this entry from HistoryCommons.

ROBBIE Briefly, describe first what is the JICI?

JON Oh, the Joint Congressional Inquiry. (Okay) The Jersey Girls call it the Jicky. And I just adopted it and started calling it the JICI, but it's the Joint Congressional Inquiry.

ROBBIE Yeah, that happened before the 9/11 Commission. (Right)

JON All right, this entry is from HistoryCommons:

"Late January 2003, White House Counsel Gonzales denies 9/11 Commission access to White House documents. White House counsel Alberto Gonzales denies a request made by the 9/11 Commission for access to a number of White House documents pertaining to 9/11 citing executive privilege. The documents date from both the Clinton and Bush administrations. The request is made by Philip Zelikow, the Commission's executive director who believes the commission must see the documents if it is to do its job properly, and that the White House has already indicated the Commission will get what it wants. The documents include highly classified Presidential Daily Briefings (PDBs), the "crown jewels" of U.S. intelligence reporting. Only a very few such PDBs have ever been made available

from the Johnson and Nixon administrations. Zelikow says the commission needs to see the PDBs so it can determine what warnings Clinton and Bush received about Al-Qaeda. However, the PDBs had not been provided to the 9/11 Congressional inquiry and Gonzales says they will not be given to the 9/11 Commission either. Zelikow tells Gonzales that this would be bad for the 9/11 Commission and the United States recalling the uproar that ensued when it was discovered the CIA had withheld documents from the Warren Commission that investigated the murder of President Kennedy. Zelikow also pressures Gonzales by threatening to resign from the commission if it is not given the documents, knowing this will generate extremely bad publicity for the White House."

It goes on.

"However, Gonzales refuses to cave in and, a few days later, makes what author Philip Shenon calls a "blunt and undiplomatic" phone call to Tom Kean the Commission's chairman. He tells Kean that he does not want to see Zelikow ever again, which means that in the future he will only discuss access to the documents with Kean and Commission Vice Chairman Lee Hamilton.

The battle over access to documents and witnesses will go on for some time. And Commissioner John Lehman will say that White House political adviser Karl Rove is "very much involved" in it. According to Lehman, "Gonzales cleared everything with Rove" and friends tell him that "Rove was the quarterback for dealing with the Commission," although the White House will deny this.

That's the end of that entry and—a few surprising things come up in this. Zelikow actually puts his foot down—and threatens to resign over access to these documents. And that goes against the grain of what we know about Philip Zelikow.

But what I think was probably happening at the time, was that the family members were were pushing for the release. That's what I think. I can't imagine him being as good as this portrays him to be. [Laughs]

ROBBIE Yeah, well no, it's interesting, while—because I remember—that is in Philip Shenon's book, right? (Right) So, what it makes me think about, and this is pure speculation on my part, but you know at some point it seemed like Philip Zelikow was fighting in the opposite direction and he was fighting against the family members and he was fighting for the Bush administration.

So, maybe, maybe he knew at the beginning that his job there was to essentially cover for the Bush administration, and he wanted to know the full scope of what he was going to be dealing with. And maybe the Bush administration wouldn't even give him that—to at least let him know what he was fully covering for. [Laughs] I mean, that's part of where my mind goes with that. But, again, could be completely not true also. Who knows?

JON Exactly. Well, it's possible, but. I just thought it was very interesting that he was willing to resign over this and also that Lehman, you know, accused Karl Rove of being the quarterback of the 9/11 Commission, which we've heard before.

ROBBIE And it's also worth noting, too, that Gonzales was—he wasn't the attorney general yet at that time, right?

JON He was White House counsel at the time.

ROBBIE Yeah, so he was—which is weird. I mean, I don't know how, if that's like a normal thing to do, because like a White House counsel is like a lawyer that's designed to defend the White House. Right? I mean, that's sort of like the role. (Right) And to jump from that to being the attorney general where you're almost supposed to be, to some degree autonomous from the White House, to make legal decisions or things about the legal framework, it just seems like just another example of corrupt—sort of out-in-the-open Bush behavior that when John Ashcroft would step down, that's who would fill in that role. But, again, maybe that's commonly done. Just, to me, it seems unethical and strange for an attorney general to work in that position previously.

JON Absolutely.

ROBBIE What was this deal made between the White House and the 9/11

Commission that granted just a select few access to the Presidential Daily Briefings?

JON

Well, on November 7, 2003, a deal was made between the White House and the 9/11 Commission that would grant certain people from the 9/11 Commission access to the PDBs. Those people were Philip Zelikow, Jamie Gorelick, Thomas Kean, and Lee Hamilton.

Two of the commissioners, Democrats Tim Roemer and Max Cleland, are extremely angry with the deal and complained the commission cannot function properly without all the commissioners seeing all the relevant documents. The victims' relatives are also extremely unhappy, and the Family Steering Committee releases a statement saying: "A limited number of commissioners will have restricted access to a limited number of PDB documents," adding "The Commission has seriously compromised its ability to conduct an independent, full, and unfettered investigation." They are also unhappy that Zelikow is one of the two handling the main review, because they are concerned about his ties to National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, among other issues. One of the victim's relatives, Kristen Breitweiser, says: "How much more of Zelikow do we have to take?" The Commission's counsel, Daniel Marcus, will actually agree with the families, saying: "If we were going to have a staff person do this, Philip was not the right person."

Okay, so, it was Zelikow and Gorelick that, I think, reviewed the documents and then gave them to Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton to look at. When Kean looked at them, he said:

"There really was nothing there—nothing, nothing." He said that if his students at Drew University turned in term papers this poorly researched, he says: "I would have given them an F."

Now, Gorelick is struck by the general lack of information in the document. But the thing that strikes her most about the PDBs is just how many warnings were given in the months preceding the 9/11 attacks.

So, there's two conflicting accounts. Kean says there's absolutely nothing to them, and Gorelick says there were a multitude of warnings. So, I don't know. Now, remember, We the People do not have access to any of these Presidential Daily Briefings, so.

ROBBIE Yeah. I mean, it's unfortunate that we can only go by what they're saying. And in Philip Shenon's book he goes through—there's a lot of sort of second-hand relaying of information about what was in a lot of those PDBs. (Right)

And, was there anything else in them that gets into more specifics, like about what you're talking about? Like what Jamie Gorelick might have been referring to.

JON I don't know. Well, I know one thing, specifically. Now, it's interesting to note that between January 20 and September 10, 2001, Bush was briefed on Al-Qaeda over 40 times, and this is from an entry from HistoryCommons.org:

"National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice later testifies to the 9/11 Commission that in the first eight months of Bush's presidency before 9/11, "The President receive[s] at these [Presidential Daily Briefings] more than 40 briefing items on Al-Qaeda, and 13 of those [are] in response to questions he or his top advisers posed."

And:

"The content of the warnings in these briefings are unknown. However, CIA Director George Tenet claims that none of the warnings specifically indicates terrorists plan to fly hijacked commercial aircraft into buildings in the U.S. Counterterrorism "tsar" Richard Clarke will later emphasize, "Tenet on 40 occasions in . . . morning meetings mentioned Al-Qaeda to the President. Forty times, many of them in a very alarmed way, about a pending attack." These briefings are normally given in person by CIA Director George Tenet and are usually attended by Vice President Cheney and National Security Adviser Rice. In the Clinton administration, up to 25 officials received the PDB. But in the Bush administration before 9/11, this was sharply reduced to only six people. Other top officials have to make do with, what I said earlier, which is called a Senior Executive Intelligence Brief generally released one day later, which is similar to the PDB but often contains less information."

So, he received 40 Al-Qaeda-related briefings. And are you familiar with

Kurt Eichenwald?

ROBBIE No, I was just going to ask you. Can you explain to the audience who he is, exactly?

JON Well, he's a reporter, and he writes sometimes for *The New York Times* and so forth, and he's actually the one I tried to get for this interview about PDBs, because he wrote an article for *The New York Times* and—I wanted to get the experts and, unfortunately, I couldn't get him.

ROBBIE Is this the newer article that came out a few years ago?

JON Yeah, this came out, I think it was in—oh, it was September 10, 2012, is when his article came out.

Now, with all of the controversy that the August 6th PDB received, Kurt Eichenwald reported that it: "Is not nearly as shocking as the briefs that came before it." And it says: "By May 1st the Central Intelligence Agency told the White House of a report that "a group presently in the United States" was planning a terrorist operation. And the title of that article was: "The Deafness Before the Storm," New York Times 9/10/2012.

So, listen to what I said very carefully, that a group presently in the United States was planning a terrorist operation. So, then you go to the 9/11 Report and it says Bush "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." That's on page 260 of the 9/11 Report.

So, contrast that to what —

ROBBIE So, Kurt Eichenwald is talking only about the Presidential Daily Briefs, right?

JON Correct. Yep

ROBBIE I mean, it's just it's making me angry just to hear you talk about this because—and I'm sure you experience this as well being involved in this as long as you have been, researching all this stuff, tirelessly—that it was like, I mean it's really vindicating—11 years almost after 9/11, an article like that comes out. They really should have come out the same time as

that—in May 2002, when that August 6 Presidential Daily Briefing memo leaked, it sort of started people off on a more skeptical perspective.

But can you imagine what would have happened if this article came out back then? I mean, things—I want to say things could have been so much different for people like us where we wouldn't have had to—been having to prove to people—Look, you know, they did get all these warnings. I mean, it would have just been understood, sort of out there in the mainstream that, yes, the Bush administration lied. They got so many warnings directly to the President's office, not just warnings from the FAA or whatever. It was Bush getting a memo on his desk saying there is currently a cell of terrorists inside the United States planning an attack. (Right) I mean, how much more specific and alarming can a memo like that get?

I mean, so that is, to me at least, the smoking gun that they at the very least knew that they were lying immediately, and that they wanted to just cover their ass as much as possible. I mean, and that's the best-case scenario, really.

JON What's funny. There's a video on my YouTube channel called "Kurt Eichenwald versus Ari Fleischer." When this report came out, Kurt Eichenwald was on the TV and Ari Fleischer was there to refute what he was saying. And Ari Fleischer was holding up the 9/11 Report saying: "Look, everything you need to know is in this book and blah blah blah and everything that Kurt Eichenwald is saying is a lie."

ROBBIE Just like Rachel Maddow with the Truthers when she held up the 9/11 Commission Report on her show. (Laughs) What an asshole. (Exactly) I'm sorry. Keep going.

JON I just pointed out that the 9/11 Report said that Bush said that: "If his advisers told him there was a cell in the United States, they would have moved to take care of it. And that never happened."

So, I don't know. I mean, and also contrast what Eichenwald said to what Thomas Kean says. Of course, that's only one of the PDBs that I mentioned that Kurt Eichenwald reported on. Phil Shenon did an article that focused a lot more on the PDBs. I think it's called "They Knew, But Did Nothing." And it talks a little bit, it gets into more detail of the

PDBs. But Eichenwald—is saying that the August 6th PDB is not nearly as shocking as the briefs that came before it, and Thomas Kean is telling us that there was nothing to those PDBs.

ROBBIE But here's the one thing we don't know though is—what was the 9/11 Commission actually given as far as PDBs? And what did Kurt Eichenwald...Did he see these PDBs himself, or is he sort of relaying them from someone telling him about them?

JON It's hard to know from the article. He just said that he managed to get a glimpse at some of them, which means that he didn't get to read all of them. And so on and so forth, but what he found was startling to him. And I don't know how he gained access to this. This is why I wanted to have him on. You know, to ask him these kinds of things, but...

ROBBIE Well, I mean, it sounds like it's probably an anonymous official insider probably gave him access to it. But, I guess what it makes me wonder is what—did the Bush administration cherry pick these PDBs and is that why Thomas Kean said that? And maybe Kurt Eichenwald saw different, more incriminating, PDBs.

But the problem is, since we haven't—I just wish someone would actually leak them—like these are floating around. It's amazing—You know, everybody talks about "oh they couldn't keep a conspiracy, you know, as large as 9/11 or a 9/11 cover-up, together without somebody spilling the beans." But that's an example of someone not spilling the beans. If these exist and it's saying there's a terrorist cell in the United States and that landed on George Bush's office desk—as his daily brief, then why hasn't that memo come out? I mean, that's, it's amazing to me, that just nobody has decided to leak something like that. I mean, just the literal—just the document itself.

JON This goes back to transparency with regard to 9/11. And a lot of other issues—the 28-redacted pages need to be released. I think only 35 percent of the documents from the 9/11 Commission have been released by the National Archives. We don't have access to these PDBs. There's so much that we just don't have access to. And, the amount or the fight that they put up and the deals that they had to make in order to get access to these things—it's absurd. It's just—when you look at what they don't want you to look at, then that becomes a topic of interest. When you can blatantly see that they don't want you to look at something, it kind of

makes you want to look at it.

ROBBIE Or the alternate thesis even suggests that maybe when they want you to look at something incriminating that it might be designed to take your eye away from something more incriminating.

JON Isn't that funny? I mean, the 9/11 Commission focused so much on the August 6th PDB.

ROBBIE Exactly, exactly.

JON And, none of the other briefings came up in public hearings that I could see. I don't remember. But, Condoleezza Rice was questioned by Ben-Veniste about August 6th PDB. And there's a lot in the 9/11 Report specifically about the August 6th PDB.

So you're saying that it was leaked so as to take away the attention from other warnings?

ROBBIE It's arguable that even maybe Ben-Veniste thought that that was the most incriminating memo, but maybe the Bush administration knew that the framework of that aggressive sort of line of questioning towards Condi Rice was itself going to be a softball no matter what because they didn't have access to the one that said that there's a terrorist cell in the United States right now. Didn't say bin Laden determined to attack the United States. It said right now there are terrorists (Right) in the United States planning to attack. I mean (Yep), it seems to me that is so much worse that yeah—it could be. I mean it could be. I have no evidence that that's what it was. But you have to wonder that maybe that's sometimes what they do too. They take a little bit of a risk and think well—this does make us look bad, but not nearly as bad as this other thing would. But, again, you know.

JON Oh, I'm sure things like that happen all the time. We have absolutely no proof that that's what happened. (Exactly)

All right so let me get to some of the statements that were put forward by the families during the time of the 9/11 Commission about the Presidential Daily Briefings. I collected a number of them, actually. The first one is:

"The Family Steering Committee is deeply distressed to find that 11 months into the Government's independent investigation into the attacks of 9/11 the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon United States is still in the document collecting phase due to stonewalling by the administration.

Counter to the public statements made by both administration officials and commission members that there is continued cooperation between administration agencies and the commission.

The record indicates otherwise.

A critical document that the Commission needs is the Presidential Daily Briefing. Although such a document has never been released to an outside investigative agency during a current administration's tenure, a full analysis of the administrative failures that led to the death of 3000 people on the morning of September 11th calls for such an historical precedent."

That was October 28, 2003.

The next one's kind of long. It's a full statement specifically about the PDBs and it's called the Family Steering Committee Statement Regarding Access to Presidential Daily Briefings.

November 13, 2003 — The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Against the United States, commonly known as the 9/11 Independent Commission, released a statement to the press regarding the culmination of recent negotiations with the White House. These negotiations involved the 9/11 Independent Commission's document requests for access to certain Presidential Daily Briefings that may relate to the 9/11 attacks.

In response to the Commission's Press Release, which provides insufficient details to evaluate the circumstances and effects of the compromise, the Family Steering Committee holds the following positions:

1. All ten Commissioners should have full, unfettered, and unrestricted access to all evidence - including but not

limited to all Presidential Daily Briefings and all working notes related to those Presidential Daily Briefings, that may be related to the attacks on 9/11.

2. The full, official, and final written Agreement that was reached between the Commission and the White House should be released to the American public in its entirety. The American public should be fully informed as to all legal restrictions and limitations placed within this Agreement upon the 9/11 Independent Commission and their collective ability to access all information needed for their investigation. Furthermore, the mechanism by which this Agreement was reached should be fully released to the public. For example, who was involved in these negotiations? Were the terms of this agreement presented to all Commissioners and was a subsequent vote taken?

3. The Commission should issue a Statement to the American public fully explaining why this Agreement was chosen in lieu of issuing subpoenas to the CIA and Executive Branch to access these certain Presidential Daily Briefings.

4. The Family Steering Committee is committed to ensuring that the Independent Commission executes their mission statement in a full and unrestricted manner.

The mission statement of the 9-11 Commission is as follows:

"The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, an independent, bipartisan commission created by Congressional legislation and the signature of President George W. Bush in late 2002, is chartered to prepare a full and complete account of the circumstances surrounding the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, including preparedness for and the immediate response to the attacks. The Commission is also mandated to provide recommendations designed to guard against future attacks."

As it now stands a limited number of Commissioners will have restricted access to a limited number of PDB documents. This will prevent a full uncovering of the truth and is unacceptable."

And that's their full press release November 13, 2003. Do you have anything to say to that?

ROBBIE I guess it's really, I mean, the very first thing that you started saying—reminded me of the administration's defense or their reasoning for not wanting to release the PDBs was that it wasn't a historical tradition or it wasn't something that Presidents traditionally allowed. Therefore, they didn't want to set a historical precedent. I mean, that was the actual reasoning they use. Am I correct?

JON I think so, yeah.

ROBBIE It just blows my mind that they think, that they would have the hubris to say something like that. I mean, it's especially—when you consider that this administration was right after the Clinton administration. I mean, was there an historical precedent for making a President testify under oath about the graphic details of a sexual affair that he had on tape? [Laughs]

JON Well, okay, now you're—when Bush and Cheney testified under oath, the argument that was going—or NOT under oath, rather. Let me say that again, Bush and Cheney did NOT testify under oath. When that was going on, the argument that was being pushed around by the pundits was that historically Presidents do not testify before commissions. And, yet—Bill Clinton testified in the Monica Lewinsky thing. Ronald Reagan, I believe, testified for the Iran/Contra—

ROBBIE He did, yeah, you're absolutely right. It's absurd. And then also, I guess not directly related to the—the families. I mean, what always amazes me is when you read off these statements from the Jersey Girls and the Family Steering Committee, they're extremely articulate. They cut right to the heart of the matter. They're just—they're just very—it's painful to think about how the media was able to ignore so much of what they did out there—releasing these press releases—when every single time they're just hitting the Bull's-Eye. They're just like—do this, do this stuff. This is exactly what should happen. (Yep) Even—It surprised me that even

lawyers and other people, pundits were like "yup, the Jersey Girls nailed it. This is exactly what the Bush administration needs to do. This should be the protocol." I mean—if I didn't know any better I would think that some of the Jersey Girls had actually been to law school because of just how articulate and how great some of these statements they released were. Some of the statements they released were.

JON Kristen Breitwieser is a lawyer.

ROBBIE Well, there you go. I didn't even know that. I mean, so hats off to her and everybody else involved in that for . . . I mean, it just, I guess, it illustrates so strongly just how obvious it was that the press intentionally ignored them. (Yep) It wasn't like they were kooky. It wasn't like they were inarticulate. It wasn't like—they were going out there like Code Pink wearing silly Pirate hats and wearing—giant poofy pink sweaters and acting silly. They were like totally professional. I mean, it was what it was. So, yeah.

JON That's one of the points I've made over the years is that (I know) the families have provided us with the tools we need. We just have to use them. (Yeah)

And I have two more statements from them about the PDBs.

"In his remarks at the signing of the Intelligence Authorization Act on November 27, 2002, President Bush stated that the Commission's investigation "should carefully examine all the evidence and follow all the facts, wherever they lead. We must uncover every detail and learn every lesson of September the 11th. My administration will continue to act on the lessons we've learned so far to better protect the people of this country. It's our most solemn duty."

Sadly, on the one-year anniversary of the establishment of the 9/11 Commission, we, on the Family Steering Committee find that the President has not respected his "most solemn duty." By refusing to provide full and unfettered access to the Presidential Daily Briefings to all of the Commissioners, this Commission will be unable to "carefully examine all the evidence and follow all the facts

wherever they lead."

[...]

In an effort to protect this country and honor our loved ones lost, the FSC respectfully objects to the Agreement reached between the Commission and the White House regarding access to the PDB's. We urge the Commission to follow the directive of the President as stated on November 27, 2002, and to aggressively take every measure necessary to gather all information that is available. This Commission must subpoena the White House to provide full and complete access for all ten Commissioners to the entire document group of PDB's. All ten Commissioners have the highest security clearance; all ten should review these critical documents."

And that was November 27, 2003.

ROBBIE What happened in January and February of 2004, during the 9/11 Commission?

JON All right. In January of 2004 (HistoryCommons):

9/11 Commissioner Jamie Gorelick and Philip Zelikow, the 9/11 Commission's executive director, complete a review of 300 Presidential Daily Brief (PDB) items that might be relevant to the Commission's work. They find that 50 of them are actually relevant and under the terms of an agreement they have with the White House, tell White House counsel Alberto Gonzales that the Commission's chairman and vice chairman, Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, should see these 50. The other seven commissioners will not see any of the PDBs, but Gorelick and Zelikow want to show them a 10-page summary of what they have found. The White House had previously agreed to this in principle, but Gonzales says that 50 is too many. He says that when the agreement was concluded, he thought they would only want to show one or two more to Kean and Hamilton. In addition, he claims the 10-page summary is way too long, and has too much detail about

one key PDB concerning Osama bin Laden's determination to strike inside the US. Gonzales's response angers all the commissioners. Its lawyer, Daniel Marcus, is instructed to hire an outside counsel to draft a subpoena, and he engages Robert Weiner, a leading Washington lawyer. The subpoena is to be for Gorelick and Zelikow's notes, because the Commission thinks it is more likely to get them. However, Marcus will say that filing a subpoena "would have been Armageddon," because, "Even though we had a good legal argument, the subpoena would have been a disaster for us because we could not have won the litigation in time to get the PDBs."

ROBBIE Oh my god (Right). It's absurd.

JON Now, in February of 2004, a last-minute action by the 9/11 Commission's Executive Director Philip Zelikow averts the filing of a subpoena on the White House over access by the Commission to information from Presidential Daily Briefs. The Commission has already hired an outside counsel to deal with the subpoena and drafted its text.

However, Zelikow works practically nonstop for 48 hours to draft a 17-page, 7,000-word summary of what is in the documents. He knows that a lot of the information in the highly classified PDBs is also available in less classified documents, to which the White House cannot object the Commission having and referencing. Therefore, he summarises the contents of the PDBs, but sources what he writes to the less classified material.

Exhausted by the arguments over the PDBs with the White House, commissioner Jamie Gorelick, who has also read all the PDBs that need to be summarised, agrees that Zelikow's summary can serve as the basis for a compromise with the White House. White House chief of staff Andrew Card pressures White House counsel Alberto R. Gonzales to accept it as well.

However, relatives of the attacks' victims are angry. Author Philip Shenon will write, "Many of the 9/11 family groups

were outraged by this new compromise; it was even clearer now that only Gorelick and their nemesis Zelikow would ever see the full library of PDBs; the other commissioners would see only an edited version of what Gorelick and Zelikow chose to show them."

So, basically—Zelikow was the one telling us what was in those things. Do you trust him?

ROBBIE Yeah, of course. It's just everything you're saying is just so frustrating to hear. I mean, I've heard a lot of it before. Some of the details you brought up—the whole idea that they were going to get them sucked into an endless litigation (Right) about getting the PDBs is just infuriating.

JON Well, and it goes back to the fact that the 9/11 Commission's time was limited—which is ridiculous! You're investigating the murder of 2,976 people. There shouldn't be—a timestop, or you know.

ROBBIE Yeah, but they really did create this false sense of urgency among everybody that we shouldn't be spending our time diverting our important time and energy and resources away from the war on terror. Like, people bought into that. I mean, even at the time, I mean, even Democrats and—a lot of people still thought that this is a really legitimate enterprise. Maybe not Iraq, but the rest of it, I guess. But, no, I mean, it's no excuse at all, obviously.

JON No, not at all.

ROBBIE I was wondering if you could answer this. I never really thought about this before, and I just had this thought while you were going through all this stuff about the PDBs. But, so there was an attempt to actually get PDBs of the Clinton administration as well. Is that correct? (Yes) And was this Bush legal—this sort of lawyer defense they were mounting—using Alberto Gonzales and their counsel. Did this include the whole package? Were they also defending or trying to prevent the release of Clinton's PDBs or not? Or how did that actually—

JON I think it was just across the board, honestly. I don't know, honestly, the answer but I think it was across the board.

ROBBIE Well, that brings up an interesting dilemma that may have actually

existed behind the scenes where—the Bush administration, if they wanted to, they could have maybe leaked an incriminating memo or two from the Clinton administration to take the heat off of them. Even when Michael Scheuer was going around the press making it seem like Clinton was to blame for not catching bin Laden, I guess part of me is surprised that we never saw a leak of that—a leak making it seem like Clinton was dropping the ball on catching bin Laden in the form of a PDB. It makes me wonder if the Bush administration—kind of helped them out a little, too, and just—I don't know. Again, it's just something we'll never really know probably.

JON I don't think so, because a lot of the Neocons and Bush people tried to point the finger at Clinton for 9/11.

ROBBIE They did, yeah.

JON If they had something, I think they would have released it.

ROBBIE You'd think so, yeah. Well, yeah. And Clinton didn't testify under oath either, right? He was—

JON Actually, I think he—I don't know if it was under oath or not. I think it might have been, but—Oh! No, it was not under oath, but it was separate from Al Gore. That's what happened.

ROBBIE And it was in private, like it wasn't, wasn't done publicly.

JON Correct. And, Bush and Cheney testified together, but Al Gore and Bill Clinton testified separately.

ROBBIE Yeah. So, was there was there anything else that happened during those months or was that pretty much it?

JON As far as the PDBs go? (Yeah) Well, there's one more story to tell. It's about Zelikow and the August 6th PDB.

Zelikow apparently tried to pressure one of the analysts that wrote it, to take the White House's side. According to HistoryCommons.org, in June 2004:

"An anonymous Commission staffer who overhears part of

the conversation and who talks to author Philip Shenon, Zelikow pressures the analyst to accept the version of the PDB offered by Bush and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, and say that it contained historical information and was written in response to a request by President Bush for such a briefing." Zelikow denied it "saying he was merely trying to prepare a summary of what was known about the PDB for the commissioners and that he had little time, so the interview was conducted by telephone."

"Nevertheless, the call is in violation of several internal Commission rules, including the requirement that significant interviews be conducted in the presence of at least two staff members. Shenon will describe the call as "a private inquiry into the origins of what was, without doubt, the most controversial document in the investigation."

Obviously, as we already pointed out, according to Kurt Eichenwald, it was not the most controversial. But, anyway. In June 2004:

"Richard Ben-Veniste, a Democratic member of the 9/11 Commission, insists that the commission properly interview two CIA analysts who drafted an August 2001 Presidential Daily Brief (PDB) item entitled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in US." Ben-Veniste makes the demand after he learns that Commission Executive Director Philip Zelikow interviewed one of the analysts by phone, but allegedly pressured the analyst to back the White House version of events. Initially, Ben-Veniste asks to see the transcripts of interviews with the analysts. However, according to author Philip Shenon: "With a condescending tone that reflected his disdain for Ben-Veniste, Zelikow explained matter-of-factly that there weren't any transcripts.... After months of battles with Zelikow, it was hard for Ben-Veniste to be shocked by almost anything he did. But the staff could see that Ben-Veniste was genuinely startled." Ben-Veniste's demand for full interviews is opposed by Zelikow, who says that one of the analysts, known only as Barbara S, has already been interviewed (although it is unclear how much of this

interview focused on the PDB). Zelikow will also say, "The CIA was pleading with us not to do this, since the career people involved in preparing and presenting PDBs would be intimidated, disrupting the sense of confidentiality and candor they considered essential for the PDB process." However, when they are interviewed, the two analysts seem eager to volunteer the information they have. The commission's Democratic Vice Chairman Lee Hamilton, who has a record of siding with the Republicans, fails to back Ben-Veniste before the full commission. Republican Chairman Tom Kean rescues him, pushing through the request for the interviews in the face of opposition from the other Republicans on the commission."

On July 13, 2004, "the 9/11 Commission interviews two CIA analysts who drafted an August 2001 Presidential Daily Briefing (PDB) item entitled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in US." The interview is conducted mainly by commissioners Richard Ben-Veniste and Jim Thompson and follows an internal battle inside the Commission. Despite a claim by the Commission's Executive Director Philip Zelikow that the analysts, known only as Barbara S and Dwayne D, were reluctant to answer questions, they are willing and eager to respond to Ben-Veniste."

Apparently, "the analysts are "confused" and "appalled" by claims by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and others at the White House that the PDB item only contained an "historical" overview of domestic terrorism threats. The analysts say that this was not its purpose and that it was supposed to remind President Bush that al-Qaeda remained a dire threat in August 2001, and that a domestic attack was certainly a possibility."

"In addition, the analysts say that another claim made by the White House, that President Bush specifically ordered the PDB, is false. They state that the PDB item was ordered "in-house" by the CIA in the hope that the White House would pay more attention to the threat."

"Ben-Veniste insists that the material from the two analysts

is placed prominently in the Commission's final report, although Zelikow objects to this. After negotiations, the relevant paragraph will read as follows: "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 Laden attack in the United States remained both current and serious. The result was an article in the August 6 Presidential Daily Brief titled 'Bin Laden Determined to Strike in US.'"

And, that's it.

ROBBIE Wow, so—

JON He tried to pressure the analysts to side with the White House. You know, and they said that Bush said that he's the one who ordered the August 6th PDB. But the CIA said it was ordered in-house. Now, we have to remember that the CIA is not blameless in 9/11.

ROBBIE Well, it seems like even Philip Zelikow himself. I mean, there's just so much weird legalese in the way that 9/11 Commission Report actually explained it. And it can be interpreted in so many different ways, but it's obviously still a lie. I mean, it was the opposite of how they're describing it. That President Bush didn't request it. The CIA was trying to—was sending—was trying to send him a message of how urgent it was because maybe they felt that he wasn't paying enough attention to it. I mean, so.

JON Now, there's another story going around. There was one that was broken this week. I think it was on FirstLook.org or the Intercept (Oh, god, yeah) about how Cheney saw these threats as possible disinformation, and in the article written by Kurt Eichenwald he mentions that there are neocons who are suggesting that all these threats about Al-Qaeda are disinformation meant to take away the focus from Saddam Hussein.

And I don't know how true that is. But can you imagine what kind of

environment that would create or mindset in some of the people within the administration—if they were charged with protecting us if they're being told by the top brass that this is disinformation or whatever. But the CIA apparently had to write a report saying this is not disinformation.

ROBBIE Well, it's fascinating because what does disinformation really mean? It means intentionally misleading information to give you some kind of misinformed picture to serve a specific purpose. So, why would the Bush administration—let's just assume that that's true, which I don't necessarily believe it is. But, if they thought it was all disinformation, just makes me think that—they were like paranoid to such an extent, I mean—and this is what makes it hard for me to believe is—they are sort of old Cold War lawyers. They're all from the 80s, a lot of these Bush administration people. And even back in the 80s, and I'm sure you know about this idea of the Team A and Team B group of people who were assigned in the Pentagon to examine terrorism, basically, around the world. And one of the teams came back to the Reagan administration saying that it was all Soviet communism that was behind all these different disparate allegedly unrelated terrorist incidents all around the world, and they were trying to link it together as this big communist Soviet conspiracy to basically destabilize the West.

And so, it's very odd to me that that would be their mindset. But in a way, I guess it makes a little bit of sense coming, that they came from that mindset—that they would think somehow that this is disinformation to distract us away from Iraq—or Saddam. I mean, do they think that Saddam was involved in getting bin Laden to go out there and spread—make it seem like he was going to attack the states?

It's bizarre. I don't really understand.

JON It is bizarre. But could you imagine on 9/11 being told by the media that the President was given warnings, but they considered it disinformation and ignored them? [Laughs]

ROBBIE I mean, I could—I was just going to say that would be the only way I can imagine if they had some extremely elaborate paranoid delusion—maybe they really did believe Saddam was working with bin Laden, but not for the reasons they've claimed, but maybe because they thought that it was all some big ruse to get us to—because Saddam was going to attack us or something. I mean, it just, even that just seems so absurd. It makes very

little sense.

JON It doesn't make any sense at all. In fact, Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice said before 9/11 that Saddam was contained, that he had no weapons of mass destruction, and so on. So. (Yeah) I don't know.

ROBBIE But any idea that they were obsessed, so obsessed with going into Iraq that they just ignored all the Al-Qaeda warnings—It works for a certain sort of understanding of the way the Bush administration operated. But it also just doesn't work when you try to mash it together with reality, and what we already know. I mean it's absurd, absolutely absurd.

JON Unless there was a purpose behind it like creating an environment where people disregard this information and therefore don't protect us as they should.

Now, the key thing to all of this, or one of the key things is we don't have access to these documents. I just want to repeat that.

We need to see—how can we possibly consider knowing the truth when we don't even have access to these documents, and this is another example of how compromised and corrupt the 9/11 Commission was.

ROBBIE Un-huh, I mean, yeah, and not just the 9/11 Commission but the Bush administration itself, I mean. (Exactly) Incredibly corrupt.

JON You know, what qualifies as suspicious behavior? Does any of this qualify? I think it does.

ROBBIE It all qualifies. And what makes me the most irritated is when—when we try to bring these specific points up to people, is the response of: "Well, of course, they were just trying to cover their ass—all administrations do that, you know. Of course, they don't want to be culpable for anything." I mean, that assumes that the worst that they did was just like drop the ball, you know? I mean, that they—

JON It assumes that they know what happened and they're okay with it. They have no idea what happened. They have no idea why they're trying to "cover their ass."

ROBBIE Exactly. But the assumption is always this very light accusation. You

know, even from some of the Bush's harshest critics. I mean. It almost has to be, because otherwise all of the—liberal—quote unquote liberal media would be would be quasi-Truther if they kept on what we're talking about right now and actually didn't come up with that automatic excuse of "well, yeah, they were just covering up, you know, the bureaucracy is just trying to protect itself." And that sort of mantra has held up over all these years and people still use it all the time. And I think people who say that or who think that should really take a closer look at some of the stuff Jon has been talking about, and the stuff that you've written about—the stuff that Phil Shenon has written about.

I mean, then another thing I think that people should also understand when it comes to a lot of this, with the type of reporting like Kurt Eichenwald did, as valuable and as incriminating as it is and it makes us want to take another look at how clearly the Bush administration had way more specific warnings than we were previously led to believe, that we don't really know what's in those PDBs. Like you said—maybe he was only, maybe he was given cherry picked access to PDBs by someone who had their own agenda on the inside. We simply don't know. And, unless we have access to them ourselves, we'll really never know.

But it's always helpful to go look at people like Kurt Eichenwald or Phil Shenon and check out their other work, you know.

JON And again, this didn't—the PDBs aren't in a vacuum. You know, again, this is just one topic. But, if you want to get into the topics of other warnings, I mean, it just becomes absurd.

ROBBIE Oh, I agree. I guess what I'm saying is—as long as these reporters aren't stenographers that are spreading—things like Iraq war propaganda, then I think chances are, you know, they're getting accurate information. I mean, Phil Shenon's book, most of it rings true to me from the other—and it's corroborated, as you said, by tons of other warnings from other intelligence agencies and other kinds of sources, so.

But, yeah, it is just really, it's just very endlessly frustrating doing this kind of research that we will never—or we just simply haven't not seen these PDBs in full. Or, some of these more incriminating ones. And, I guess that's just my personal feeling on it. It's very, very frustrating.

JON We keep hitting brick walls. We can only research something so much.

But if we don't have access to the documents, if we don't have subpoena power, if we don't have the ability to call somebody under oath to testify with the idea that if they lie, they're gonna go to jail. We can only do so much, and all I did here was just point out one simple lie. You know, or I showed the compromise and corruption of the 9/11 Commission. I pointed out a lie. And that's—that's all I can do, really, without access and all that other stuff.

ROBBIE Yeah. And it just it still blows my mind though that—organizations like The Intercept or, you know, a lot of these other really—lefty antiwar, anti-U.S. imperialism journalists out there still haven't even come to where you are, which is simply that you know that there is criminal culpability of some kind.

I mean, people need to be held accountable. And all of these journalists who have accepted that narrative that "Oh, they're all just covering for the bureaucracy" or yeah "Bush was—he ignored all these warnings, but he was just covering his ass." I mean, there in some ways, I'd say, you know, perpetuating a myth, a harmful myth (Absolutely they are), by omitting all this. And I'm not going to call them gatekeepers or whatever because I think a lot of them simply, they've looked at—the worst side of the "9/11 Truth Movement," and a lot of them just don't have either the courage or the time or the resources to really look into the real facts of this, and to really look at it all laid out and be like "oh my god, obviously, we were totally lied to and we should do another investigation."

JON Well, I was just talked to by someone who I won't mention who just took part in a panel recently and it was a bunch of progressives. He's a progressive. And one of the people in the audience started asking him all these crazy conspiracy theory questions about 9/11. And, you know, they didn't want to talk about it and I can't blame them for that—

ROBBIE Like what kind of questions.

JON I don't, I honestly don't know, but he was talking about, I think, holograms or something—something just way out there. And, when people hear this shit, they don't want to take part. And I understand that, but you know, some of this stuff is just so blatantly obvious and out there that they should know about it.

ROBBIE Yeah, I mean, just as another example of what you're talking about is I—I had heard of the Iran/Contra CIA cocaine stuff for years. But I had heard of it in the form of like, sort of like black conspiracy theory culture like Louis Farrakhan and stuff like that so I didn't—I'd heard it even before I got into politics and I just probably wrote it off as "oh, that's probably just some crazy paranoid conspiracy theory stuff." And it took me a long time to actually eventually read Gary Webb's reporting on it and realize "oh, there actually is a lot of factual components to this idea, but it was sort of wrapped in this more—grand conspiracy theory that really actually diluted a lot of the truth of what this really meant. And I think that that's, I mean, that's clearly happening in the "9/11 Truth Movement."

JON You saw what happened with Gary Webb and I, you know—did you see the movie?

ROBBIE I did, yeah, it was rough. It was really good though. It was a really good movie.

JON They killed the messenger—just exactly as the title describes. They went after him and—instead of going into the meat and potatoes of what he was talking about. Or, they tried to change the narrative or—just like they just did with Sy Herish saying that he only had one source or something like that. Like that was the common theme. Did you see Jamie Kirchick wrote against Sy Herish?

ROBBIE Yes, I did, yeah, I wasn't surprised.

JON He said that very same thing, that it's only based on one source. But Sy Herish said in multiple interviews that it was based on multiple sources.

ROBBIE And what does it even really matter. I mean it's like a lot of that can be corroborated from other sources as well. It's just. I mean plenty of reporting is done based on one source as long as it's a really credible source and a lot of the time. I mean this is just one example. We interviewed a guy named Ken Silverstein on Media Roots radio who got us, who a source told him, that Eli Lake had basically—that's a reporter for Bloomberg, one of these Neocon propagandists—that he had basically been wining and dining, winned and dined by a Georgian lobbyist firm. And then afterwards wrote positive stories about Georgia. A source told him that. But pointed him towards public records that he

found that basically proved it all.

So, sometimes you really only need one source. I mean, if as long as you can corroborate it and—when I say a source I mean like a person as a source because then you could find other actual sources—public records, other reporting that's already been done can be considered another form of a source. So, yeah, it's an irrelevant criticism to say that oh, he only had one source or, you know, whatever. (Right) You know, even if it were true.

So, it's dumb—and there's so many layers to the Seymour Hersh thing. You know, the fact that, yeah, that he's voted for Obama twice in a row and that he refuses to answer this fundamental question of why wasn't bin Laden, why didn't they attempt to capture him. I mean, I don't know?

You know, I don't know if I believe all of Seymour Hersh's story. I don't think he is—

JON I think he did say that was a good question.

ROBBIE Yeah. In the Real News network thing? (yeah) Okay, maybe I need to watch the whole thing, because when I saw Paul ask it, he said something like: "Well, you're putting the cart before the horse. Like, let's talk about that latest." Maybe they mentioned it again or something.

JON Well, regardless. So, thank you for hosting the show. What are you working on right now?

ROBBIE Well, I'm working on, I'm finishing up my movie that's been in the works for like almost a year. And that's going to be called "A Very Heavy Agenda." And it's premiering at the 9/11 Truth Film Festival in September, out here in Oakland. And it's basically just a movie about the Neocons, and how they were able to influence the Bush administration and get into the Bush administration. And then also how they had to sort of go into hiding because—their policies had been shamed, and then they came back out of hiding to re-brand themselves to basically create a new situation where Russia is now our adversary again.

And it's kind of—a lot of people think that the Neocon story has already been told before, but I guess the movie serves as more of a way to show the more obscure people who were involved in it. You know, arguably

some of the most influential people like Robert Kagan who aren't really talked about very often.

So, I think people—who are into 9/11 Truth stuff and just into, you know, the same politics we are, will probably get a lot out of it, so.

JON Great. Awesome. Aren't you still working on the anthrax story?

ROBBIE Off and on. I mean—I try to digest anything I can when anything new comes out. But, yeah, I mean, Abby and I are planning to do more on the anthrax story. I don't want to announce anything yet on her end, but we—there are some things in the works with her after *Breaking the Set* that are going to be very exciting, and I'm hoping that we could sort of re-approach that together in a more like a long-form investigative piece. And that's all I'll say about it for now.

JON Awesome. Excellent. Well, Sir, thank you very much for guest hosting today. It's always a pleasure to talk to you. You bring a lot to the table, a lot of sense to the table.

ROBBIE Well, same to you Jon. You are an amazing researcher and, yeah, I'd recommend everybody check out the articles you've done. All the different—you've done a really good article, too, which just lays out all the different lies and contradictions. What was the title of that article?

JON "The Facts Speak for Themselves?" (Yeah)

Yeah, I wrote that—I've written several articles. I recommend people read my book or watch *9/11 Press for Truth* or *In Their Own Words: The Untold Stories of the 9/11 Families*.

ROBBIE Your book is called?

JON *9/11 Truther: The Fight for Peace, Justice, and Accountability*.

ROBBIE Everybody check that out and check out the rest of the episodes of this show that you're listening to right now.

JON Absolutely. And I just want to say that it has been very difficult for me to get guests for this show—people that I consider to be credible or bring something to the table. So, I don't know how many more shows I'm

going to be doing. I'm going to try. But we'll see what happens.

ROBBIE Yeah. And you've done some great episodes so far, had some really great guests on, some of them who are—not guests normally willing to go on—quote unquote "9/11 Truth" related—broadcast, so I commend you for being able to get people like Thomas Drake and some of those people. And even Phil Shenon himself, which was awesome. I mean, I didn't end up agreeing with some of the things that he said, but I mean it was still a very enlightening conversation. And the Jonathan Kay thing, too, I mean, that was great being able to get him to come on your show.

JON Yeah, it was all right. I just wanted to show people that we were in the right. That's the only reason I had him on.

ROBBIE Yeah. And like, we talked about this in private a lot after that happened, but I mean that was a, I think that's what debunking is going to be like in the future. That's what we're up against is people who basically concede a lot of these points. Acting like "oh, yeah, of course, they're covering their ass; of course, Saudi Arabia is in those 28 pages; of course, this and that..." It's like where were you 10 years ago (Laughs) when we were asking all these questions, you know. They're just, they're adapting, you know.

JON You were doing hit pieces is what you were doing.

ROBBIE Exactly. They're adapting like a mutation. It's like evolution and they know sort of how to walk the walk, and what the right things to say are to seem on the level with intelligent people now.

So, yeah, we got—that's what we're up against—pointing out to those people—well look, where were you 10 years ago? Why do you belong to a think tank with Michael Ledeen—one of the most notorious insane Neoconservatives on the planet? I mean—what's up with that? You know?

JON James Woolsey.

ROBBIE Yeah, I mean, it's insane. I mean, James Woolsey was responsible for so much of the propaganda connecting Iraq to 9/11. I mean, if you want to talk about a propagandist outside the administration, I mean, he's a Democrat, too. And he's one of the most responsible for putting out that

kind of information. So, it's crazy, but yeah, you did a great job so far, and I hope you continue to get guests like that even if they're people who —make me furious. It's good to have those people on to.

JON Yep. Well, thank you very much, Robbie.

ROBBIE Have a good one, Jon.

JON All right, you too.



Episode 29 – Peter Phillips – June 15, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

Peter Phillips (PETER)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week we will, again, address the issue of the corporate news and how it affects us, as well as other issues.

Hi, this is Jon and I'm here with Peter Phillips. Hi, Peter, how are you doing today?

PETER Hey, Jon, hey, thanks for having me on here.

JON Thank you very much for taking the time today to be on.

All right. So, I'm going to read your bio for everybody.

Peter Phillips is a professor of political sociology at Sonoma State University and President of Media Freedom Foundation Project Censored. He was Director of *Project Censored* from 1997 to 2010. Phillips holds a Ph.D. from University of California Davis. His dissertation was on the sociology of the San Francisco Bohemian Club. His recent research is

focused on the transnational capitalist class or TCC and U.S.-NATO empire's move to 21st century fascism.

Before we get started, I just want to say that I had Mickey Huff on for Episode 2 to discuss how the corporate news has treated advocacy for 9/11 justice, and 27 episodes later, I still hate the corporate news. (Laughter) Bob McIlvaine and I have breakfast every week, and we talk about different things and we always end up saying—if the corporate news did its job, etc. and so on. So, this is still a major problem in this country and it gets worse all the time.

And I also want to thank Mickey Huff for helping to arrange this interview.

So, are you ready to get started?

PETER Yeah, sure, that's great.

JON All, righty. What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

PETER Well, we didn't have a television. We lived out on a ranch near Sonoma State here, and so, we went over to a neighbor's just to see what was happening, because my wife got a call from a friend of hers in New York.

And, so it was firsthand. Terrible things happening. We went over and saw what was happening on television and the collapse. And then I went to the university that day, but we all were basically over at the Commons looking at the big screen TV in terms of coverage, somewhat in shock like, oh my God, what's going on.

And, then the university closed. It said that the President decided that because of the national tragedy we're going to close the university, so we went home.

I followed it fairly closely—I think the first, that night or the next day, Michael Parenti was on KPFA and he was using the terminologies of—blowback and the chickens come home to roost kind of approach. And I started thinking about that in that context. But it was a few months before we really started to get information that contradicted the stories that corporate media was saying.

JON It's interesting that you say that. I was just talking to Mickey today about—it was different on 9/11 for people who have been following the exploits of our Government for years. (Mm-hmm) And—Dr. Parenti suggesting blowback and I would have never thought of that back then. It wasn't until years later that I came to different, or had a different, viewpoint. Anyway, so what was the first—

PETER Even that viewpoint was—that terrorists, supposed terrorists would have a reason for wanting to attack us. And that was always suspicious. You know, and Bush said: "Well, they hate our freedoms." And, that sort of thing. That, to me, just didn't make sense. And—

JON Right. What I would generally say is: "Well, they took away all our freedoms, so the terrorists have nothing to hate us for anymore."

PETER Right, something like that. Yeah, that's certainly been a result of that day. But, it didn't take long for some suspicion of how that happened or was facilitated beyond Osama bin Laden. That's the way they were laying it out to enter my mind and many people around me.

JON So, what was the first thing that you questioned about 9/11?

PETER I think that Osama bin Laden was behind it was one of the first things. He was denying it. I knew about planned invasions of Afghanistan, which we have seen earlier. And, then we started to really take a look at some of the problems—the failure of the airplanes to be intercepted; failure of the U.S. Air Force that day; and, in particular, and then the stock options information came out. That came out pretty quickly, and how that was kind of covered up and just ignored. And then we heard about ISI and how money had gone to—to support activities here.

So, there was a lot of different things in that year that came out—the jet scrambling; the Carlyle Group; and connection to Bush; the planned invasion of Afghanistan; the insider stock tradings; the U.S. Government; the pre-warnings that a number of countries had given to us that something was pending.

So, as *Project Censored* we were seeing these stories from a variety of independent sources, and we're going: "Oh my God, you know, what are we going to do here? In terms of our annual listing of stories?" Which was we always have the top 25 most important news stories not covered by the

corporate media. And there was a lot of pressure, even here at our university, to avoid trying to say conspiracies or things of that nature.

So, we decided—I mean, there were so many stories that we thought were legitimate stories that we just went ahead and put a chapter in our book on 9/11 that listed all of these things, and cited the sources for them as an overall statement about 9/11. And that's how we dealt with that. Because, if we'd really gone through our normal process, most of the stories that year would have been 9/11-related it would seem like.

So, it was kind of a question, and a lot of us, I think, were very concerned that the U.S. certainly ignored the warnings, and then we started to recognize the possibilities that there was some facilitation that occurred inside the U.S. military industrial complex, which could be private companies as well as public.

So that—with the information then the suppression of that. Any questions that questioned 9/11 were overtly challenged, and the corporate media wouldn't even go there. They wouldn't even point out anything. Most of these have been covered. The stock options stuff was covered, but then there's no follow up. So we thought that was pretty interesting. And so we had several students working on those stories and then published in our *Censored 2003* book, which was a year later. It actually came out in September of 2002. So, a year later we had put together quite a significant amount of information (Right) on 9/11. The beginnings of that and the questioning of the Government's facts on it.

JON And the stories that you mentioned, it's not like they were being reported on by conspiracy theory websites. These were—were considered corporate news, mainstream media news outlets. And they weren't getting the coverage, you're right, they were suppressing the information. Journalists, for a number of reasons, were not questioning things like they should have been doing. (Mm-hmm) And we found later—Like—I'm sure you're familiar with Robert Scheer—he wrote an article for the *L.A. Times* called "What We Don't Know About 9/11 Hurts Us," and not long after that he was let go from the *LA Times* (Right). And we saw a number of instances where journalists would—just shy away from it. And I've heard from Abby that journalists just won't touch it.

PETER There seems to be, yeah, there's kind of a strong resistance inside the corporate media to cover anything that would be looked at suspiciously as

implying some sort of a conspiracy. (Yeah) And that gets doubly manifested on the left, particularly, because some of the early engagers in 9/11 questioning were extreme right wingers. (Were—) And it became an issue on both the left and the right, and a number of people, paleo conservatives or even Ruppert, were not left-leaning progressives. (Right) And that raised the hackles on people like Norman Solomon, and some of the other liberal left liberals in the New York City environment, media environment. And they, of course, for years had been hassled by right wing 9/11 folks for being what they called gatekeepers and be called names. (Right)

So, they've gotten very tough skins around that, and they won't even go anywhere near it. And it's caused some, I think, blind-sightedness on not being able to look at very scientific and legitimate things, like the stuff Richard Gage is engaged in and, of course, Stephen Jones when he initially came out with his questioning on the collapse of Building 7.

JON Well, I think the buildings have gotten more attention than they should have for a number of reasons. But I wholeheartedly support the questions of how those buildings came down. I know many family members still have questions about how those buildings came down. But, I think, there has been a little bit of overemphasis on those buildings. (Well, I—yeah) We should have been focusing on simpler things, I think. My belief is that you shouldn't have to be a scientist or an architect or an engineer to understand the need for 911 justice, for truth, accountability, and justice. So, that's the route that I've taken.

PETER Certainly, 9/11 was used to justify a permanent war, permanent war terrorism. And that was, of course, a manifestation and extension of what the neoconservatives really wanted, and has continued to this day to expand global war and chaos everywhere.

So, that's the biggest problem and the biggest criticism at this point, which is why I've moved in the direction of researching—transnational corporate class and power.

JON Well, what I said earlier about how the media suppresses information while covering 9/11 information, they occasionally do cover a story, but they don't give it the attention that Britney Spears gets. Or, Shaquille O'Neal who supposedly just posted something on his Website about 9/11 that was absolutely ridiculous. I don't know if it was him or not, but it got so much media attention that Shaquille O'Neal is a 9/11 Truther. And, they'll cover

Saudi Arabia to an extent, but all the other stuff they just ignore. Especially the families, like the September Eleventh Advocates who have written letter after letter, press release after press release over the years, and have been almost completely ignored.

And, in fact, during the time of the 9/11 Commission the 9/11 Family Steering Committee released press release after press release calling into question different aspects of the 9/11 Commission, during the time of the 9/11 Commission. If any of those statements had gotten the attention they deserve, this might be a different world today. But, anyway.

PETER You're completely correct in that regard. I mean, corporate media today, and for decades now, is nothing more than a propaganda machine for the State Department, the Pentagon, and American capitalism at the highest levels.

JON It's so funny that you say that because one of the very first quotes that I remember from you is, I think you said something to the effect that if you rely on the television for your news, then you don't have a damn idea of what's going on, or something to that effect.

PETER Yeah, it's a Neil Postman thing—best entertained, least informed.

JON Well, it's funny because at the time you had said that I was still—maybe the TV tells the truth, maybe it doesn't. But, I've learned over the years that TV is horrible and you shouldn't watch it. But, anyway.

PETER Right. I mean, I didn't have a TV for 25 years and we do have cable and my wife likes to watch it, and I'll watch movies and stuff, but I don't watch television news, per se.

JON Oh, television shows I'll watch, but I won't watch it on a TV. I don't have a TV except for video games and DVDs to play. (Yeah)

So, when *Project Censored* did address the 9/11 issue—and we're skipping over a question, but we'll get back to that one—what did some of *Project Censored* supporters do when you decided to cover 9/11?

PETER Well, there were some raised eyebrows, but nobody did anything really seriously. When our 2003 book came out, were all these factual stories about 9/11, there wasn't any meta-analysis saying that—these are things that we really need to figure out. I mean, what's going on? If you read them

all together, collectively, you have to come to some understanding that hey, maybe there's more behind this than what's being presented. And, that, I think, was understood and a number of people, our national judges and that, were pretty clear. They go: "Yeah, this is concerning." We didn't get any pushback, formal pushback, even here at the University until we sponsored Steven Jones to come and speak here, which would have been in 2004-5, right in there.

And he came and gave a full scientific presentation on Building 7, and it was very well done. We invited the science community here at the university to attend and only one did. But the head of the physics department got a hold of another professor who was very concerned about us, about *Project Censored* here and 9/11. And they pushed the local newspaper to criticize Steven Jones. The front-page headline was: "Discredited Scholar Speaks at Sonoma State." And the chair of the physics department said that his information was incorrect. She didn't even attend. I mean she didn't even bother to come and hear his presentation.

So, that was a little raw. But going into that we had invited Steven Jones, and Norman Solomon was on our board at the time, our national judges board, and he called me up and he goes: "You're going to have Steven Jones come and speak." This was released with our annual stories. And I said: "Yeah, I think he's going to give a presentation." And he says: "Well, I don't think you should have him." I go: "Well, we've already invited him. He's going to come. It looks pretty scientific and factual." He said: "Well, at least make it a debate." And I said: "Norman, I can't do that. I mean, it's two weeks from the event. I can't call him up now and say: "Oh, you've got to make this a debate. We're not going to let you come and present." And then so he demanded the email addresses for all our judges, our national judges—I think there was like 18 or 20 at the time. And I sent them to him, and he sent an email out saying he was resigning from the Project Censored national judges, and encouraged everyone else to do it. Well, one other Judge did—Robert Jensen—and everybody else stayed, which was a statement to us that there are certainly people that can look at this objectively and say well, wait a minute—we have to look at the facts, as difficult as they may be or as scary as they may be. (Exactly) And that's about the time we started calling these threshold concepts. In other words, there's things that are so scary that you don't want to go into that dark closet, and open the door and cross the threshold.

So, from that—that was certainly an interesting factor. I mean, Norman, three years later decided he was going to run for Congress in our district here, and he knew that he really ticked me off when he did that resignation. He invited me to lunch and we got together and he told me he's going to run for Congress. And he said that in regard to the 9/11 issue, he would be happy to encourage further investigation. Because, apparently, whenever he went and talked, there were 9/11 people in his face. I think he was getting kind of tired of it. (Right) But understand, he also had led a "not let's talk about this" effort on KPFA Pacifica to discourage coverage of 9/11 or anything that would imply that it wasn't the way that the 9/11 Commission reported it.

So, that was too bad and we—I didn't criticize Norman when he ran for Congress, but I didn't get behind him either. So, it was kind of, that's just what happened.

JON Well, this is a very scary issue to confront, I think, for a lot of people. It is for me, certainly. You know, they say the Government is supposed to fear the people, and not the other way around. And—but I think as a people we need to address it regardless of how scary it is, because if we don't address it—look at the direction this country is going (Right) since that day.

PETER I think it was the Cynthia McKinney hearings. I was in Washington and I helped organize the press conference that day at the National Press Club and the place was packed. There just wasn't any corporate media there. David Ray Griffin spoke and there were a number of other people. But, there was media from all over the world, but nothing, nobody from corporate media came (No, no), which was telling in itself, because they just can't. They won't. They're jobs—

JON I believe the coverage—that the corporate news coverage that the 9/11 Congressional briefing got, which is what you're talking about (Mm-hmm), I think it came from the Weekly Standard in a attack form and then was put on CBS News. If memory serves, I think that's what happened. That was the only coverage it got essentially. Here comes the conspiracy—the march of the conspiracy theorists (Right, right, right). Something to that effect. (Yeah)

PETER There's a maturation that kind of comes with this. I mean, once you know all these stories and there's further investigation, and we know about the hijackers, and there's some good movies out. I think—I think several that I

think are really really solid, but then you kind of reach a point well, okay, we've covered all this. This is where we are. Now where are we going? And, So, I think—five years, six years into it I'm starting to think well, now we're in major wars. We have a U.S.-NATO global empire maturing. What's this all about? Where are we going in the future here? And, so even if we convicted Cheney of being involved, not saying that he was in fact, but he probably had some awareness of what was going down, or something like that, it wouldn't change where we are today in terms of global empire.

So, I think our energies just simply focusing on 9/11 as if it is going to save us, if we somehow could expose what really happened, that we can just get everybody to believe it, is not valid strategy. I'm perfectly happy to have everybody investigated as deeply as possible and continue to do research and expand it, but I think we need to move, also be thinking about a strategy of where we are today. What 9/11 has brought us and the continuation of false flag events and the empire building that we now are faced here.

JON What I try to tell Progressive's—and I'm talking about people like Amy Goodman or Glenn Greenwald or Chris Hedges or any of those people that generally don't talk about 9/11 (Right). They talk about everything else under the sun, but they won't talk about the lies of 9/11, and all I'm trying to get them to do is to acknowledge the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. To look at this post-9/11 world through that lens. (Right) And accept—when the corporate news doesn't do its job, it's up to those with a voice to inform the public about what's going on. And there are many people—with a voice that just aren't addressing the issue. And I have covered so many different topics over the years—Israel and Gaza; Russia and Ukraine; the wiretapping and the torture; and everything that came about from 9/11—I've been covering all of that. But I've also been covering the fact that we were lied to about that day, and I can't honestly think of a faster way to end what's considered to be the post-9/11 world than by proclaiming that we were lied to about that day, and thereby taking away the justification for all of it. If we could do that as a country, I think that would be a powerful statement to the world and to this country but—I don't know that that's going to happen.

PETER I think half the people already accept that. They certainly think that they weren't told the whole truth—literally, half the people in the country accept that.

- JON Well, most polls over the years have shown that a majority of the people question what we were told about 9/11 (Yes). It's a question of whether or not they're going to do something about it.
- PETER Well, 9/11 of course is a big media cover up. But so is election fraud. I mean, the fact that George W. Bush never won a U.S. election for President (Right) and that both elections were fraudulent, no corporate media wants to cover that story either. And there's plenty of evidence to show that there was voter manipulation, and not only cheating in terms of who could vote. But—election fraud in the sense of voting machines being manipulated.
- JON Well, that brings me to a good question. What are some of the biggest stories the corporate news has essentially ignored over the years
- PETER My general answer to that is class and power, and the degree to which the power elite dominate the country, dominate the world today in a much broader sense. That's the macro. Now, inside that there is certainly failure to cover 9/11, failure to cover the Kennedy assassination adequately, or various other things that are labeled conspiracies, which was the CIA, which they did after the Kennedy administration, which was to put that out as a conspiracy theory. So, you call them that, then they question us. And the negation of that, that term has come to—particularly in terms of corporate media and how they use it—so, anybody they don't like, they'll call them a conspiracy theorist, and dismiss them and then point out the silliest aspect of some theory and then try to relate that to that person. That's clearly a problem. Election fraud was a big problem. The war on terrorism is another big problem. Certainly, the idea that we've been lied to about Osama bin Laden forever, and the refusal to identify what we're saying are the terrorists—ISIS, al-Qaeda, and our involvement, U.S. involvement, and other agency involvements in terms of making those groups happen initially.
- JON Right, that's a big one.
- PETER Those are big lies, very big lies. Environmental destruction is a huge lie or lack of coverage in terms of blaming what's really going on and who's involved. And, so—we're really only talking about six or seven thousand people who are part of the one thousandth of one percent that control 100 trillion dollars worth of wealth. (Right) Those people have that kind of control over—literally half the wealth of the world—and there's only a few thousand of them. (No, I know) We need to identify who they are and focus

on making them change. And exposing them and pulling their covers back on these power elites in the world. That I think is an agenda that really—and from that 9/11 emerges, voter fraud emerges, environmental action emerges, and we can have all kinds of adjustments to the wrongs that we've seen.

JON I think this goes back to what Mario Savio was saying about putting our bodies in the gears of the machine (Yeah), like we see in so many other countries. And—it almost happened with Occupy and then it faltered. But for a number of reasons.

PETER It didn't falter. But it didn't falter. Social movements can emerge, that can explode, they can be repressed, but they leave a consciousness that has changed.

JON Right. Oh absolutely. My goodness, the one thing that I think the "9/11 Truth Movement" or advocates for 9/11 Justice have done over the years, has gotten people to question what they're being told by their Government. I think that's a success of ours. I think some people take it to the extreme and say that everything is a conspiracy. But I do think that we have successfully gotten people to question what they're being told (Right) at the very least.

PETER And the 99 versus the one percent. (Right, exactly) It doesn't even matter. I mean, if you take the one percent of 7-8 billion people—that's a huge number. To be in that number, you only have to have like 700,000 dollars worth of wealth. (Wow) It's the difference between somebody with 700 thousand dollars worth of wealth, and someone who's controlling 100 billion. (Right, exactly) That is the most immense. So, if you own a home and it's worth 700,000 thousand, that difference between you and somebody who's making minimum wage isn't that different massively. It may be in terms of lifestyle than it is between the power that the multi-billionaires have. (Right) That being that one thousandth of one percent of those 6,000. That's who's controlling the world. That's where—and they're the ones making the decisions about capital issues—how the hundreds of trillion dollars is being invested and where it's spent. And that's who NATO and the U.S. military empire is protecting is that capital. And they will do literally anything, include having false flag activities like 9/11 to create permanent war that uses up capital and increases wealth even more more globally and concentrates it even more. That's what war does.

JON Yep, and War is a Racket. I saw the other day there was a headline that Israel said their war with Gaza is a moral war, and I was reminded of George Carlin's take on oxymorons and civil wars. (Yeah) You know, how can you have a civil war. But, it's ridiculous, in terms of—

PETER It is ridiculous, and the U.S., Obama having drones that can kill people anywhere in the world and literally (including Americans) and people is a loss of moral legitimacy. So, there's the crisis of humanitarian—humanitarian inequality—human inequality as a humanitarian crisis of the half of the world living on three dollars a day—barely getting by, 30-40,000 a day dying from starvation with easily curable diseases. That crisis is—a hundred 9/11's every day. (Yep) And continues to grow and expand. And unless we address that, it will cause massive chaos. Ultimately, environmental destruction and the one percent won't have anywhere to live either.

JON Exactly. They don't care. It's like an addiction. Dr. Parenti described it as being the worst addiction in this country. It's not drugs; it's wealth.

PETER It is pathological. Achieving great wealth and wanting to have great power is a sickness that can only be countered by systems of democracy and due process. (Accountability) And accountability, yeah.

JON You know, we see all the time, the banks were just fined, I think, five billion dollars, which is a drop in the bucket for them. But, you know, there's the two-tiered justice system...

PETER But nobody goes to jail.

JON Yeah, nobody goes to jail. And, but, we go to jail. We go to jail left and right. (Right) We have the largest prison industrial complex in the world (Right). I think. (Correct)

 Could you please give us a brief history of how our corporate news got to where it is today?

PETER Well—newspapers and media inside of capitalism—this is kind of like a McChesney history lesson—were, before the Civil War, there were massive numbers and mostly not profit-making, mostly supported by community groups and political parties and various organizations and churches and all kinds of things. And any given city could have 20-30 daily newspapers.

After commercialization, after media became—particularly newspapers to start with and then of course radio and television eventually—became profit-making, where they were selling advertising in support of capital to people to go buy things, the support of media became advertising based.

And when that happens, then you're in service to people who are paying for the advertising, which would be the capitalist class (Right, exactly) that privatizes newspapers, and then newspapers, of course, can be owned by people who have political agendas. And one of the biggest political agendas is protecting our capitalism.

But—a hundred years ago, or certainly for the Spanish-American War, our corporate media was pushing and needing the capital needed to have places to grow. And so declaring war against one of the weaker imperial countries in Europe, Spain, and then taking over their territories—Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines—was one way for the U.S. to start to expand our own empire and our own colonial capability. And we, of course, have declared a long time ago that American continents were U.S.-led and that we didn't want interference from Europe.

So, the idea of the Monroe Doctrine, Manifest Destiny, all the U.S. being the exceptional country, we wanted to control North and South America. That was our areas of influence and growth. We, of course, controlled and expanded across the American continent and committed genocide in the process. And the newspapers were cheering that on. (Right) But these papers—if you had five newspapers in any given city, which was pretty typical 100 years ago, and today you have one or less, or you may have one large regional paper... So, the media has consolidated massively. So, when Ben Bagdikian first wrote his book *Media Monopoly* back in the 80s, he said there's 50 major media corporations in the United States.

And we were all like: "Oh my God, that's really not that many and they could all fit in a cocktail room"—

JON Right, and today there are five or six.

PETER Five or six, exactly. So, that concentration of media has made this an even bigger problem.

And then, of course, Chomsky and Herman came up with their propaganda model of corporate media ideas, which is about 23 years old now, and they were accurate, it was true. I mean, that's what it was about. It was about supporting capitalism and they wouldn't run stories that offended advertisers and they tended not to run stories that undermines corporate power and influence of the Government.

And that today, however, has even reflected to a certain extent an independent media. So, a lot of independent media is afraid to run stories the corporate media criticizes or won't run—for they will be identified as lacking the values of journalism, objectivity, or promoting conspiracy theory. (Right)

You know, in the mid- to last decade where we looked at all the corporate media and how they'd covered 9/11 issues, and the very objective ones, and we looked at independent media how they covered it. And—whether it was Building 7 or the stock options or the—it was very intermittent. Some did, some didn't. Never openly challenged, openly challenged.

JON There was a time when the corporate news as a whole, I would say 90 percent of them, were just in attack-mode (yes) or anybody who questions 9/11. And they're still doing that today as we just saw with Shaquille O'Neal. If you're anybody with a voice and you dare to question 9/11, they will come after you like you wouldn't believe. And, as a result, other people with a voice are afraid to speak out (Yeah, yeah). I don't know [sighs], I've given up my whole life for this and, I think, that if I can do it—a Joe Schmoe schlub—can speak out and continue to speak out, then the least they could do is—speak out.

And I've said before that if celebrities want to talk about 9/11, they should get together as a group, like 20 or 30 of them, and just make a simple statement that—we support the families call for a real investigation and walk away from the podium, and don't put forward any theories, because individually we're very—or, they're very easy to deal with, but as a group, it would be a lot harder. So, I think—that would have been wonderful if they had done that, but they never did. [Laughs]

PETER Oh, I started showing *Zero*—that 9/11 movie that came out 2008 in class every semester. And, as I found, the students became more willing to look at 9/11 as they were—10 years old when it happened or even today—five years old when it happened. That group of students are more willing to

really consider it, and look at it historically than people our age (Right) that are stuck in the fear of addressing that or being labeled in some way.

JON One of the things that I've focused on is trying to contact teachers to see—what they're teaching kids in their syllabuses about 9/11. They really, they don't teach them much. I've talked to students.

PETER They don't teach them much at all.

JON They teach them about the day, who is alleged to have done it, and that's about it. They don't talk about the 9/11 Commission, and how ridiculous that was and all that other stuff.

PETER Most of them don't talk about it at all. (Right, exactly) Or, they'll just say: "Oh, yeah, this happened, it was terrible." And, which led me to put together a course called "The Sociology of Conspiracies" two years ago. And we've offered it twice now here at Sonoma State and it's in our catalogue. (Right) And this course, it's Sociology 371—371 is the federal code for conspiracies by the way—occasionally, my students figure that out.

It's a course that looks at the broader aspects—of course, Lance deHaven-Smith's work on conspiracy theory in America, and state crimes against democracy, his work there. And we, of course, have Peter Dale Scott's work on *The American Deep State* and then Kathryn Olmstead from UC Davis, her work on conspiracy theories in American democracy, and she goes back all the way to WWI and up through 9/11. And, well, you start to see that these conspiracies of various sorts—assassinations, stock market manipulations, bank fraud—happen all the time. (Yep) And so, I have my students read Mark Lane's book *My Last Word* on the murder of John Kennedy. They read William Pepper, his book *An Act of State: The execution of Martin Luther King*. We cover a little bit on Robert Kennedy and Graeme MacQueen's book on anthrax, which has a lot on 9/11.

JON I have the course description right here. It says: "A critical analysis of conspiracies in society using power elite and state crimes against society theories applied to modern historical events with cultural, social, psychological, public propaganda, and power perspectives. Topics include political assassinations, election fraud, threats of terrorism, 9/11, and permanent war."

PETER That's it. And we're getting 95 percent positive feedback.

JON That's great.

PETER We're—we're maxing the scales. These students are really saying, this is a really important course, really valuable. I learned more than anything else in college—you know, kind of thing. (Right, absolutely)

Because if you look at these spread out, and you look at the pattern, the sociology of conspiracies, the patterns that are evident, then it makes more sense to understand what Peter Dale Scott is talking about when he talks about the deep state (Right). There are elements inside Governments and private bureaucracy businesses that want to repress democracy and expand their power and profits. And do so illegally. And that's the definition of a conspiracy.

JON Right, and some people refer to it as a state within a state, or the national security state, which is, I think, Michael Parenti's term for it right. (Right)

Anyway, what are—well, is there anything else you want to say about your course?

PETER Well, just that not only the students really like it. I have had zero negativity from other faculty or anywhere else for that matter, and I've not been quiet about it. I have put it out on lists. I've written about it. I say this is the course that we offer, it's in the catalog. I think it's an important course and nobody said anything yet. [Laughter] I'm waiting—waiting for the hammer to fall or something, but no, I mean, it's not like—and I don't think we could have done it right after 9/11.

JON Right. Well, yeah—I kind of wish—

PETER I kind of wish as well. And it's not like it's all about 9/11, because it's not. It's all about conspiracies. And then with, you know, and I used David Ray Griffin's book last semester, but I didn't do it this time. I used Graeme MacQueen's book on anthrax which he lays out a very clear case that this was Government anthrax that was spread around and we were lied to about.

JON Yeah, there was this story that broke in the last couple of months about one of the investigators in the anthrax investigation suing the FBI for oh, I don't remember, like suppressing evidence (Yeah) which showed to the contrary

that it wasn't Bruce Ivins and so forth (Right). So that issue is not resolved by a long shot. (No)

Now, what are some of the variables with regard to how our corporate news outlets decide to run a story or not? Do you know?

PETER Well, there's internal self-censorship that reporters just know that they shouldn't go in certain areas. But newsrooms will pick stories and Fox News, of course, we know internally now, they'll pick stories and tell reporters how to cover them. (Right)

But it's not like reporters are free to go out and pick up anything that they want to. You know, the idea of an investigative reporter out there running a beat, and trying to get something on the mayor doesn't really happen anymore. They're assigned. And so, it's editors that are assigning these stories and most of the—there isn't that much investigative reporting left. So, there's either stories coming out over the wire—and most of the newspapers in the country are just running a wire service. So, they're Associated Press, a New York Times, Washington Post Wire Services and they're just literally running these things verbatim. So, they can be covered—they're all selected by editors, which is actually just—there are 1700 dailies in the country, so it's not very—it's a few thousand people. (Right)

Now, certain stories like the one, like when the ACLU came out with the evidence and the autopsy reports on civilians who died in U.S. custody in Afghanistan and Iraq in the first three years of the war, and they reported that these were people who were in U.S. military prisons and they had died. And the autopsy reports showed, from U.S. doctors, that the cause of death was homicide. They were murdered, or the conditions of their bodies were so severe they said they died from heart failure, but they died when they were being tortured to death.

And, we had something like 40, 50 autopsies that indicated this. ACLU puts out a press release on this. This is what? 2006, I think, right in there. And AP picks it up. It goes out to all the dailies in the country. And less than 12 ran it.

JON That's horrible.

Well I have an example of that. On September 11, 2006, 9/11 Family Members Christina Kminek, Donna Marsh O'Connor, and Michelle Little

got together with the makers of the film *9/11 Press for Truth*, Kyle Hence and Paul Thompson, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. to call for a new investigation. And ONE news outlet in the entire country covered that and they were right across the hall from, I think, Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton who were giving their own press conference. (Right, right). You know, obviously, they got a lot of coverage.

But, you know, there are other instances like that—the Jersey Girls calling for a new investigation in February of 2008. Raw Story was the only news outlet to cover that in the entire country. [Laughs]

PETER That raises too many important questions.

JON Right. Well, there are so many examples of that with regard to 9/11. It's not even funny.

PETER You're right. I mean, it's absurd. And, to have any idea, people will say: "Well, what isn't true about 9/11?" I'll say: "Well, you got five hours you can listen?" (Exactly) It's massive. I mean, You can do some highlights, but —

JON What I generally try to do is just plant good seeds (Right) in people's minds so that they—they start questioning things on their own. And I try to point them in a good direction and that's all we can do. Unless we have that five hours, (Mm-hmm), you know.

Do you remember back in the 70s when Dr. Martin Luther King was on, I think it was The Mike Douglas Show, and he had the chance to talk about—his antiwar stance and so on and so forth, for an extended period of time. You would not see that today. You wouldn't see Cindy Sheehan on the television for the national news for half an hour unedited being able to speak her mind.

PETER Or Noam Chomsky, for that matter (Exactly). And Noam hasn't done anything on 9/11 and criticized it a bit, but you know, people have been really kind of calling him a gatekeeper and stuff like that, but he's—I can't go there.

I had a fight with Webster Tarpley about that once because he was criticizing Noam Chomsky. I said: "Look, he's covered so much, he's done so much a major intellectual in the world. If he doesn't want to do 9/11,

leave him alone." And, I think, that part of his response is that he does get heckled when he publicly speaks—or did for a long time. I don't think it's going on as much now from various sources on 9/11, and after a while, you just get defensive. I'm not talking about that. (Right) So, it might be interesting to talk to him about it someday, but—

JON Well, Cindy Sheehan had the same experience where she would go and speak at events and there would be quote "9/11 Truthers" in the event and they would almost harass her to the point where she started to hate 9/11 Truthers. And, it's funny that you mention Webster Tarpley because back in 2007, I believe, Webster did something and he called Cindy a name and I defended Cindy against Webster and, as a result—Webster got out on the stage in New York City during an anniversary event, and alluded to the idea that I might be COINTELPRO. (Laughs)

So, anyway, but with regard to Noam Chomsky, he and I have had a discussion about 9/11 in the past and, basically, his view is that we've done worse things around the world (Mm-hmm). Even if it's true; even if the Government was involved in some way in the 9/11 attacks, there are worse things going on in the world right now that require our attention.

PETER That's absolutely true.

JON Yeah, there are, but I don't understand how—

PETER Howard Zinn took the same position.

JON I know, but I'm not asking people like Noam to make it THE issue for them. I'm just trying to get them to incorporate the fact that we were lied to about that day. If, you know, you can't—if you—you can't say that like an omission. It's like omitting something—a big truth.

PETER I hear you and I agree with you, Jon. I just—it's not on the top of my agenda to criticize Chomsky or anyone else, Chris Hedges.

JON Oh no, it's certainly not how we get people on our side (Right). But I've tried to reason with a lot of—

PETER Or Amy Goodman, for that matter. I mean, at least she did have David Ray Griffin on and sort of sabotaged him, but she did do it.

JON But she never had a family member on. She never had Paul Thompson on.

PETER Oh, I know, I know.

JON You know, there's a lot of issues that she didn't cover, but she did cover a lot of things. So—a lot of people act as if she didn't cover anything and that's just not true.

PETER No, she did cover some things.

JON She had Sibel Edmonds on. She had the Loose Change boys on.

PETER She made it a debate.

JON Yeah, and she talked about the Israeli art students (Mm-hmm), and the people that were arrested on the van, I believe. She's had Bob Graham on to talk about Saudi Arabia. So, she has covered the issue, but she hasn't covered it to the extent that some of us would like. Anyway—

PETER No, I totally agree. And when we did the National 10th Anniversary shows on Pacifica, and all the Pacifica was an all-day event and *Project Censored* show helped make that happen—we did the three-hour segment in Berkeley. We were still required to make it a debate and not just a people present. That was the policy that was laid down to us, which we accepted, because at least we got it on a national all-day radio show. At Least it was on as an agenda item to be talked about. And we thought that was a big victory for us at KPFA, and then all the other Pacifica stations aired their segments, as well.

So, it was—a significant honoring of the 10th Anniversary of 9/11 and it was a critical honoring as well.

JON Right. I think the very first event that I ever went to was hosted by Pacifica Radio on September 11, 2004, in Washington, D.C. and John Judge, Coleen Rowley, Sibel Edmonds, Ray McGovern were the panelists, and so on and so forth.

Now, this is a pretty easy question. If we had a functioning news, something that had the people's best interests at heart, do you think this would be a different world today?

PETER Of course. [Laughter]

JON [Laughs] I don't know why I wrote that. That's such an easy question.

PETER Well, I mean, the more transparency we have about what powerful people are doing the more likely we can call them on the carpet if they're doing stuff that we don't like. (Right)

That's why TPP is secret. We're not supposed to know who's involved there. Actually, I did see a list of 600 folks that at least got copies of TPP, implying that they were involved in its presentation and development. But we don't know who the negotiators are. The U.S. Trade Organization is certainly key to that, but—and they have staff and that kind of thing. But we don't—who's as an individual that represents the pharmaceutical industry and the TPP is going to let them—greenwash all their formulas. And keep their patent rights. We don't know who that person is and we should.

JON Right. How can people tell who to trust and who not to? Have you developed a system for this?

PETER [Laughter] You know, *Project Censored* puts out stories almost daily from one of our 20 to 30 college campuses that are involved with this. And not so much in the summer because the campuses aren't in session, but when they're in session, we're posting stories on a regular basis.

These are stories that students have researched in a class, and then a faculty member has reviewed. So, they've been vetted. And then we're posting them online. And, but what's key about this is we're posting the sources, where this is from. So, the idea that our validate Independent News, and the various places from which we get the news stories, we're saying these are valid places. This is a good place to look at news.

And, so yeah—whether it's Common Dreams or Truth Out or any other long-lived Global Research list of independent news sites, there's quite a bit that's online. It's quite available and it's certainly not inside of newspapers in America or on news. So we're telling—and students are learning through a critical thinking process involved in all these classes, they're learning that there are places for news that are independent. *Project Censored* is one of them, but there are many, many others, that you can find out information

about literally almost anything and—but learn to trust and look for multiple sources and verification—and that's what we do. (Right)

JON I generally tell people to judge people by the fruits of their labor. If they have a good track record, chances are they're pretty trustworthy. And, you know, another thing that you can do is look at—if a story is reported, how many other outlets are reporting on this story, and always, always go to the source. (Right) Like, if there's documentation that was just released and the news is reporting on it, don't listen to what the news is saying. Go read the documentation itself. Because a lot of times the news just doesn't report on the important stuff. But, definitely, always try to go to the source. And you can even try contacting individuals. (Mm-hmm) If you see somebody mentioned in a news report, try contacting them and getting their own account. You know, I've done that several times. (Mm-hmm)

It's very hard. You know, during the Ukraine—when the whole Ukraine-Russia thing happened, I really came to realize that we don't know exactly what's going on. There are propaganda wars going on right now that are just devastating.

PETER Ukraine has been one of the biggest lies going.

JON I'm sorry, say that again.

PETER The idea that Russia invaded the Ukraine (Right) and that Russia is trying to implement a cold war agenda of imperial power. It's just lies. It's just completely false. We've done a number of good stories of that. And, but that's part of the degree to which the U.S.-NATO empire is willing to go ahead and lie to create a global power structure for capital.

JON Yeah, and you know, I think, there's an unspoken war going on right now with Russia. I don't think that we have great relations with China at the moment. And—do you think looking back at 9/11, do you think one of the possible reasons for facilitating or allowing or whatever the hell happened on 9/11, was to get in that region, to compete against Russia and China?
[PAUSE]

PETER Yes.

JON Do you think that was one of the reasons?

PETER Well, it's—yes. I mean, it's certainly—occupying Afghanistan and then our original underbite of the Russian's invasion of Afghanistan was a challenge. It was meant to be a challenge. Massive mineral resources and wealth in Afghanistan on top of the oil that was in Iraq. Of course, we're totally involved there.

I just did an interview with Nick Turse last week on his new book on Africa. And—he was saying that the future wars—and the Pentagon is really looking at this—the future wars are going to be in Africa. The War on Terrorism is going to make a big shift and go to Africa. It already has. (Right) We're already seeing that. War in Yemen and other places. But, it won't just be wars and chaos and balkanization of the various countries in the Middle East. We're going to see that all over Africa as well.

That's the agenda. And that's what we need to be fully transparent about and expose in a very big way. And the lie about—the terrorists. They're really people resisting—global capital penetration in their homelands. And we're just beating the shit out of them.

JON That's one of the things about the Iraq war if you watched, if you paid attention. First the people that were fighting against us were called insurgents. Then, they started referring to them as terrorists (Right). Then they were Al-Qaeda in Iraq. Then we were told that they chose Iraq as the battlefield. You know, and so on and so forth, and they have propagandized—I'm sorry, go ahead.

PETER That's ISIS.

JON Yeah, well, ISIS has come about [sigh]—it's a combination of things. Very simply, the anger that we created when we invaded Iraq; when we killed over a million people and displaced millions more; when Blackwater was hunting Iraqis for sport; when we were torturing people at Abu Ghraib; when we used depleted uranium and caused babies to become sick. You know, there's no statute of limitations on the anger these kinds of things create.

And then when you have Saudi Arabia and Qatar and Kuwait sending in rebels into Syria, and we're sending them intelligence. The so-called rebels. Then we sent them arms and then we started sending in rebels from Jordan to accompany them. You know, we—it's a combination of all these things—we created—we and our allies created ISIS, and that's how, essentially, it

happened. The two things combined: those in Iraq who hate us and those in Syria that we supported to take down Assad combined.

PETER It's called Chaos Theory. (Yeah) You've got chaos in the world and then global capital can literally penetrate anywhere because there's no resistance. It's just tiny little countries that become security zones that could be even privately controlled by private mercenary companies.

We just finished a big study on private mercenary companies. They're the new fascism of the 21st century. (Right) The whole life of an Italian and German fascism. It's fascism by capitalism using private military companies, and the U.S.-NATO alliance's military power to compete in nation states everywhere in the world.

JON With regard to—I'm sorry go ahead.

PETER Including Russia and China.

JON With regard to America, it's not so much in-your-face fascism as it was in Germany. It only becomes that way when you try to—push back like the Occupy people did. You know, like I've done (Yeah) civil disobedience and all that stuff. That's when you start to see the fascism. But it's not as in-your-face as it was in Germany. It might be. It could become that. But, you know...

PETER It's not as much for white people, but it certainly is for people of color, the people in the inner cities.

JON And Muslims now because of 9/11.

PETER You know, a couple thousand Muslims arrested after 9/11 and detained. They weren't arrested, they were just detained.

JON Right, I know. But, I mean, I read about stories where people in New York City—somebody pushed someone who looked like a Muslim in front of a subway train and killed them. Just hatred like that is just horrible. Like Pamela Geller, and all her propaganda. It's just horrible. And I try to tell people that 9/11 was not a Muslim crime. It was a crime. It wasn't—a Saudi crime, an American Crime, an Episcopalian crime—it was a crime. And you don't hold everybody who—if somebody who considered themselves a Muslim was involved in 9/11 that doesn't mean that you hold every single

Muslim accountable in the world. Just as—if our supposed Christian nation, if our Government does something that we don't like, does that mean we should hate all Christians? (right) That kind of thing. It's ridiculous. (Of course)

Now, one thing I want to talk about is how certain people help to discredit good work and research. And can you please tell us about your doctoral dissertation?

PETER Well, my dissertation was on the sociology of the San Francisco Bohemian Club, and most of my research work in graduate's political work was on power elites going back to C. Wright Mills. Bill Domhoff was on my dissertation committee. He was a long-time power researcher of UC Santa Cruz, and I was at UC Davis. I had a couple of good people there.

And, so I took a look at the Club as—I called it Sociology of the Bohemian Club, but it was—a relative advantage, which was kind of a play on words in that people who were members really had, was an expression of an advantage of society. Not only in terms of who go through the club and could be interacted with, but the private men's clubs had been that—had served that function for a long period of time, certainly throughout the British Empire. And were a way of allowing elites to commingle and, develop agendas and consensus about various issues and talk things through in private.

So, the Bohemian Club was one of the premier clubs in San Francisco. But they're unique in that they have a 2,000-acre private redwood forest, old growth forest, up in Sonoma County, just a few miles from where I live, actually, on the Russian River there. And they meet every year for two weeks, three weekends and two weeks and camp out. Camp out meaning they have these rustic cabins in the woods. And they meet there and every cabin has a bar, and they party and drink a lot and eat good food, and it's all men and have various self-entertainment, plays, and events and speakers and the President of a country could come in, or a high-level official in the state department or sometimes give lectures.

So, it's all very private, very elite. And, so I got to visit, and I wrote about them. And they acknowledged that everything I wrote was truthful, but they didn't like my interpretations very well. (Laughs) But that's the nature of academic research.

But I did that 24 years ago. So, that's—I started that research and then finished it up in '94 and that's when I got hired here at Sonoma State.

JON Now, have you had problems—as a result of Alex Jones going into Bohemian Grove and making his little movie, you know, the cremation of care or ceremony and all that stuff, have you had problems?

PETER I've criticized Alex for that. (Right) It was a ridiculous exposé, and it led to a young man from Texas showing up there with a crossbow and hoping to save children from being killed. I think he's still in jail. But, I mean, they weren't even in session when he got there. But it does get kooks enraged, and Alex seems to be good at that.

Well, it just absolutely wasn't true. When Alex went he could have walked in the front gate with a BBC reporter, because at that point before 9/11, anybody could, but he chose to sneak in through the redwoods and—and try to say all this was filmed and then—he called it the cremation of care ceremony, which is somewhat of a bizarre fraternity (Absolutely) But, it's certainly not sinister and it's just weird. I mean, they're burning—big bonfires in front of the statue. This owl statue and that kind of stuff.

JON A lot of men's clubs do weird things.

PETER Yeah, of course they do.

JON My father's a Mason (Yeah) and they do all kinds—he never told me what they did. Don't worry Masons. But he did say that they do some weird things.

PETER Yeah, private groups do that. I mean, they have ceremonies that supposedly mean something, but, you know—when I saw the cremation of care ceremony, there's 2 or 3,000 guys sitting out in the woods there. And it was all very interesting. And, they had fireworks and the high priest—comes forward and he challenges care and care responds "You can't kill care," and they end up burning up care with all the torches—go out and then—marching priests in robes with torches. It's quite weird, (Right) but it's kind of silly. There's guys are just kind of cracking up about it. Some people take it seriously because you go there for years and years, you do the same thing every year. But Alex is portraying it as human sacrifice. (Exactly) And, as a result—

JON Do you get a lot of—I don't want to say dumb questions but—misguided questions about the Bohemian Grove as a result of what he did?

PETER No, not so much.

JON No? They don't say—did you write about how they burn people in effigy or whatever the hell they do?

PETER No, I never really had anybody ask me that. First off, nobody out here listens to Alex Jones anyway. And, maybe if I was in Texas somebody might ask me, but it's never happened.

JON Is it true though that they occasionally go out of the grove to get, you know, prostitutes or whatever?

PETER Well, of course, I mean, if you put 2,000 men with money in one place at one time, of course a certain percentage of them are going to go out and fool around. (Right) There's no question about that. I mean, that's just money and wealth and men and their egos.

JON Right, well, I don't say I condone it, but right. I hear you. [Laughter.]

PETER I mean, that just—it happens at every convention and major football game or whatever. That's just part of the way of the world. But, yeah, women do come in to Sonoma County, and there are private homes that are used for entertaining the men. And there was a group of women busted, about 10 years before I did my research work, by the sheriff here. The cops were just looking the other way.

JON I think if the United States knew about things that go on, they'd be shocked. But, again, your work was very credible and Alex's was not. And, I think that was the point.

PETER I mean, he's a shock jock and what motivates him, whether he really does work for Stratfor—I don't know for sure. (Laughs).

JON Whether he does or doesn't—the effect is the same.

PETER Yeah, it doesn't matter. I mean, he's like Jonathan Kay. He makes outlandish statements and writes a book about 9/11, and criticizing anybody that is a truther or something like that. I mean, there's a lot of people that do that.

Whether or not they're paid to do that—they're certainly encouraged, and maybe ordered in some way.

JON I had him on as a guest and challenged him and did my best to make—people realize that this is a legitimate issue. (Yes) And it's funny, because one of the things that he did is he, essentially, he agreed with almost everything I said. (Mm-hmm) Like that's the technique they're doing now, as opposed to saying everything you say is wrong, there is nothing to what any 9/11 Truther has to say. Now—he agreed with a lot of what we said or what I say anyway. (Yeah).

Now, what do you recommend people do to get their news? I think we kind of went over this.

PETER Well, certainly not watch, waste any time watching TV news, unless you want to know what the weather is. And, find independent news sources that you like and trust and go to it on a regular basis.

I think *Christian Science Monitor* is pretty darn good, their website. I certainly recommend and encourage people listen to *RT—Russia Today*—for good, critical analysis, national stuff. There's all the Pacifica stations are for the most part giving us information you're not getting on corporate media. You find a Pacifica station in your area that's pretty good to do.

JON Right. What I generally did is every morning, and I did this for a decade, is I would go to Google News and type in "Israel" and everything coming up having to do with Israel. And I would go through them all, and pick out the stories I thought were important. Then I would type in "Russia" or "9/11"—each individual subject and I would search all the news outlets and post everything that I could find that I thought was important. But that's a lot of work and I've stopped doing that

PETER That's a lot of work [Laughs]. I get 200 emails a day on various news things. (Right) And some days, I'll spend—a lot of time looking at stuff. On other days, I just—you can't.

JON It's hard to do. But—it's a requirement, unfortunately, because we don't have the corporate news media that works, so we have to do it. We have to do what we have to do to try our best to inform the public.

PETER Yeah, and most people don't have the time or the ability or that and so, that's why, I think, groups like *Project Censored* and various other ones that help consolidate the news, *Electronic Infytada* are just some that can give you really good sources and information about what's happening.

JON Is there anything that you'd like to promote? Like your show with Mickey?

PETER Well, our show with Mickey originates on Fridays at one o'clock on KPFA in Berkeley and then, of course, it's online immediately at KPFA.org, and then within 24 hours it's pretty much up on the *Project Censored* website. So, all of our radio shows are there.

I think, yeah, I'd like to promote the *Project Censored* website. I mean, you could take any topic, whether it's 9/11 or Israel or Russia or anything else, depleted uranium, torture—TPP, health policies, environment—and use those words and search inside of *Project Censored*, you'll get a ton of information from various independent sources. And, that I mean, that's a great place to do student research projects. It's a really, in depth website with information covering our 40 years of research—39 years, officially.

JON Yes, I highly recommend *Project Censored*.

Now, I have a question and it's not—I kind of had a bet with Mickey, not a bet, but—do you remember the first time that I met you?

PETER No.

JON You don't? Oh, oh well. He said you would.

PETER Remind me.

JON Okay, it was the June 2006 conference in Chicago.

PETER It was in Chicago, okay.

JON You were sitting in the lobby and I sat down next to you and I said: "Hey, Peter." [Laughter] We had a little talk.

PETER Un-huh, un-huh, okay. I'm sorry, I don't remember that in particular. But, yes, I knew you were there, and I think you told me that once before.

JON Oh, okay. Yeah, that was the first time we ever met. But I don't think I've seen you since. [Laughs.]

PETER Yeah, I don't think we have. We haven't been to the same room at least, since. (Nope) You weren't in D.C. were you?

JON I was there for the Truth Emergency Convergence (Uh-huh), which was, I think, the day before (Okay) where we were at Lafayette Park and everybody was talking.

PETER I was there. I spoke.

JON Yeah, you spoke. A lot of people spoke. Paul Thompson, Jenna Orkin.

PETER Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, you were there then, but you didn't come up to say hi.

JON I'm sorry, I didn't come up to say hi that time. (Oh, okay) Yeah, the first time I met you was in June 2006.

Anyway, Peter, I want to thank you very much for taking the time to come on today.

PETER Well, it's been fun talking. You know, I'm just—we're kind of ad libbing here and thinking about what, where we're going, and what's happening and —

JON Yep, what, where we are going, indeed.

PETER I think we're a big part of all that. It has been in my life for since it happened and it's part of everything that I'm doing now in conspiracy's and looking at the transnational class at the highest levels.

JON Yep, and I appreciate the work that you're doing. (Sure) And, again, I want to thank you for coming on today. And, again, I want to thank Mickey for making this happen.

PETER Yeah, it was great.

JON All right. Have a good day there, Peter.

PETER Okay, thanks a lot. What do you do with this? How does it end up getting out?

JON I put it on iTunes, and I put it on my YouTube channel (Uh-huh) and it shows up on Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox, as well.

PETER Oh, great.

JON All right?

PETER All right, Jon, thanks.

JON Have a good day.

PETER All right. Bye, bye

JON Bye bye.



Chapter/Episode 30 – John Newman – June 20, 2015

Jon Gold (JON)

John Newman (JOHN)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week we will be discussing in detail who Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh are and their relationship to 9/11. This is a topic we could spend hours and hours on but, unfortunately, we were limited to two hours today.

Hi, this is Jon and I'm here with John Newman. John, how are you doing today?

JOHN Fine. Good morning. How are you doing?

JON Good morning. I'm doing great. Going to have brunch soon with my father for Father's Day. I'm going to get to see my new niece. I love seeing my new niece. I'm totally in love with her.

All right. So, What I'm going to do is I'm going to read your bio for everyone. And, by the way, this was a very impressive bio. I mean, all of

them are. All of my guests have been. But this was just—I was very impressed by this.

Dr. John M. Newman, Jr., Major, U.S. Army, Retired, was born on 20 December 1950 in Dayton Ohio. Dr. Newman earned a BA in Chinese studies (George Washington University, 1973), an MA in East Asian studies (George Washington University, 1976), and a PhD in modern Far Eastern history (George Washington University, 1992). He served in US Army Intelligence (1974–1994), became the Assistant to the Director, National Security Agency (1988–1990), and was a U.S. Army Attaché in China (1989–1991).

Dr. Newman taught for the University of Maryland Honors Program from 1992 to 2012. He currently teaches courses on counterterrorism, international terrorism, and America in the 60s at James Madison University. He is the author of JFK and Vietnam (1992); Oswald and the CIA (1995; 2009); Quest for the Kingdom—The Secret Teachings of Jesus in the Light of Yogic Mysticism (2011); and Where Angels Tread Lightly: The Assassination of President Kennedy, Volume I (2015).

Dr. Newman is an expert in textual records interpretation and documents forensics. His skills have been widely sought by US and foreign media organizations, including PBS, the History Channel, CSPAN, NBC, and other news organizations.

Dr. Newman has appeared on several occasions before various subcommittees of the U.S. House of Representatives to testify and/or make presentations on U.S. Government Agencies' compliance with classified records release laws and the performance of the 911 Commission.

Okay, so that's your bio. So, let's get to the questions. (Okay)

What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

JOHN

I could talk for an hour about that, but I won't. A couple of things that are really just seared into my brain, I was actually in my car driving to the University of Maryland when I heard the first tower was hit over the radio. I was going through a neighborhood. I sped up and got a speeding ticket. In between the first doing 35 in a 25, in between the first plane crashing into the towers and the second one.

So, but the thing that I've never seen before—I don't know if you've ever driven around Washington D.C.—it's pathological, especially around the beltway. They call it the suicide circle, they have for years. And, it's just crazy.

That day, within an hour after the Trade Center plane crashes and the Pentagon event, it was amazing. Everybody lined up real nice to get up on or off the beltway or other major arteries. I've never seen American drivers around here so orderly and polite and working with a fellow man than in the hours of that first day on 9/11.

JON That's interesting. I have driven around D.C. It's a pain in the butt is what it is.

JOHN Yep. Those are the things that—stand out. Like everybody else, you know, it was glued to the TV set all day. My wife was actually working downtown very close to the White House that day and actually saw the plane come over (Oh, God) and, I believe, it went into the Pentagon, flew a path there close to the White House. (Wow)

So, it was low enough to make a big sound. Everybody saw it and heard it, you know. I was on the other side of the hill. I was north, so I wasn't able to see it, but yeah, it was a—you remember where you are day. Just like JFK was, if you're old enough to remember the assassination.

JON Well, it's funny the reason that I ask this question of everybody, aside from wanting to know—what was their day like. I think that people would find that interesting. One of the other reasons that I ask that question is because it's funny how some people in Washington, D.C. seemingly can't remember what they did that day. Everybody else can remember exactly, you know, if you're old enough to remember, exactly what you were doing that day.

What was the first thing that you questioned about 9/11?

JOHN Well, so, at this point I'm 51 years old almost, so I'm not young anymore. I'd been through a lot of history. In fact, history is my academic credentials. So, the first thing that crossed my mind by certainly within a few hours of the information streaming in, was this is just like the Tet Offensive in 1968. You know, they had so much information. We knew the Tet Offensive was coming. There was a big lie though. They cut the figures in half and the people that saw it as income and couldn't believe it because they didn't

think the Viet Cong had the numbers to pull it off. It turns out they did. But, the point is that something that big, well-prepared, has to have had a footprint, and that thought that I had which has been born out, is of course they did. But at the time—on the day, we didn't have any proof of who knew what at that point. But that's what I was thinking. This is crazy. Why weren't we standing out there waiting for these guys just like they should have been catching them across rice paddies in '68.

It also reminded me, because I had, because I was already teaching counterterrorism at the University of Maryland, it reminded me of the '93 attack on the World Trade Center. So, this was another thought. This wasn't their first attempt to take those buildings down. And, I just couldn't believe that as extensive as this operation was that it hadn't been detected before it happened.

JON Well, that was one of the major lies after 9/11 is that we were told, repeatedly, that there were no warnings, that nobody had any idea that this could possibly happen. George W. Bush said on two separate occasions that he didn't have any inkling, whatsoever. And then in May 2002, when the August 6th PDB was released (Right), partially released—that was a warning. So, we—that's when I was off to the races. When I found out that we were being lied to. That's when I started my activism.

But, yeah, that was one of the biggest lies after 9/11. And we've heard from numerous people that we have every indication to believe that they were well aware of what was coming and where it was coming and so on and so forth.

Now, before we get started with the questions, I just want to say that there is a long-established history between the Pakistani ISI and Al-Qaeda, or individual terrorists like Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, Osama bin Laden, and even Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. So, so much history that it would be impossible to cover it all in one show. Also, and I forgot to say this, I want to thank Dr. Peter Dale Scott for helping me get this interview together. He's a good man and a great writer. And I have a lot of respect for Dr. Scott.

All right. Can you give us some background history on the Pakistani ISI's connections to terrorism?

JOHN Yeah, and to reiterate your point any one of these questions we could talk for hours, so I put together just some highlights of things about that

question. The roots of the ISI's connection to terrorism grew out of a larger process that was unfolding for decades after the end of World War II. Basically, decolonization was happening all around the planet. And, of course, in the Middle East, the Near East, and South Asia. But, what characterized that unfolding process, in a nutshell, was that nearly all of the secular nationalist movements failed in countries with a predominantly Muslim populations—and in other places too, but certainly countries that have predominantly Muslim populations, the secular nationalist movements just failed almost everywhere. And that failure is what laid the groundwork for a return to a term we call Islamic fundamentalism. Pakistan followed that pattern, especially with Gen. Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq's regime. It was a coup d'etat in 1977. And Zia based his regime on the religious principles of Abu Layla Maldini who had erected the modern concept of the modern Islamic state. And he's published several things, but his first book has a few headlines I will mention.

Islam is all encompassing. The Islamic State is for the entire world. It should not be limited to just the homeland of Islam. Jihad should be used to eliminate un-Islamic rule and establish the world-wide Islamic State. Islamic Jihad wishes to destroy all states and Governments anywhere on the face of the earth which are opposed to the ideology and program of Islam, regardless of the country or the nation which rules it.

So, these were the centerpieces of Zia's Government as he put it together in Shariah Law, Sharization or Islamization of Pakistan and he, upon assuming power, promised neutral elections within 90 days to quickly postpone them and started witch hunts and trials of Pakistani politicians. He was assisted by several right-wing Islamists and conservatives, especially by an intelligence unit—then the so-called political wing of the ISI under a Brigadier General by the name of Faisal Hussain Sadiqi. The ISI—better to say that than Pakistan's Interservices Intelligence and Special Services Group—was crucial for the consolidation of power in Zia's regime. And, he became the undisputed ruler of Pakistan, assuming the office of President in '78; was granted power to dissolve the National Assembly at will, which he did, and replaced it in '81 with the Majlis-e-Shoora or consultative council—the same exact name as the lead council bin Laden used to set up the rules of Al-Qaeda. And, Zia used his Majlis to help with the process of Islamization in Pakistan.

So, these events were taking place in Pakistan against the backdrop of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in December of '79 and its developing occupation of that country in the years that followed.

So, when we talk about terrorism, it's not, in the case with Pakistan and the ISI, which is where we're going in this conversation, I think it's important to lay this piece in that the door was opened to Islamic fundamentalism by Zia's regime. And it's just a vectoring of circumstances that, as he was doing that, the Soviet Union invaded the neighboring country Afghanistan.

So, that's what I would start out with that piece as a sort of history of how the ISI is pulled into what we know of it today. Terrorism (Right) and terrorism operations.

JON

Fascinating stuff. And then, of course, during the Afghanistan-Russia war, the CIA, the Saudis, and the Pakistani ISI all collaborated to support the mujahideen against the Soviet Union (Yep), and that mujahideen later became known as Al-Qaeda.

There's one thing I want to add to this. As I said earlier, there were connections between the ISI and certain individuals like Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and Osama bin Laden, and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

On October 19, 2007, a B. Raman for in.rediff reported that:

"Brigadier Ejaz Shah, a former officer of Pakistan's inter-services intelligence" [...] "used to be the handling officer of Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar the Amir of the Taliban."

I sent him an e-mail. And when I asked Mr. Raman "What does it mean to be Osama bin Laden's handling officer for the Pakistani ISI? What is the responsibility of the person that has this particular job?" And his response was.

"The handling officer of a source in Indian and Pakistani intelligence agencies is the person who looks after the welfare of the source, keeps him motivated, and uses him as needed. The source cannot meet anybody else other than his handling officer, except the head of the agency. One source, one handling officer, is the general rule. This is to prevent the exposure of the operation and maintain its deniability. I

understand in the CIA they call him the running officer of the source."

So, that was the connection to Osama bin Laden and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, I believe, also had the exact same handling officer, Ejaz Shah.

So, I just wanted to point that out to people. (Yeah)

Okay, so, what about the CIA's relationship to the Pakistani ISI? What can you tell us about that?

JOHN Well, again, Zia is at the pole position when we move to that question because as soon as the Soviets invaded he sets up a big meeting, which included the then head of the ISI, Lieutenant General Akhtar Abdur Rahman and various others. General Khalid Mahmud Arif, the Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, and Muhammad Sharif, Admiral head of the Navy. It was a very high-level meeting and the ISI chief called for, basically, a covert operation to arm the Islamic extremists and burn Kabul down to the ground.

So, that's how it started. Of course, the United States and other Western countries and Saudi Arabia, some other Gulf countries were interested in helping out. The United States had offered \$325 million dollars, which Zia said no, not doing it, that's peanuts. So, anyway, he found himself in a position to ask for a lot of money and it didn't take long. Once Ronald Reagan was in there, who called the Soviet Union the Evil Empire, and the U.S. financial aid was vastly increased and we finally sent something they had been asking for a long time—forty F16 jet fighters. And, eventually, of course, in 1986, we gave the mujahideen Stinger missiles, which put them in the title battle there.

But all this was done through the CIA, and it was the largest operation the CIA has ever mounted, this one with the ISI to defeat the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. There were also U.S. Army Special Forces that were there as well, and these CIA officers and special forces all worked at the operational level in the ISI in Pakistan, of course. Billions of dollars in arms, U.S. dollars, went to the mujahideen militants. The ISI and Pakistan basically demanded control. I have seen stories in coverage that the CIA was skittish and didn't want to go in there. That's really, I don't think that's true. I think that this was an arrangement that the Pakistanis demanded.

And—anyway, the covert operation was called Operation Cyclone. And a lot of the money had to be funded—well, really two ways the CIA and ISI worked out the financing—one was a big bank. It was called the Bank of Credit and Commerce International belonged to the Bank of England, but this branch of it, the BCCI—we'll just call it the BCCI—was based in Pakistan. It was the largest Muslim bank in the world. It financed just about every major terrorist network in the world within a few years—before it got closed. It was very closely connected to the ISI and, of course, it was one way the CIA could funnel money to the mujahideen.

Another, very lucrative source, that the CIA and ISI worked together on, was to boost opium production that financed covert operations. Again, because of its position in the middle, the result was that the ISI's power grew by a quantum leap. This is nothing new, by the way. Going back to World War II, even before the CIA existed, its OSS precursors and OPC—Office of Policy Coordination precursors—used narcotics to finance operations against the regimes that the enemy, in World War II, and then again, to help prop up and the regimes we wanted, like in Italy, and to stop the common sale is drug money. It's just not the first rodeo for it being used on a large scale. The CIA was directly involved with the ISI in doing that because it was so lucrative.

And, just to tie up the one loose end here about the CIA's deal where they're going to—give advice to their counterparts in the ISI, but they're not going to be in there. This is the backyard of Pakistan, as far as they're concerned, and nobody's going to touch it. They're going to do it. I've seen reports that said there were fewer than 10 American operatives in the region because it feared it would be blamed, US feared it would be blamed like in Guatemala. I don't think they ever minded being blamed for Guatemala. It's one of their star operations.

Anyway, we had ways of getting people in there. And one of them, to give you an example. The CIA still needed to know. So, they did not—they did break this arrangement, but the way they did that was covertly. In other words, they didn't ask permission—Oh, can I go in there today? They would send somebody who would appear to have no connection to anything who would get in there. It would have to be basically posing as a an extremist Islamic militant. We wanted to get into the northern front. Go up there and talk to Islam and so on and see what was happening. And, believe it or not, one of the most well-known terrorists for Al-Qaeda, his story, his triple agent is Ali Mohammed (Laughs). And we could go on with him, you

know, for a day. But, while he was working at the JFK School, he decided he was going to go to Afghanistan, which is against all the rules. You can't go. And he was ordered not to go and he did anyway. And then he came back and they wrote him up. They wanted to give him an Article 15 and all those—the paperwork disappears. It went into what we call File 13 in the Government. Right? He was protected by the Central Intelligence Agency. I'm pretty sure about that. I can't prove it, of course, because they're not letting us see all the memos on this.

But he was completely untouchable and he went up there right at the crucial time when—we needed eyes on the ground and he brought back—a couple of belts that Soviet soldiers he said he killed, and showed them off at school, at the warfare school. And, so, he was able to do that. He spoke the language. He was an American citizen. He married an American woman that was on the plane with him when he first got to the United States. So, he was an American citizen. He was walking around up there and was able to—I'm certain of it—provide that information to a very thirsty bunch of people who wanted to know how all this money was being spent and what was really going on, as a check against what they were being told by their counterparts in the ISI.

So, anyway, what are we talking about here? The mujahideen.

JON The CIA's relationship to the ISI.

JOHN Yeah. And what they're doing is not sort of the—British boxing. You know, it's this is terrorism. It's not called that because they're freedom fighters, right, for countries that have been raided. (Right) And, but we're talking about their main modus operandi was sabotage and assassination operations—not just against the military, but the civilian targets too. They attack convoys, bridges, roads, power lines, pipelines, radio stations, police stations, office buildings, air terminals, hotels, cinemas, and any other soft civilian targets they could. And so in another world we call that terrorism.

During a typical day in the border region with Pakistan the "muj" would launch 800 rockets between April '85 and January they carried out 23,000 shelling attacks on Government targets not military. They placed their own firing positions in or near little villages within range of Soviet artillery post that Soviet retaliation would cause civilian deaths.

And when my son, who had two tours up there, with the Mountain Division they had the same problem. The Taliban were always, you know, within a hundred yards of a little village that had kids in it.

The mujahideen assassinated a lot of people, pro regime Afghan political leaders. These were five main groups that this is reminiscent of what we know about Al-Qaeda. They would study their target for a long time, for months and months, before they—killed the person.

Anyway, this is what I call Frankenstein. We created Frankenstein through the ISI to crash the Soviet Union basically. And the problem is that even before it is over, you know, in mid-87 the Soviet Union announced it was going to withdraw its forces. And that didn't happen till February 9, but by that time, everybody knew what was going on so the Islamic jihadists in Afghanistan were already laying plans to implement these calls to worldwide jihad. And Frankenstein was coming home to its creators, the evil say the American homeland.

And, so, what grew out of the CIA ISI cooperation in Afghanistan, led directly to the rest of the story which was already underway while the last two years are being played out. Azzam is the guy. Azzam is the guy who set up the apparatus, who was very popular, had spent, you know, all that time on the northern front in Afghanistan, and he set up and attended, personally, here in the United States, the first conference of jihad in Brooklyn at the Al Farooq Mosque and founded the Alkifah network—that's a refugee, sort of, network in New York and other major U.S. cities. In mid-1987, was when the Soviet forces announced they were going up and by '88 Azzam is here in the United States attending these big and promoting a worldwide jihad and starting to raise money.

There are other people who enter the story, which probably don't have time to go into—Wadih el Hage and Mahmud Aboualima. Wadih el Hage was later arrested for the U.S. embassy bombings in 98. Aboualima was in the Brooklyn cell. He was arrested for the first Trade Center attack.

Anyway, they were out at an Islamic conference in 1988, in summer of '88 in Oklahoma City. So, even as things wind down, the whole worldwide jihad thing is being launched and so, at various points—a long story—you keep seeing the ISI involved. For example, everybody in terrorism studies knows about Ramzi Yousef. The real story is that we had a guy inside the cell, the Brooklyn cell, who pretty much—a state trooper who ends up

taking over the counterterrorism branch in the FBI in New York doesn't like him. And, so, we lose our eyes and ears and he's inside the cell and he was going to be their bomber. Right? He was going to turn them all in but, well. So, he goes out and Yousef replaces him.

Well, Yousef is connected to shake up the Little Ramen and Al-Qaeda at that very time. And when he gets in here, it's a long story, he has a stooge with him who makes a scene at the airport—but, anyway, their passports had been provided to them by the ISI. And so it all—we have a long story in between the Afghanistan piece and when things fire up for jihad and 9/11. There's a lot of years in there and a lot of stories to tell that all were points on a line meant to attack us. And, so, without getting into each and every one of those in our conversation today, always lurking in the background are people connected to Al-Qaeda and in Pakistan. The fact that bin Laden was a Saudi is less important than where he ended up—was after a short time in Afghanistan and then he was in Sudan and then back in Afghanistan and then in Pakistan.

JON Well, one of the—

JOHN —Saudi Arabia.

JON I'm sorry, one of the things that you mentioned was that you had seen statements before showing that there were problems between the CIA and the ISI or that the CIA was reluctant and so on and so forth. But, I think it was in May of 2001, somebody by the name of Selig Harrison had spoken about the extensive ties that we still had between the CIA and the ISI. And another thing that you reminded me of, the drone strikes in Pakistan, you know, publicly the politicians argue against it—because the people of Pakistan hate them. So, the politicians publicly denounce them. But behind the scenes—Pakistan's intelligence is giving information to the CIA to be able to kill people.

So, you know, when you hear that there's a problem in the relationships between the CIA and the ISI, I just—I question that.

JOHN Yeah, I was actually saying something a little bit different than that, but I agree with what you just said—that the CIA was skittish about being involved at all in this Afghanistan war and was much happier to have the ISI take care of everything. I don't think so. I think they would have preferred to have had much freer rein to move people around, assets

around, inside Afghanistan. So, I don't believe that they were skittish about it at all. I think that was the deal. I think that the Pakistani side, the ISI, and the leadership at any one point in time—that will even include Bhutto before Musharraf got in there—wanted it that way. They didn't want the CIA to be pulling all the strings. They wanted their money. And sure, if there was some information they could provide them, but Pakistan. So, I just, I think the CIA had to take that deal. Is what I'm saying. And, then they would break it. So, they would send their own covert people around in there, like Ali Mohamed, trying to figure out—what was happening.

But, the relationship was certainly not troubled at the beginning. They were all on the same page, right? They had to defeat the Soviet Union in there. It was after Frankenstein came home, here, and started banging us on the head here, there, and all over the place, more places than people know about—some of the stuff is still classified and being withheld—that the problem starts to develop. And, it certainly got worse as you get closer to 9/11, because a lot of people start knowing what's going on and—Mahmood Ahmed, General Ahmed, ISI chief, has to play it real careful, because he doesn't want to let—his counterpart, which would be the head of the CIA, know what's coming or that he knows what's coming.

So, it gets awkward, you know, as you get into 1999 and 2000 and 2001, but certainly not back then. You've got a long time between '89 when the Soviet Union pulls out and 9/11—12 years.

JON

One of the things that happened after 9/11 is that it seemed that Americans forgot that the ISI had connections to terrorism. In fact, that knowledge was protected for many years. (Yeah) It wasn't until within the last five or six years that they finally started to acknowledge it, but they've known about it for years. Just like with Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is the chief financiers of Al- Qaeda. And—this is nothing new to us. We've protected that knowledge. We protected it prior to 9/11. We hindered investigations into Saudi financing prior to 9/11. We did the same thing after 9/11. We continued to protect Saudi Arabia and we also protected, I think, the Pakistani ISI.

So, after 9/11 there was a report that came out that said Lieutenant General Mahmood Ahmed, who was then head of the Pakistani ISI, ordered Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh to wire transfer a hundred thousand dollars to Mohamed Atta. Now, after that report came out, over the course of several months and maybe years, the blaming of Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh—that

story went away. And then a bunch of different paymasters were put forward using variations of his name, which was very confusing. Can you tell us about this?

JOHN

Yeah. Let's see here, let me go to where I want to go. Yeah, I like to call it a shell game. Basically, you have—like a guy with two shells and you never know where the real thing is under which shell. It starts—this shell game began immediately after the 9/11 attacks and continues up to December. So, it takes place over about a three-month period in time and there are four acts involved. And, it's an amazing story. I think it helps when you understand this. It helps you get your arms around why we're covering up so many things.

One of the nice things about a huge event like 9/11 is that the official Government spokespersons are compelled, literally, to stand before the TV cameras and go on television, and all the talk shows on a daily basis. And, for a long while, I mean all day, on the cable TV networks that's what you would be seeing. And so it's interesting that a lot of the times they're telling the truth. Until they figure out that there's something that they didn't know that is really, really got to be held down. And that's really what characterizes this whole shell game. There comes a point in time when they figure out that it is Omar Saeed Sheikh. So, you have a story that takes place before that which reflects basically what they thought for real. And then they get to a point where they figure out what the truth is and that has to be suppressed. And then, when it is suppressed, they come up with yet the final act, another false name, to go to the top of the FBI's wanted list. So that's the overview of it.

But the first paymaster—they knew right away—they found out from the United Arab Emirates in Dubai. That's where all the money was coming from to Atta and the hijackers. And they came up—the first paymaster was an Egyptian—they thought. And his name was Mustafa Ahmed—excuse me, actually, let me just back up. The name, the alias of the Dubai paymaster was Mustafa Ahmed al-Hawsawi. And, so, this guy, this first guy, an Egyptian his name was Mustafa Ahmed. So, it's got a Mustafa in it and it's got an Ahmed in it. So, why not? Right? It sounds similar to the alias. Anyway, that was on September 24th. We're talking about two weeks out, less than two weeks out from the attacks.

So, then anyway, *Newsweek* reports that this guy Mustafa Ahmed had sent money to hijackers and they're quoting a Government official and so on

about that story. His full name was Mustafa Mahmoud Saeed Ahmad. All right. But here's the thing. This is a fascinating story about who this guy really is. That is his name. But PBS *Frontline* after the 9/11 attacks, they had done an investigation—basically looking at, mostly, I think at the 1998 attacks on our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania—and they discovered that in November 1997, this guy Mustafa Mahmood Saeed Ahmed had walked into a U.S. embassy in Nairobi Kenya and told a CIA agent there that he knew of a "plan to detonate a truck bomb in a parking garage of the embassy." (Wow)

During his Kenyan interrogation, at the time, he told Kenyan police that he had "cased the embassy and photographed the building." *Frontline* then reports that for unknown reasons the CIA did not take Mr. Ahmed statements seriously. The CIA issued two intelligence reports on Ahmed's warning that called into question his credibility. Ahmed was merely deported.

But Ahmed's story does not stop there. A year later in 1998 he shows up in Tanzania where he organizes the transfer of funds from Middle East Bank to the Saudi financed Greenland Bank of Tanzania to bankroll the embassy bombings. So, apparently, this financial work that he did then was what the post 9/11 press briefings were thinking about when they thought he could be the paymaster, as well as the two parts of his name that seemed to be close to the Dubai alias. Anyway, after his arrest, the Tanzanian Government says Mustafa's either the mastermind behind the bombing or is the key person in the bombing conspiracy and they lock him up in the Congo maximum security prison.

Well, if that's where the story would end, it would be just—bad silly CIA not taking the story seriously. But here's what happens. Less than a year later in mid-1999, without warning and without fully explaining the reasons, the Tanzanian prosecutors dropped all charges against Ahmed, released him from jail, and bought them a one-way ticket to Cairo. In a post-9/11 press briefing a U.S. Government official stated that it was Ahmed in Dubai that 9/11 pilot Moḥammad Atta mailed the package from Florida a week before the attack.

So, here's the first paymaster, a really—I'm sure they would like to have gotten even with him but—three days later, after announcing that he was our guy, his name simply disappears from the 9/11 investigation. And U.S. commentators, officials they didn't say publicly why they dropped them in

favor of another Egyptian Al-Qaeda operative whose name was Sheikh Saeed.

So, this is Act Two. On October 1st U.S. investigators announced they found a smoking gun linking bin Laden to the 9/11 attacks. They told the *Guardian* that his name was Sheikh Saeed, an Egyptian, also known as Mustafa Mohamed Ahmad. The same day, BBC quotes FBI sources saying the same thing—that the paymaster was Mustafa Mohamed Ahmad also known as Sheikh Saeed. So, we'll call this guy paymaster #2.

Neither story points out that this Egyptian was not the man arrested in Tanzania named Mustafa Mahmud Saeed. And you can see how U.S. Reporters might have their eyeballs rolling back in their heads with all these names. Both stories say the U.S. investigators believe that the paymaster, Mustafa Mohamed Ahmad had worked as a financial manager for bin Laden while the Al-Qaeda chief was in Sudan, that he was still a trusted paymaster of Al-Qaida.

So, the BBC's coverage, likewise, dropped the first Egyptian Mustafa Mahmoud Saeed Ahmed for the new one, Mustafa Mohamed Ahmad. And that the ICE sources were happy to say that this is the guy, and because he is a trusted finance chief, this is it. This is how we can show—because Al-Qaeda didn't accept responsibility for quite some time for this thing—and this is how they could pin it, or apparently so, on bin Laden.

The thing is that this new identification was partly wrong and partly right. Mustafa Mohamed Ahmad #2 had indeed worked as a financial manager of bin Laden. However, he wasn't, as we now know, he wasn't the 9/11 paymaster, nor was he the Al-Qaeda finance chief, Sheik Saeed. The intriguing thing about the BBC story is they got a couple of things right. Bin Laden's finance chief was the Dubai paymaster. It was also correct in assessing the name Sheikh Saeed was an alias, but they apparently still didn't know at this point that it was one of the 17 aliases used by Omar Ahmed Saeed Sheikh. And he was exactly what bin Laden needed when he broke him out of jail.

We can get to that story elsewhere in the conversation here, because he was from the London School of Economics and bin Laden's finance chief had been arrested in the wake of the '98 bombings in Africa.

So, anyway, guess what happens? Very soon, Mustafa Mohamed Ahmad, just like #1 guy, Mustafa Mahmoud Saeed Ahmed before him, would be dropped as the Dubai paymaster. The 9/11 Commission report did not include either of these two Egyptians among the extensive list of those connected to the 9/11 plot. Names weren't even in the report.

But, for three brief days, in October 2001, paymaster #2 had become the FBI's choice for the 9/11 paymaster and Al-Qaeda's finance chief. So, the real news, actually, it was true, was that bin Laden's finance chief WAS the paymaster. All right, so they got the smoking gun at this point.

Then it becomes Omar, okay? He becomes the guy. And, I think, we should talk about that separately. We get to who's Omar and who's General Ahmed. It's a fascinating story. But, they find out on the 6th of October—in fact, I'll just do it quickly now, so that maybe—or maybe not—we won't have to come back to that.

JON Just so I understand, on October 6 Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh is named as the paymaster?

JOHN Correct. That's next. This is Act 3. (Okay) And that's when it happens. That's the first indication—well, of course, our Government knew, the FBI knew before that day, because it's the FBI team that makes the discovery. But our sources, they're really just three. And it takes place in a very short period of time. And then this whole story has to get killed. And you're right, October 6, CNN let's the first big surprise out, but it's not the whole story, but it's certainly part of it. And the most important part. They identify this Dubai alias Mustafa Ahmed al-Hawsawi as Omar Saeed Sheikh "the man released from prison and in the U.S. in two years to go after hijackers of an Indian Airlines flight and demanded his freedom." There's no doubt who we're talking about here. They've identified Omar Sheikh as the Dubai paymaster.

And so, that's Act #3. The second source is also CNN. Two days later, they include the \$100,000 dollar story. In other words, what happens is that Omar wires \$100,000 to Atta because they needed a little more money for all the reconnaissance flights and the final flights on the day of 9/11. And, so, this dovetails into that whole story about how they got that money. There's a—a kidnapping of a shoe businessman and so on, that—just going through, just trying to stay focused here on the main shell game. So, CNN 10-6 Omar is the paymaster. CNN 10-8, he wired \$100,000 dollars.

But it's not in CNN. What is not there is that the guy who ordered him to do it was the chief of the ISI, General Ahmed, it's the India times. One day later on the 9th that provides that detail. So from the 6 till the 9th, you've got three days in October where first we learn Omar is the paymaster; that he wired a hundred thousand dollars to a Atta; and that the person who instructed him to do that was the head of the ISI and the FBI found this out when they ran traces on Omar's or cell phone number 0 3 0 0 9 4 5 8 7 7 2; and they found out that beginning in July, that number was used often by Omar to communicate with the ISI chief. And as fast as that happened, that story was suppressed.

JON Well, it was originally broken by the *Times of India*, I believe, and then *Agence France-Presse*, I believe, confirmed the story.

JOHN That's because—

JON Everybody always says it was the *Times of India*. It's an Indian newspaper. You can't trust India when they're reporting on Pakistan and etc. and so on. But it was corroborated by Agence France-Presse, I believe.

JOHN Yeah, but what's the date of that, for Agence France-Presse?

JON Oh, I don't remember. I don't have it in front of me, I'm sorry.

JOHN Yeah, I've got them, too, but I don't have them beating CNN to the punch there. In other words, I'm looking at the very first moment that it became public. The India Times what I have is October the 9th. That's only one day after the second CNN thing. And the only way CNN is going to know about this isn't going to be from the India Times. It's going to be from the FBI. They're the ones who made the discovery. So, I don't know how soon *The India Times*, but certainly *The India Times* had no qualms talking about this because it is India. I agree with that much, but it doesn't make it not true.

JON Right, exactly. I found over the years that Indian reporting with regard to the ISI, generally, turns out to be accurate.

JOHN Good, yeah, because they had their phone lines tapped. [Laughs] They were pretty good. And the FBI got in on the action.

Anyway, let me just finish out the name shell game thing, so we can focus on other aspects of this whole big story. So, and we can—the explanation for why it has to be suppressed is because Omar had been a double agent working for MI6. We can talk about this in more detail and when it happened and so on, but that's what he had been and that's what they thought—that we had a highly placed source reporting to Western intelligence at the top levels of Al-Qaeda.

But, it turns out, he's not a double agent. It's what we call in the business a triple agent. He has been feeding—a triple agent must feed the agency that he's been doubled by, in this case the Brits. He's got to be feeding them good stuff for them to keep buying. Ali Mohamed did that to us, too. He was a triple agent.

So, this is a big like got-you-between-the-eyes. And it took all of 72 hours before the CIA and the White House were on top of this thing to suppress it.

So, the final act in this is a Saudi businessman and, without going through all the details, it's a silly story. There's two small fragments in a Irish publication—that's the only basis for it. But anyway, they hang it on a fourth guy. And, at the same time, and this is another part of the story I know you want to talk about, is finally when the United States secretly indicts Omar for a 1994 kidnapping of an American in India. So, they secretly invite him and just banish him from the story by going to the fourth and final name, which goes to the top of the list of the FBI's Most Wanted.

The thing is, by the time we get to the 9/11 Commission report, that name's gone too. And there's all kinds of monkey business in the 9/11 report when it comes to this story about Omar and the paymaster and so on and so forth.

But, anyway, it was a four-part, four acts, of a play where very briefly the truth was discovered, it was shared with the public, and then just as fast suppressed by the highest level, not just the CIA—by President Bush himself.

JON

Okay. You mentioned that he was a triple agent (Yes) and that he was working for MI6, as well as the ISI. I have some news accounts with regard to this.

"When FBI agents questioned Sheikh earlier this month about his relationship with the ISI, Sheikh's answers were elliptical.

'I will not discuss this subject' one source quoted him as saying. "I do not want my family to be killed.' "

And this was *Newsweek* March 13, 2002.

"There are many in Musharraf's Government who believe that Saeed Sheikh's power comes not from the ISI, but from his own connections with our own CIA."

And that was the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*.

JOHN Yeah, I've seen the *Pittsburgh Review*, but I don't agree with it. I think it's a — (Yeah, I don't think —) It's not logical. We would have wanted to, we would have loved to have run him as our double. But it didn't make any sense. The guy was already a Brit and had access to, you know, the moms there that were fundamentalists and with the Al-Hadid. This is a terrorist group in Britain. And, so, he had all—he had a cover. He could go to England to visit his parents. Right? So, he had a wonderful cover to work MI6. It made a lot more sense that MI6 would run him than the CIA. But, certainly, the CIA was beneficiary of what MI6 was learning.

So, you have—we share at very high levels with the Brits in not just in human intelligence, but other of the intelligence, the INTS like SIGINT and those things—very sensitive things.

So, he is—oh, by the way, I know it's a question you have put on your list that, you know, Musharraf said this, too, in his book *In the Line of Fire*, which I have read. I have that book, but Musharraf calls him a double agent and that just shows you that Musharraf is more of a general than he is an intelligence practitioner. He certainly knows a lot about it because he's running the country. But, look, let's start off with just an agent.

An agent is working for an intelligence agency in a country. Now, when you become a double agent, you have become recruited by an agency usually of another power, whether it's still friendly, like it could be a European country or some other U.S. agent. So, if he's doubled, he could be doubled by even a friendly power who report to them or to a hostile power—Soviet Union or—Pakistan or, whoever. That's a double agent.

But a triple agent is one who in his act, or her, activities as a double agent is actually working for the other side all along and is simply feeding you good

stuff so that his bona fides will be accepted. Otherwise, they can't get away with it. So, we've had some really famous ones. There's Ali Mohamed, the most celebrated triple agent. But it is still a matter of national security that Omar Ahmed Saeed Sheikh was the biggest one of all because it's got 9/11 on the other end of it. (Right) And it's very embarrassing for MI6 and the CIA. It's embarrassing for the ISI. It's embarrassing for Pakistan. And we're trying to go into Afghanistan, we and the British, right? (Right)

In the days after, this huge discovery has been made. We're airdropping people in there. And, for Musharraf it's like a dagger in his hands here. He gets a phone call from the deputy secretary of state that basically says: "We will bomb you into the stone age unless you do X Y and Z." That's why you get the title the book: *In the Line of Fire*.

So, yeah, it's really, really a crossover point. We find out that he was a triple all along. That we had misplayed him. Just like we had misplayed Ali Mohamed. And it's terrible. We have a terrible, terrible record of getting rid of good doubles and being fooled by double agents who are actually triples.

And there's another one—this is the other one we'll go into today—that has to do with Oklahoma City. It took me about 15-20 years to figure out. And those are the most sensitive stories of all. And you can't try. Why hasn't it been tried? You can have a real trial of a triple agent, or even a double agent, without blowing the doors off of all the case officers that have been involved.

JON Well, that's one instance. You know, after—okay, this is an interesting story to me. After 9/11, after Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh was named as the paymaster, we indicted him for a crime that he committed years prior. So, it was obvious that the U.S. wanted him, but they did not want to tie him to 9/11.

JOHN Right, it had to be suppressed.

JON Exactly.

Now, with regard to the shell game, as you refer to it—

JOHN Can I expand on that point you just made, just really briefly, and we'll get back to the shell game? (Sure)

So, "national security" quote unquote is the politically expedient that made it necessary to decouple Omar from 9/11, but the United States had no intention to let him get off scot free and getting away with all this stuff. So, that's why when they decide to go ahead with the indictment, they hang him for something he should've been indicted for all along. Right? He should have been indicted right away for that (Right). He was never indicted. He wasn't indicted or tried in India after they break him out of prison. He's allowed to walk a free man all over England. And the families are outraged for the people who died, Brits who died, because of his activities. He's never indicted anywhere—in India, in Great Britain, or the United States. All this time, until after 9/11. (Right) So, it's a secret indictment and it's not until November, mid-November that they indict him. They go a whole month before they finally work out this 4th Act, and the shell game, and then secretly indict him. And it's not released. The indictment isn't publicly released until late February 2002. The pearl thing is already going on. It's too late. It doesn't matter; Omar's never being extradited.

But, here's the kicker. Who is trying to get him to come here? It's the Justice Department and the FBI. And the problem is the White House won't buy. They—the story is that they had been leaning on the National Security Council trying to get him extradited and, actually, the CIA doesn't want that. It was the Justice Department trying to do it. The CIA knows the whole skinny. They don't want it and neither does President Bush. And so they're happy not to be bringing him back here and there can't be a trial. And we don't want him to talk.

So, he's not going to say anything to the FBI. And I think that's pretty perfunctory. It just was one interview. So, the U.S. people never got to talk to him—just once. And he's got—they don't want to kill him either for a couple of reasons. I'm talking about the Pakistanis, because number one, he still has information that they want. And number two, there's a lot of reason why he will continue to play that game. I'm certain that the only people he's talked to and said anything truthful to about all these past stories are going to be Pakistani intelligence.

JON Right, like people Ejaz Shah and so forth.

JOHN Yeah, I think, I don't think he's going to talk to anybody else. And I think everybody's happy with that—in London and Washington.

JON Well, okay. Now, with regard to the different variations of his name, I was going through a monograph from the 9/11 Commission. It's called the 9/11 Terrorist Financing Monograph. And I found a name in there for a financier of Al-Qaeda that was very similar to Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh. And it says.

"Before 9/11 Al-Qaeda was reportedly highly organized, with a committee structure that included the Finance Committee. Credible evidence indicates that Bin Laden played a significant role in planning each operation and was very attentive to financial matters. Other than Bin Laden, the person with the most important role in Al-Qaeda financing was reportedly Sheikh Qari Sa'id. Sa'id, a trained accountant, had worked with Bin Laden in the late 1980s when they fought together in Afghanistan and then for one of Bin Laden's companies in Sudan in the early to mid-1990s. Sa'id was apparently notoriously tightfisted with Al-Qaeda's money. Operational leaders may have occasionally bypassed Sa'id and the Finance Committee and requested funds directly from Bin Laden. Al-Qaeda members apparently financed themselves for day-to-day expenses and relied on the central organization only for operational expenses."

And that is from the 9/11 Commission monograph on terrorist financing.

Now, again, I looked him up—Sheikh Qari Sa'id. I can't find a damn thing about him anywhere.

JOHN Right, he's number four. This is Act #4. I've lost my notes here. I have so much stuff getting ready for this interview today. But, yeah, look Omar was the guy running the finances from the time he got out of jail, he went straight to bin Laden. And he was put at the very apex of the organization. He was, overnight, placed on the Majlis ê Shura with bin Laden. Bin Laden called him my special son. He was the heir apparent, going to be the heir apparent to succeed bin Laden.

JON Right. I remember reading that.

JOHN So—and here's what his folder, what he takes care of. First thing that happens is he has to, he breaks ranks with Azhar—the guy that he hooked up with, the terrorist, in prison. He was trying to spring Azhar out when he

got caught, and he got put in prison way back in '94. So, he's back now and he breaks with Azhar for various reasons, he didn't like him.

Incidentally, Azhar formed a new—that was Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), I forget the expansion of that. It was his original group. He forms a new one—Jaish-e-Mohammed at this time, when Omar overhauls Al-Qaeda. And Azhar makes this—founds this movement, actually, at the Binori town mosque in Karachi. You know, that's the one Pearl was caught sneaking around in, by the way.

Anyway, Omar now is out from under Azhar. Initially, he is reporting directly to Abu Zubaydah, the operations chief, but his portfolio, that's what it would say, quickly becomes significant. He overhauls the entire financial network of Al-Qaeda, all the logistics networks, and the communications networks. He's also given responsibility for international liaison with the Hezbollah, the Sudanese National Front, and the UK, and he's also a liaison from the ISI to these various groups in Afghanistan. In connection with his financial overhaul, he does a couple of things. Number one, sets up a mini-stock exchange from a computer in the Kandahar safehouse with online access to worldwide stock exchanges. Why does he do that? Because when they're going to sell short any equities that would be most damaged, like insurance companies, because of the 9/11 attack. There are all kinds of financial things going on that have been looked into by people who've been stopped, because it would show that that had happened. He designed a new secure encrypted web-based communication system for finances and communications generally for Al-Qaeda. And, to bring in even more money, he took control of an overhaul and improved the whole opium, the whole narcotics trafficking thing. And that's why there was talk that he would one day succeed bin Laden. He operated across the entire front of Al-Qaeda's operations. (Right) He was in a great position to feed us real information, sell out some guys—they do that. And then—keep the big one, keep the lid on the big one for 9/11.

So, I think that the way the 9/11 Commission report got around this stuff was to not connect various aliases that, just like you said, when you go try and find them out, they don't seem to be born anywhere and have a past. And try not to say something that is an outright lie, but just to not say stuff to give you the appearance that it is what it isn't.

So, I am with you. I don't think this guy exists at all. I think it was just the end of the whole shell game. They had to come up with something. They'd

already dumped the first two guys and they ran into Omar. It became necessary to figure out how we're going to handle it. And they did. And the 9/11 Commission, basically, has obscured this part of the story, too.

JON

Well, let me comment on the 9/11 Commission for a minute. This is an entry from HistoryCommons.org. It's June 20, 2004. 9/11 Commission figure says Pakistan was "up to their eyeballs" with Taliban and Al-Qaeda.

"An unnamed senior staff member" on the 9/11 Commission tells the *Los Angeles Times* that, before 9/11, Pakistani officials were "up to their eyeballs" in collaboration with the Taliban and al-Qaeda. As an example, this source says of bin Laden moving to Afghanistan in 1996, "He wouldn't go back there without Pakistan's approval and support, and had to comply with their rules and regulations." From "day one," the ISI helped al-Qaeda set up an infrastructure, and jointly operated training camps. The article further notes that what the commission will publicly say on this is just the "tip of the iceberg" of the material they've been given on the matter.

Now, there was a last-minute document given to the 9/11 Commission, apparently. And this is according to *The Washington Times*. It's a report from July 22, 2004.

"According to *The Washington Times*, 'On the eve of the publication of the report, the 9/11 Commission was given a stunning document from Pakistan claiming that Pakistani intelligence officers knew in advance of the 9/11 attacks.' "

Now, are you familiar with the Jersey Girls and so forth?

JOHN

No, I'm familiar with that they did know before the fact.

JON

Well, okay. The family—the Jersey Girls were the four widows responsible for the creation of the 9/11 Commission. (Oh, okay) They were Lorie Van Auken, Mindy Kleinberg, Patty Casazza, and Kristen Breitweiser. And, they submitted a question to the 9/11 Commission about this very incident. And this is a report from *The Washington Times*.

"On May 15, 2003, a group of 9/11 victims' relatives met with the commission co-chairman Thomas Kean and other senior

staff and submitted a list of questions, which included a mention of Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed. On June 17, 2004, the New York Times reported that Lorie Van Auken, whose husband died in the World Trade Center, was 'irate' that the June 16 commission narrative of the 9/11 attacks did not even mention the allegation about Ahmed's role in the \$100,000 transfer to Mohammed Atta. Clearly, the ISI link is no mere conspiracy theory."

And the *NYTimes* piece said:

"Ms. Van Auken was irate that there was no mention of an accusation that General Mahmud Ahmed, the head of Pakistan's intelligence services, ordered the transfer of \$100,000 to Mr. Atta."

Now, Thomas Kean was confronted about the \$100,000 wire transfer in 2006, and he said he wasn't even aware of it, which is a little ridiculous to think because it was a pretty big story. A lot of people were promoting it and so on and so forth.

Now, there was one document from the 9/11 Commission—a Memoranda for the Record for Adam Drucker, an FBI agent from May 19, 2004, and in that document it says: "There is absolutely no evidence Atta received a wire transfer from the Pakistani ISI. There is no unexplained wire transfer or any unexplained funds at all."

But before this quote and after this quote, it's highly redacted, and their names aren't even mentioned. Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed or Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh. So, I, you know, I don't trust the 9/11 Commission. We've gone over this on my show before. They were completely corrupt and compromised. So, you're right. They did not address the issue. They wouldn't even say—I've never once heard an official in the American Government explain why this is untrue. If it isn't true. I've NEVER heard anybody explain why.

So, with that, why don't we get into the next question. Who are General Mahmud Ahmed and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh? And, you kind of pretty much explained who Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh was.

JOHN

Which one did you want me to start with?

JON The Lieutenant General Mahmoud Ahmed. Who was that guy?

JOHN Okay, yes, yes. Well, in the interest of time, just to try and hit the high points, we should begin with the coup in 1999, that put him into power. It's an ironic thing. The way it happened was, he was kind of responsible and didn't intend this to happen, but he goaded his Prime Minister to go into Kashmir. And, when the Prime Minister did that, it kind of blew up his face and Clinton, basically, told him—that if you guys don't stop this, we're going to go world-wide public with all the terrorist stuff you guys are into. And this touched off a really bad blood between—I'm looking for the name of the guy that was ousted here, too many names—in any event, so, what happened was.

JON Sharif, wasn't it Sharif?

JOHN Yeah, Sharif, exactly, Sharif. And, so Sharif is going to fire Musharraf and the generals for having—he's going to blame them on this thing. So, that's how it starts. And Musharraf finds out. Because one of the top generals calls him out of the country and tells him this is going to happen and so Musharraf hops on a plane. He's chief of Pakistan's army at the time, by the way. He's the second in command.

And, so he gets the call from Lieutenant General Mohammed Aziz Khan who coordinates the coup on the ground with Musharraf on the way and, it's either that or get rid of Musharraf too. So, Musharraf is going to be taken over. They're afraid that Sharif has buckled under the United States and they're afraid that's going to happen in the future. They don't really know everything about Musharraf, but he's going to be the guy.

So, Aziz Khan has been the staunchest defender of the Taliban while working for the ISI, one of the most pious Islamist generals. In the heat of the coup, Aziz Khan works with the commander of the 10th corps, Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed. That's our guy we're talking about here. Also an Islamist who ordered troops from nearby Rawalpindi there, you know, the Capitol. The coup almost failed when the air controllers at the Karachi airport refused to let Musharraf's plane land. It had no gas left. But they changed their mind when another general, General Usmani, the Karachi corps commander took control of the airport and surrounded the control tower.

So, while Musharraf himself was probably not an extremist Islamist, the generals who put him there in power clearly were. Aziz Khan remained the Army Chief of General Staff, second in rank after Musharraf himself. And further roles in the coup as Usmani became Army deputy chief of staff and Mahmud Ahmed became chief of the ISI. One of the first acts of Musharraf as the new ruler was to cancel the top secret mission being planned by the CIA to send commandos into Afghanistan to capture bin Laden. So that's how the guy comes into power.

And, they cut off the CIA-planned mission to capture bin Laden. I would fast-forward to spring 2000. This is where things really go south between the ISI and the CIA. The story is, the short version, that Mahmud becomes—and this is what they said in Pakistan—"a born-again Muslim" and to just cut to the chase here, rather than use all the details, he actually comes to Washington and has a falling out with the State Department and he's given a dressing down and he goes back to Pakistan and basically cuts off the CIA. And there are no longer—this is 2000 now, in the spring of 2000—basically, the CIA is no longer able to plug in the ISI at the operational level.

The next major thing I would put in his story is it looks like he's anticipating the attack by April 2001. He, apparently, attempted to have Musharraf assassinated. Musharraf lived through that. And, also, he...

JON Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed tried to assassinate Musharraf?

JOHN Yes. That there was an assassination attempt that the ISI was involved in. And this was in the spring because they were already fearful that Musharraf was not going to be able—they wanted him out of the way before 9/11. And—I can't prove that, but I have a lot of details here that I could refer to in support of that. So, we'll just call that a possible or probable. But there's more pieces to this.

So, he—Mahmud—goes to Afghanistan to meet Mullah Omar, the head of the Taliban, and plead with him to get bin Laden out of there. Because they know that the attack is coming. And so, there's going to be reprisals—the Americans are going to go nuts. And so the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Abdullah and General Mahmud Ahmed, the ISI, they go there together to try and get Mullah Omar to get rid of bin Laden, and this is still in the spring. So, in addition to an assassination attempt on

Musharraf, they're in there also trying to get bin Laden out of the way and Mullah Omar refuses. Says, he's our guest and so on.

So, there's a couple other things that happened, too, but—so, what happens in the end is that they—George Tenet goes over there to Islamabad. He meets with—he invites him to come back to the United States to work things out. Right. George Tenet is the head of the CIA at the time and things have gone into a glacial freeze. And so he's invited to come to Washington to meet with the CIA and other senior leaders in September 2001. And he doesn't say no. For him to say no would have raised antennae. So, he has to accept.

And, so, he comes to Washington and on the morning of September 11, 2001, at 8:00 o'clock, he's having a quiet breakfast with Representative Porter Goss and other members of the House Intelligence Committee. A Chairman of two Congressional intelligence committees were talking. He had Porter Goss and Senator Bob Graham talking to him. And, while they're talking—and they're talking about terrorism, especially generated from Afghanistan, says Graham. Anyway.

So, somebody walks in with a note and Porter Goss looks at it, hands it to Graham. It said: "A plane just hit the World Trade Center." Goss fervently scribbles a reply and asked for to find out more. So, while they're waiting to find out more, you know, they're talking some more with Mahmud. He was very empathetic, very sympathetic to the people of the United States, he said. I'll tell you, this is an acting performance worthy of an award, because you have to wonder what's going through his mind as he absorbs the news. You know, he understands, he has to understand there's an attack underway. Was he—the Americans wouldn't know he was behind the ransom money that had been sent to Atta for the plane that just flew into the Trade Center. (Right)

So, within moments—it's another plane and so on, and then they cancel the meeting. Anyway, he's actually physically sitting here with our top guys in Congress during the attack.

JON

Well, it also should be said that prior to 9/11, those same individuals that were meeting with him on the day of 9/11 met with him in Pakistan in the weeks prior to 9/11. Also, during the week of 9/11 in Washington D.C., he met with individuals from the Pentagon and unspecified individuals at the White House, and so on and so forth.

So, then we get to 9/11 and the news about Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh being the paymaster comes out. Then the news that he did so under the orders of Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed. Then what happens?

JOHN It's crushed, the story's crushed.

JON Well, but I mean I'm talking about Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed. Musharraf sacks him.

JOHN Oh, okay, so Musharraf, yeah, sacks him. He fires him. But what's really interesting about it is the excuse he uses—for being involved with the Taliban. Like everybody in Pakistan is involved with the Taliban, you know? (Right) So, it's a silly excuse.

JON And it was reported that it was due to U.S. pressure.

JOHN Yeah, in the newspapers, but not what Musharraf said. Musharraf's excuse, public excuse, was that he had been supporting the Taliban. One of the Indian newspapers, maybe even a Pakistani newspaper, said it was done because of CIA pressure or American pressure. You're right. And I'm sure it's true. I'm sure it's true. It could have, it could have been the under secretary of state who threatened to bomb them back into the Stone Age if he didn't do what he was told.

JON Well, to my knowledge, nobody in the FBI, none of the investigations that have taken place, any of them, have ever spoken to Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed. I would think that they would at least like to talk with him—or maybe put him under a polygraph and so forth, but that's never happened.

JOHN At the time, you've got to realize who's in the White House, and that's Bush and that's not going to happen while he's there. (Right) And Cheney, you know

JON Right, I know.

Now, there are a few stories about when and where Atta received the \$100,000 dollars from Sheikh. What is the most likely scenario? And I believe it has to do with Ansari?

JOHN Yeah, the guy that Omar met in prison back in '94. His real—that's an alias. His real name was Aftab Malik, but to broadly address the question you're asking about the scenario, the ransom scenario. I've got several sources that I rely on. One of the earlier ones is a German internal security service. Their informants told them that Omar Said Sheikh had sent a draft of \$100,000 dollars to Atta. How would they know? Because they had, they were infiltrating the Hamburg cell, you know, way back when Atta was there. So, there are German sources that also carry the story as getting it not from the FBI or the Indians, from their own informants. German internal security service.

Then you have the big break we've been talking about—the FBI team, the first week of October, finds out about it, as reflected as we said in the CNN stories and also *India Times* during those few days. But there is another chapter to this, which is *The Los Angeles Times* in late January of 2002. It resurfaces because there's another attack that's carried out. This isn't the one that takes place in early October, by the way, that Omar and Ahmed are involved in that one. So, but there's another one against the United States, I guess it's the U.S. I.A. office in India in Calcutta.

And the story is that it's pulled off by the same people that were used for the ransom payments, the bankroll of September 11 strikes, in America. And, this story is extensive. It tells a lot of the story about Saeed Sheikh, the real Omar, him being the one who sent the money to Atta, the \$100,000 dollars. But, it's curious, they leave out one thing. They do not mention that Ahmed, the ISI chief, was behind it and ordered it. Even though they're basing their story on *India Today*, which is a magazine. And there are two articles in *India Today*, January 8th and February 2nd. They do mention the ISI chief's role in it.

So, the *LATimes* runs this story on 22 January, 2002, puts everything in there, except for General Ahmed's role, which is strange. I mean, they had to be aware of it, but they deleted that part of the story.

JON Well, there's one thing you mentioned that they took part—the same individuals, Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, and so forth—took part in a terrorist attack against the United States you said? And—

JOHN Yeah, and this is in 2002.

JON Okay. We should point out that on October 1, 2001, this is an entry from HistoryCommons. Kashmir Suicide Attack Involves 9/11 Funder Saeed Sheikh. And it says.

"A suicide truck-bomb attack on the provincial parliamentary assemble in Indian-controlled Kashmir leaves 36 dead. It appears that Saeed Sheikh and Aftab Ansari [the people who were involved in the kidnapping of the shoe salesman where they got the money to send the \$100 thousand dollars], working with the ISI are behind the attacks."

And that's according to *Pittsburgh Tribune Review* and *Vanity Fair*:

"Indian intelligence claims that Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf is later given a recording of a phone call between Jaish-e-Mohammed leader Maulana Masood Azhar and ISI Director Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed in which Azhar allegedly reports the bombing is a "success."

So, not only are there allegations that Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh took part in 9/11, but there are allegations that he took part in other terrorist attacks. So, that gives credence and credibility to this whole 9/11 story in my mind.

JOHN It does. And it was the third one, which may not involve Omar but still involves the ISI chief—no, he's gone. Anyway, it involves the same gangster Aftab, sorry, they figure out his name, by the way. That's Malik that was used in the shoe kidnapping incident.

So, but the fourth—what we were doing here we were running through \$100,000 dollar scenario and there are all these sources that all—we've got three good ones now, and the fourth, actually, occurs in 2004, who is a British MP. And right on the floor he makes this big speech and he's basically, I think, poking fun at the United States for not say anything about this, and also poking fun at or, actually being critical, I think, of Pakistan for not indicting and trying, you know, Omar for—

JON Are you talking about Michael Meacher?

JOHN Yeah, exactly. And he could have mentioned his own country. Like, why didn't they invite and try Omar. He was walking around a free man. But

they had a British MP in 2004, making—bringing this stuff up again is interesting.

JON

Well, I spoke with Michael Meacher. I corresponded with him years ago and, you know, tried to corroborate everything that he said and so forth, and one of the things that he did mention was an individual by the name of Dennis Lormel who was an FBI agent who talked about a hundred thousand dollar wire transfer to Mohamed Atta during some of these Senate sessions. But if you read the transcript, he doesn't confirm that the 100 thousand dollars that they're talking about is the the 100 thousand dollars from Lt. Gen. Ahmed/Omar Saeed Sheikh to Mohammed Atta. It's a hundred thousand dollar wire transfer that took place a year prior to that. So, I think Michael Meacher got a little bit confused. And then I just tried to get him as an interview, but he declined. [Laughs] (That figures) Yeah, no, and I tried contacting Dennis Lormel. I sent him an email. I found out where he was working. I called him. He said he couldn't talk right now, to send him an email. And, basically, the end result was he had no comment because he never returned my calls. And a whole bunch of other things.

Now, so basically, after the 9/11 attacks happened and after it was found out that Ahmed and Sheikh were involved in paying Atta, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh is involved in the kidnapping of Danny Pearl. And he was, I believe, found guilty for the murder of Daniel Pearl, but it was years later that it was found out that it was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed that was the one to actually murder Danny Pearl, and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh was only involved in getting him to that area where he could be killed. And Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh has been sitting in prison since that time and there are few things that I'd like to point out.

There were allegations that he was running a terrorist network from prison and this is a quote.

"In a sensational development, authorities have claimed busting a clandestine terror network set up by jailed killer of Daniel Pearl inside the Hyderabad Jail and the Sindh Government has suspended senior police and jail officials after a large number of cell phones, SIMS and other equipment were recovered."

And that's TheNews.com.pk, by Amir Mir from December 18, 2008. And here's from another article:

"The real question that arises is how he has been able to acquire so much freedom to operate at will from within jail and engage in criminal activity that involved high-profile assassinations."

"It is also rumored that it is his links in high places that have enabled him so far to escape the gallows."

And that's from the TheNews.com.pk from December 19, 2008, so a day after.

So, he was running a terrorist network from prison and the last report about Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh that I'm aware of, was a suicide attempt. And it says.

"Omar Saeed Sheikh, the terrorist freed by India in exchange for the hostages of a hijacked plane in 2000, has attempted suicide in a Pakistani jail, an official said on Saturday."

That was ZeeNews.india.com, February 16, 2014.

That's the last thing I know about him, so far.

But, with regard to Danny Pearl, I have a quote from Mariane Pearl who was Danny Pearl's wife, and she wrote a book called *A Mighty Heart* and in that book she says.

"The distinctions between good and bad, Government organizations and terrorist organizations, are not simply fading; they seem to be faces of the same coin."

So, I just wanted to make people aware of that.

Now, let's see, do you have any—we went over a lot of stuff, but do you have any opinions of the 9/11 Commission?

JOHN Yeah, there's just a couple of things that, skip that. We'll go to that question.

JON I'm sorry, I don't mean to skip ahead, but we covered a lot of it.

JOHN That's okay, yeah, we're running out of time anyway—and I think you've covered some of this in the presentations you've done publicly. Philip Zelikow is the commission's executive director. He's a fireman. He's like the fox in the henhouse, you know. And, he's basically got a wide range to steer what's going on. And, obviously, the most you're going to get out of the commission is a limited hangout even if you could call it that much.

It did its best, I think, to hide the involvement of Saudi Arabia and even more so Pakistan. When I went down to the subcommittee headed by, I forget what's her name now, the African-American woman who has for a long while in the House of Representatives. I addressed her subcommittee and the 9/11 families for their service.

JON Oh, Cynthia McKinney, that's right.

JOHN Yeah, and I agreed to do that on one condition: to go down there and tell them what I knew about Omar. I said I want to know one thing and I don't have to know any of the details, but I want to know whether or not there was a separate closed-door classified briefing for Congressmen and Senators who had their committees that would have had jurisdiction or oversight of this. Was there a classified briefing, not in the 9/11 report, on Omar Saeed Sheikh. And they honor that agreement and the answer was yes, there was. There's a whole level of a set of information that was given to a few senior leaders in our Congress, on Omar, as a separate briefing that is not in the 9/11 report.

JON Also, the—

JOHN Yeah, there's a lot of things—

JON The allegations concerning—I'm sorry, yeah, no—the 9/11 Commission, Phillip Zelikow, as far as I'm concerned, belongs in jail for a number of reasons.

Now, with regard to the 28-redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry, I always thought these allegations regarding the hundred thousand dollar wire transfer would be in those pages, but based on what Bob Graham has told me, it doesn't seem that they are. So, I just wanted to point that out to people.

There are a few things I wanted to tell people about.

Okay, now, this is an interesting story. There were actually bribery allegations with regard to Pakistan and the 9/11 Commission. Are you aware of this?

JOHN Not really, not the details.

JON Okay.

On March 3, 2006, *The Friday Times* reported that:

"Pakistan gave tens of thousands of dollars to its lobbyists in the United States to members of the 9/11 inquiry commission to 'convince' them to stop some anti-Pakistan findings in the report." This according to FO Official Sadiq. According to the Pakistan paper *Daily Times*, this story about bribery "triggered" U.S. media interest.

I don't remember seeing any mention of this story at all. If you know of an American media outlet that investigated this story, and reported on the results of that investigation, please let me know.

On April 10, 2006, *The Dawn* reports that Pakistan officially denied the allegations of bribery.

"Pakistan has never indulged in the illegal activity of bribing or buying influence anywhere in the world" said a statement issued by the FO spokesperson here on Sunday.

Now, it's interesting to note, that after Osama bin Laden's reported death on 5/1/2011, and after the United States started to hypocritically point fingers at Pakistan for either protecting or harboring Osama bin Laden—and I say hypocritically because we were protecting them—we were protecting the knowledge that they were connected to terrorism.

Reuters reported that "Pakistan's Washington lobbyists have launched an intense campaign on Capitol Hill to counter accusations that Islamabad was complicit in giving refuge to Osama bin Laden."

Then an *NBC Washington Report* on July 19, 2011, comes out that says.

"A Virginia man has been arrested for participating in a conspiracy to act as an agent of the Pakistani Government. Court documents identified the man as Syed Fai of Fairfax, Virginia, a U.S. resident. The FBI alleges that Fai funneled millions of dollars to elected officials in high-profile conferences in an effort to influence American policy on Kashmir, a disputed territory along the Indian and Pakistani border. In charging documents, Fai was said to have received funding for his lobbying efforts from the Pakistani ISI, the country's spy agency."

So, they denied the allegations concerning bribery in the 9/11 Commission. And they say that they never do that kind of thing. And then we have two reports stating the opposite that they do do that kind of thing.

So, I wanted to make people aware of that.

And one other thing was an odd confession from an arrested militant. And this is an entry from HistoryCommons.org June 22, 2007.

"Arrested Militant Says Saeed Sheikh Funded 9/11 Hijackers
According to reports in the Indian press, a recently arrested militant leader says he believes Saeed Sheikh wired money to lead hijacker Mohamed Atta before 9/11. The militant, who is known as Babu Bhai and is a leader of the militant organization Harkat ul-Jihad al-Islami, says that the money came from a ransom paid for the release of a kidnapped shoe company executive and that he was involved in the kidnap operation as a deputy to the local commander, Asif Raza Khan. Other people involved in the money transfer are arrested based on the information disclosed by Babu Bhai. This confession supports previous reports about the transfer."

The wire transfer—so, I thought that was odd that out of nowhere came this story of an arrested militant talking about this. Did you ever hear of that?

JOHN Yeah, it links very nicely to all the other sources we have on that story.

JON Exactly. And, so I've told people over the years that there is more reason to believe that this wire transfer did happen than not. And that has been my opinion. Do you agree?

- JOHN Yes. Yeah, I think it's, like I said, the Germans have their own informants. The FBI—got all the cell phone numbers and transcripts of that stuff. And, you know, you have a guy here involved in the kidnap of the shoe tycoon. And we may find more, too, but that certainly rises to the level of certainly a probable—when you get that many independent sources giving you the same story, it can't be dismissed.
- JON Do you think one of the reasons that Danny Pearl was murdered was because of the fact that *The Wall Street Journal* was the only newspaper in the country to cover Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed? Do you think that had anything to do with that?
- JOHN I've said so in the classroom constantly that that maybe caught their attention. Like I said, he was—the paper itself was on their radar screen, you know, and here comes Danny Pearl, only he's looking at the stuff that's even worse than what we've talked about today. He's actually looking at the weapons of mass destruction story. And they catch him sneaking around in a very bad mosque. He shouldn't have been in there, the Binori Town mosque and Omar's also tied into that to the liaison with bin Laden in Afghanistan, okay? That's a big story that developed out of all the rest of the stuff we've been talking about on into November and December. And, I mean, basically, the CIA chief was hopping flights over there, you know, every few weeks trying to wring the truth out of Musharraf and everybody else, all their nuclear scientists about what had been going on. And so, it's already enough to have the newspaper on their radar screen. Apparently, the only one that didn't cooperate and that was basically a news blackout in the United States on this story, but to be fishing around for something even bigger. Which is the export of Pakistan's nuclear technology, not just from the top and actual people who are bomb makers going in there and meeting with bin Laden was what Pearl was fishing around for. And so I think that's also part of why they killed him.
- JON Well, Mariane Pearl writes in her book, I believe, if memory serves, that his being Jewish also had something to do with it.
- JOHN Sure. I'm sure it did. But that's the story that nobody wanted to come out in Pakistan—what they were doing with bin Laden and WMD.

JON Are you aware of that time during a press briefing with Condoleezza Rice where an Indian reporter asked her about Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed and the hundred thousand dollar wire transfer? (No) Have you ever seen that?

JOHN No, I can't imagine that she was forthcoming.

JON Oh, okay.

On March 15, 2002, Condoleezza Rice is asked a question about Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed.

"Dr. Rice, are you aware of the reports at the time the ISI chief was in Washington on September 11 [And he says, falsely, that on September 10th \$100,000 was wired from Pakistan to this group here in this area. It wasn't September 10th. It was in August, I believe. But, anyway, he says:] "While he was here, was he meeting with you or anybody in the administration?" And her response was, "I have not seen that report, and he was certainly not meeting with me."

Now, if you read the transcripts from the WhiteHouse.gov where it says ISI chief, they take that out and replace it with a dash. They took out the ISI chief from that question in the transcript. I always thought it was funny.

JOHN Yeah. [Pause] He basically is, I think, that lines up perfectly with the *Los Angeles Times* reporting the story based on the *Indian Press* again in January and telling everything except for the ISI chief's role.

JON Right. Is there anything you're working on now or that you would like to promote or anything at all?

JOHN Well, the latest, I just published a book on the Kennedy assassination that goes way back into '59 and before and a little bit after. It's called *Where Angels Tread Lightly: The assassination of President Kennedy Vol. 1*. If any of your listeners are interested in the JFK case, I've started about a five volume or six volume series on that. And I am working on this subject that we're talking about today, too. I don't anticipate a manuscript being published until sometime next year, late next year.

JON I look forward to reading that.

Are you aware of this study that came out from George Washington University with regard to Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and so forth? That came out, I think, it was in 2011. [Pause] Are you aware of that document or report?

JOHN I don't know. I don't think so. Are you talking about national security archives they uncovered, or the school now?

JON No, it was like the Danny Pearl Project or something to that effect. It was about Danny Pearl's murder. And I wrote to them and I asked them why isn't there anything in here about Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and the hundred thousand dollar wire transfer and they said that they didn't see any evidence to support that. So that's why they didn't put it in this report. I could send you a link to that.

But, anyway, I want to thank you, John, very much for taking the time to come on my show to talk about this very important, what I think is an important issue that needs to be addressed and never has been. And I thank you very much for your insight. I think it's very invaluable and I wish you luck with all of your future endeavors.

JOHN Well, thank you very much for sharing your time with me, too. And good luck with keeping the 9/11 story alive. I think that it needs people like you that are going to stay on it. And keep digging until we get to the bottom of it.

JON Well, again, thank you for your time today, John, and I hope you have a great day.

JOHN You too.

JON All right. Take care, John.



Chapter/Episode 31 – Paul Thompson – Part 1 – July 27, 2016

Jon Gold (JON)

Paul Thompson (PAUL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week, I'm having a four-part series that covers a multitude of issues. This is part one.

Hi, this is Jon, and I thought that I was done with this show, but I was given an opportunity to speak to someone I wanted to speak to from the beginning. So, here I am today, and I'm here with Paul Thompson. Paul, how are you doing today?

PAUL I'm doing good.

JON All right, excellent. All right, so what I'm going to do is I'm going to read Paul's bio for everyone.

Paul Thompson is the author of *The Terror Timeline*, a compilation of over 5,000 reports and articles concerning the September 11, 2001 attacks. The book was based on research conducted by himself and other contributors to the HistoryCommons website. Thompson's research in the field has

garnered over 100 radio interviews, along with TV interviews on Fox News and Air America and interviews in print, such as for *Buzz Magazine*. Articles about himself, his research and its reception by the "9/11 Truth Movement" have appeared in *The Village Voice* and *Esquire Magazine's* "Genius Issue," and recognition as "an authority on terrorism," even though, "He never studied, trained," as noted by *Esquire*. In 2005, Thompson was asked to speak at a Congressional briefing on the 9/11 Commission's final report, he addressed what he defined as failures by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

Paul Thompson was born in Pacific Beach, California and currently holds a psychology degree from Stanford University obtained in 1990. He now spends time there and in San Diego. He is a freelance researcher and has worked in the past as an environmental activist at an environmental-protection firm.

Mr. Thompson has made numerous appearances on Link TV and Free Speech TV. He helps these independent channels raise money.

All right, that's Paul's bio and I wrote a little personal bio for Paul, that I'm going to read for him now.

Paul Thompson is a hero of mine. He is certainly one of if not my biggest influence. The release of the August 6th, PDB gave both of us a kick in the ass to do something about the lies of 9/11, but Paul did something so spectacular and so important that in my mind, he deserves the greatest recognition. I'm talking about the "Complete 9/11 Timeline" available at www.HistoryCommons.org which I have called on several occasions one of the most important websites on the internet. I have spent years studying the timeline, and I still come across entries that surprise me. I have tried for many years to mimic the way I think Paul would present information. I'm basically a poor man's Paul Thompson. I want to thank him for everything he has done.

And that was for you.

PAUL

Well, thanks a lot. That's high praise. It's nice to know that someone appreciates that, because I worked so many hours on that and I didn't get a whole lot of feedback. So, you know, when people look at an encyclopedic-

type thing, they usually don't go contact the author. They just kind of use it as a reference. So, it's good to get some, to know that I've had impact.

JON Oh, I've told—when I was talking with Ray before on this show, I told him that I would feel naked without the Complete 9/11 Timeline. (Mm-hmm) Anyway, so all right, we're going to get to the questions. The very first question is: What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

PAUL Well, I was living on the West Coast as I still am. So I missed the whole thing. By the time I got up and went to work the attacks were over, and I got into work and someone was listening to the radio. I was working at a, like you said in the bio there, I was working for an environmental group, and there was some mention just as soon as I came in about 10,000 maybe 20,000 people being killed in New York. I was just completely baffled. I had no idea what that could be about. So, pretty much everyone at work we just sat around and listened to the radio. We didn't have a TV—and then I went home and of course watched all the images over and over again.

So, at that time, I was just, you know, an ordinary person who had no connections. I didn't know anyone who was, you know, lost any relatives or loved ones. I was far from the whole thing. So, I just thought, wow, that's pretty amazing, pretty weird, and I just kind of moved on with my life. So, I didn't really get involved until about a year later.

JON Right. And that brings us to my next question. What was the first thing you questioned about 9/11?

PAUL Yeah, well, like I said, about a year later, maybe summer of 2002, if you remember that's when a lot of stories started to come out about all the different warnings. And there was the story of the PDB, the Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S., that hit the newspapers around that time. So, I had just accepted the story at face value up until that point, and then I started to see these news reports. And I just sort of fell down a rabbit hole where I realized that what I had been hearing was not the true story, and I wanted to know what the true story was.

So, just for my own edification to make sense of this complicated thing, I started working on a timeline. And, you know, I had no plans for it. I didn't think of—sharing it on the Internet or doing anything with it, really. I just wanted to understand for myself. And it grew into a bit of an obsession. And it just kept growing and growing and growing. And so, at some point,

you know, some friends I had were like: "You've got to do something with this. This is pretty interesting stuff you have here." So, I put it on the web, I think in late 2002, and then that just made it continue to grow even more, and other people chimed in and contributed. And so, it just was sort of an organic process that I really fell backwards into it.

I had no interest, really, in terrorism—in a way, I still don't. You know, I would have never imagined that this would be something that I would be spending so much time on. I definitely had no particular background to qualify me for anything. But, I just felt that I had to know what the true story was. I had to understand what was going on, because 9/11 wasn't just another terrorist attack. It was something that radically changed the history of, not only the United States, but the entire world that we're still dealing with the post-9/11 world that—if that would have never happened, things I think would have gone in a very different direction.

So, in order to really understand the world around me, I felt like I had to get into this topic even though I didn't have any particular fascination with terrorism or Al-Qaeda or any of these things but I just, you have to know these things in order to make sense of all of this that's been happening and the implications on domestic policy, on civil liberties, on foreign policy, you know, our entire way of life.

JON It's amazing because none of us know what we're doing when we get into this and being an activist is a learning process. And you, basically, have to develop a PR campaign that reaches the most people. It's trial and error. And we do the best that we can. Who would have thought that I would be focusing on terrorism today? Like you said, foreign policy or any of those things. I never in a million years would have thought that. (Yeah)
All right. Have you read the released 28 pages, with redactions, and was there anything that stood out to you?

PAUL Yes, I did. Well, on first glance, it was, most of it was not that surprising to me, because a lot of it, the vast majority of it was just confirmation of things that had already been reported in the news. For instance, a lot of it focuses, almost all of it focuses on the two hijackers of San Diego—Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi and their various connections to Saudi officials and Saudi helpers. And, most of that had been reported as far back as 2002, most of it had been reported. But upon closer inspection, there are a lot of interesting things that we didn't know before.

And I would say the main thing about it that I think people should be making a big deal about is that it both confirms and adds to what we know about Prince Bandar who was the Saudi ambassador for a long, long time, since the early 80s until about 2006. And, it's a really strange thing if you look into this Prince Bandar connection, because he seems to have been directly funding through kind of a pass through his wife going to another wife—these two people, Omar al-Bayoumi and Osama Bassnan, who it's widely believed were paid spies by the Saudis who were supposed to keep an eye on the Saudi community in San Diego, and look at—is anybody there doing something that could be potentially harmful to Saudi interests. You know, there's a lot of dissidents and so forth, and the Saudi Government is very—they're a dictatorship, and they crack down on that sort of thing.

So, you can really see the money flow in a way that is clear. There were times that it went through the wives, but there were even some direct payments and directly to Bassnan or to Bayoumi. And then we find out these strange connections having to do with some phone numbers, like there's this person Abu Zubaydah who was the, well he has a very strange role. Some people say he's not Al-Qaeda. Some people say he was one of the very most important Al-Qaeda.

JON I'd say he was somewhere in between, actually.

PAUL Yeah, well, it's a strange thing. He also, his whole story is that he may have been sort of mentally ill in some kind of way. So, he's a very strange character. I think what he was, basically, was kind of like a human switchboard, if you will. He was based in a border town between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and he worked closely with the terrorist training camps in Afghanistan, which not all of them were connected to Al-Qaeda. There were some others. And so, if you were a person who wanted to go train in one of those training camps, you sort of went through him and he—so, he was not entirely Al-Qaeda, because he worked with these other groups also, but he was really one of the most important people because he had all these connections. He had sort of the terrorist Rolodex, if you will. And that's where Prince Bandar comes back in, because when Zubaydah was captured in March 2002, by the U.S. forces in Pakistan, they looked at his phone book and they found that he had the phone number of this organization that was managing Prince Bandar's house in Colorado. So, it wasn't directly Prince Bandar's phone number, but this organization was very secretive. They were not in the phone book or really there's no way to

reach them. And they seem to be like if you want to talk to him, you have to go through them. So, that is very interesting. What is he doing with Prince Bandar's phone number in the United States, basically?

And then he also had the number of one of the Saudi embassy bodyguards in Washington, D.C. where Prince Bandar worked. And then, furthermore, the 28 pages mentions that someone connected to one of Prince Bandar's personal assistants. Their phone number was found in a bin Laden safe house in Pakistan.

So, you have all these curious connections. And it's doubly curious to me, because if you look at the Saudis, it's a very strange, strange situation, because on one hand Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda publicly made it known that their goal was to destroy the Saudi Government. They felt that the Saudi Government was corrupt and had sort of betrayed their mission of properly guarding the holy sites in Mecca and Medina. And, every time practically that bin Laden would give a speech he would decry the Saudis. And there were some terror attacks even before 9/11 that took place in Saudi Arabia, you know, by Al-Qaeda.

So, you would think by all logical measures that they would be mortal enemies. Right? But then, on the flip side, the Saudis have for years been this very fundamentalist extreme branch of Islam called Wahhabism, which makes no bones about a goal to convert everyone in the entire world to their very extreme version of Islam. It's well-known women can't drive or vote—they're one of the most extreme countries in the world in terms of how they practice Islam.

And they have spent a tremendous amount of money promoting this Wahhabist division throughout the world. I saw one account that was, you know, from not long after 9/11 that said they had spent 70 billion dollars on this promotion which often took the form of building big new mosques, which then as the price of having the mosque, you have to have a Wahhabist Imam, the religious leader, so that that really spreads the Wahhabist message all around the world.

And, so, at the same time that they have been at odds, Al-Qaeda and the Saudi Government, you know, in some ways they've been very much allies in other ways. It's sort of like—sometimes one policy domestically is 180 degrees from the policy that takes place overseas. So, the Saudis definitely they don't want anyone who's Al-Qaeda or any other radical Islamist group

to be blowing up buildings and killing people within Saudi Arabia. But, at times, they've been very supportive of that happening outside of Saudi Arabia, especially to people or countries that are considered the enemies of Islam.

You know, you can look at different countries where there have been conflicts like Bosnia or Chechnya and you can see a tremendous amount of money that has flowed. I mean, we can look at recent years and it's very clear everyone admits that ISIS, which seems to be trying to—be even more extreme than Al-Qaeda, that they're getting a big portion of their funding and their recruits from Saudi Arabia. And that's not even that far from, that's like next door to Saudi Arabia. And look at what ISIS is doing. They brought back slavery. They have beheadings of people and just all kinds of terrible, terrible things and, yet, there's a large number of people in Saudi Arabia who would say: "Go for it. Do more. Take over more territory."

So, there's this strange, strange dichotomy, I think you have to agree, between like a love-hate relationship, if you will, between a lot of the top Saudis, both businesspeople and royals in the Government and then these Islamist fundamentalist movements.

JON I agree. And one of the things that I like to point out regarding ISIS. You know, we invaded and occupied Iraq. We killed upwards of 1.25 million people. We displaced millions more. We wounded I don't know how many more. We tortured people. Blackwater was hunting Iraqis for sport. We were flushing Korans down the toilet. I think I said torturing people. But, you know, there is no statute of limitations on the kind of anger those things create. So, there were a lot of people who were already anti-west, the anti-Maliki Government. He was very oppressive.

PAUL Sure, and what happens is that you find when there's all kinds of violence that takes place, massive homelessness and displacement after a war, that's really fertile ground for extremist movements of all sorts of different kinds. I mean, you could look at the United States doing the secret bombing in Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge developing and taking over directly because of that. Certainly, if their country hadn't been war torn, the Khmer Rouge would have never been able to take over. Or you could look at Libya and how that country is in a total state of chaos now and, of course, it's no surprise that ISIS has established a foothold there.

So that often happens. But what's curious is that the Saudis, even on some Governmental official level it seems, would support a group as extreme as ISIS, because if ISIS, I think, even the same people who support them would recognize that if they were super successful, took over Syria and took over Iraq, they wouldn't stop there. They claim that they're the one legitimate Government in the world, that they have the one caliphate and that the caliphate ultimately needs to control the entire earth. And, so, sort of almost next on their hit list would be to take over Saudi Arabia. So, it's a very strange thing that they're sort of gambling. You know, we want this group to be successful, but not too successful.

JON They were blocking their borders to prevent ISIS from getting in. But to finish my point. As you said, Saudi Arabia funneled money—in fact, it was Bandar who was responsible for sending in rebels or terrorists, or whatever you want to call them, into Syria. The United States, originally, was sending them intelligence. Then we started to send them arms. When we started to send in our own rebels from Jordan, and the people that I spoke of earlier—the people that we were supporting in Syria, essentially started to collaborate amongst themselves. So, it's almost—it's of our own creation almost.

PAUL Yeah, well, let's definitely get back to that. But I want to, for the moment, I want to sort of keep the focus on Prince Bandar (Okay). We can come back to ISIS and so forth later, because I think that it's a very interesting case of history repeating itself.

And, in any case, looking at Prince Bandar, the thing that's so curious is that we've seen that sometimes in Saudi Arabia you get these very fundamentalist Wahhabist diehard religious types who are big believers in this Wahhabist goal to conquer the world and very anti-Western. And, so, they give money to groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS. And, yet, Prince Bandar never seemed to be that sort of person. In fact, his popular nickname is Bandar Bush and he has literally been defacto accepted as a member of the Bush family. He's treated like a family member and he is as western as any Saudi, you know, that you could think of in terms of his—he's got this multimillion dollar chalet in Colorado and he's a real mover and shaker in Washington. He goes to all the cocktail parties and he's friends with all the top officials and just treated very differently from your average foreign diplomat. He's almost treated like an insider. And this has been noticed for decades.

To give you an interesting little tidbit—just a few years after he had been made the ambassador, he was one of the key people in the Iran-Contra affair. He gave over 30 million dollars to the contras because the U.S. Government couldn't give the money themselves because of a Congressional ban. So, he was—this is not the behavior of a typical foreign ambassador at all. It's like—it's like one of the insiders, like I said. And, so, to have him of all people be connected to these Saudis in San Diego who are directly assisting the 9/11 hijackers, and then have these other connections come up with Abu Zubaydah and so forth, suggest that he may have been playing a really bizarre double game where he was, on one hand, very, very friendly to the United States but, on the other hand, seemingly willing to allow the 9/11 attack to take place, maybe directly assisting it in financial ways and all sorts of ways. We don't know. But if it were to be most anyone else, you know, this would be front-page news. I mean, imagine if we found an Iraqi official or an Iranian official that had these sorts of connections to the 9/11 attacks, we'd never hear the end of it.

JON Well, one of the things that we can speculate about, because of his relationships, as opposed to playing a double game, maybe there was a collaborative effort. I don't know.

PAUL We just can't know. You know, we're not privy to these private conversations, but just to give another example of how mind-blowing it is, I'm sure you know that just a couple days after 9/11, President Bush and Prince Bandar had a meeting, a private meeting. And it seems like that one of the things that took place in that meeting was discussion on how to get key Saudi Royals and bin Laden family members out of the United States. But this is the first foreign diplomat that Bush contacted in person after 9/11—very, very important contact there. And, in retrospect, I mean, how incredible is it to think that this key seeming ally in the U.S.'s efforts just two days after 9/11 may have been the person who was giving hundreds of thousands of dollars to the 9/11 hijackers cell in San Diego.

JON Right. I have an entry that doesn't get a lot of attention from HistoryCommons.org that I'd like to read. And I'd like to get your opinion on it.

March 15, 2001, Bush tells Saudi prince that military action in Iraq needs to be "decisive."

"During a meeting with President Bush, Saudi Prince Bandar expresses concern about the U.S.'s continuing patrolling of the 'no fly zone' in Iraq. The prince complains that it is 'costing us militarily, financially but much more importantly politically' and adds that 'It is not hurting Saddam Hussein.' Bush seems to agree. 'If there is any military action, then it has to be decisive, that can finalize the issue,' Bush says. 'The Iraqis are useless and not effective.'"

And that's according to James Risen's book *State of War*.

Don't you think it's interesting that the President of the United States is talking about military action in Iraq with one of the individuals who supposedly was involved with the 9/11 attacks, which gave Bush the ability to do what he did?

PAUL

Right. Well, you know, I've been thinking about this in recent days and thinking like why on earth would Prince Bandar want the 9/11 attacks to happen and to be successful? And, one thing I've been thinking about that relates very much to that quote you just mentioned is that there was a lot of flak that the Saudi Arabian Government was getting after the Gulf War in '91, that they allowed the U.S. to come into Saudi Arabia with 300-plus thousand troops and attack the Saddam Hussein Government, and then afterwards they let them stay. And Saudi Arabia, in Islamic eyes, was considered sort of sacrosanct soil and that no foreigners—who are not of the faith should be stationed there. And, so, they were getting criticism from all over the Middle East and the Muslim world about this for years. And this was one of the key points that bin Laden would repeatedly harp on in his speeches was that, you know, that they've allowed these infidels to be based in Saudi Arabia.

So, around the time of 9/11 and thereafter it became clear that Saudi Arabia wanted, was pretty much saying it's time to go. We want you out of Saudi Arabia. It's causing us too much trouble. And, so, that's what happened was that when the U.S. took over in late—started moving all their troops into the region in late 2002, and then attacked Iraq in 2003, all those troops that had been based in Saudi Arabia, now were based in Iraq. And there were no more troops until this day no more U.S. troops based in Saudi Arabia. There are few based in the Gulf like Bahrain and a few other countries, but no more in Saudi Arabia.

So, this was one of the biggest thorns in the side of the Saudi Government that having the U.S. there and having the U.S. attack Iraq and then sort of re-center the U.S. military presence of that Persian Gulf region in Iraq instead of Saudi Arabia was very much to the benefit of Saudi Arabia.

So, if you're looking at that quote and you're thinking from Prince Bandar's point of view, they're thinking probably great, if the U.S. attacks and takes over Iraq, then they can be kicked out of Saudi Arabia without us really suffering, because the U.S. wants to have some presence somewhere in the region. You know, not just a small presence of just a couple bases in Bahrain and Qatar, but you know really a large presence. About two thirds of all the oil in the world is in the Persian Gulf and the U.S. has tried to maintain a strong military posture there in order to keep the flow of cheap oil going. So they were not willing to leave Saudi Arabia unless they had somewhere else to go.

So, I think if you look at it from that point of view, you could see why Prince Bandar was being sort of a cheerleader for the takeover of Iraq, even though strategically that would be very problematic for Saudi Arabia because, you know, there's this whole Sunni versus Shia divide and the concern that the Iranians would end up greatly increasing their influence in Iraq, which is what exactly happened.

So, it was sort of a gamble, but it looks like I could see why they would want that to happen.

JON So, it definitely seems as if Saudi Arabia wanted Saddam out.

PAUL You could see, you know, again, I'm not privy to their internal dialogue. They're a very secretive country, but you could see why there would be a logical reason for them to want that to happen. They really, really wanted the U.S. troops out. I think a lot of that had to do with bin Laden thinking like, you know, if—not just bin Laden—there's always been this great fear in Saudi Arabia that the people are very unhappy with the leadership. That they feel the leadership is corrupt; that they say one thing and then they do another; they profess to be very religious but then they're living sort of the playboy life in places like Monaco and gambling and having all kinds of foreign women and drugs and all this stuff.

So, there's this—there's the Arab Spring and so many countries have had, you know, their Governments overthrown and that has been THE great fear

for the Saudis for decades. And, so, to remove the U.S. troops would remove a major grievance by these potential fundamentalist movements within Saudi Arabia themselves who say the Government is not legitimate and thus needs to be overthrown.

JON All that makes sense and there was another—I think, Bob Woodward wrote in one of his books that in January of 2003, Cheney, Myers, Bandar and, I think, Hemming—I'm not sure—were having a meeting, discussing. They were planning what was to take place in Iraq after the invasion. So, obviously, he had a lot of inside knowledge, maybe influence or whatever, with what was going on.

PAUL Right. So, yes, so then you also see that time and time again that the Saudis have used terrorism as a foreign policy tool. They're not afraid to do that. I mean, you know, ISIS is a good example, where they—they have a problem with Syria. They don't like Assad and so they support, you know, rebel movements, which they would rather see take over who are more in line with their Wahhabist beliefs. And you can go to a lot of different countries where you can look, and you can see that there are, if not Al-Qaeda or ISIS, groups like that that have been supported by the Saudis and, sometimes, you know, they have even threatened or seemingly been involved with terrorist attacks in the West. There was—I don't remember the exact details offhand but—there was something that happened a few years ago with Britain where, remember they had the 2005 terror attack there. (Right) And, I think, a few years after that there was this big arms deal that had been going on for decades called the BAE deal—that was the name of one of the companies involved, which was a huge multibillion dollar deal, mostly between Britain and Saudi Arabia. And there had been accusations of widespread bribery that the British Government had been paying off millions and millions of dollars to key Saudis as part of that deal, and there was going to be an investigation. And then the Saudi Government openly, you know, in the public, pretty much said kind of like a mob enforcer or something like that. I don't remember the exact quote, but it was something like: "If you persist in these sort of things, we won't be able to stop another terror attack happening in Britain." [Laughs]

JON Right, that might have come directly from Bandar, I think.

PAUL It might have been Bandar. So, you can see, this is not just the Saudis that have done this. There's another really good example of a deal like this that happened with the Pakistanis where the French Government was involved

in some sort of big arms deal and they also questioned the terms of the deal and wanted to renegotiate the deal. I don't remember the details, but there was some problem with the deal that was coming up and then, very mysteriously, I think, 11 French workers working in Pakistan were killed in a bomb that was blamed, I believe, on Al-Qaeda, and the French later did—there was a French judge did an investigation and this was a couple of years after 9/11 when the bombing took place—and the judge concluded, basically, that the Pakistani Government aided and abetted that bombing in order to send a message to the French Government, you know, like basically back off on this deal or else this is what happens to you.

So, there is this rough Machiavellian power politics that goes on where people use terrorism as just another, you know, arrow in the quiver, if you will, of ways to get things done without really much regard to loss of life or the ethics involved.

And so, if you look at that, and you look at what Bandar is doing with, you know, with what was happening in San Diego, anything is possible. I'm not saying that he, you know, he was aiding and abetting 9/11, but it certainly is something that would need to be seriously investigated.

JON Well, to make sure that I was right, I looked it up and there's an article in *The Guardian*. BAE Secret Papers Reveal Threats from Saudi Prince. And it just says.

"Prince Bandar, the head of the Saudi National Security Council and son of the crowned Prince, was alleged in court to be the man behind the threats to hold back information about suicide bombers and terrorists."

PAUL So, there you go. I mean—so he himself is shown in other cases to just use this as a foreign policy tool. And we can see motives why he would have wanted the 9/11 attack to succeed at that time.

And, an interesting thing about this whole San Diego connection is that, I think, people often assume that there was this sort of hostile relationship between the Saudi minders, the spies, especially al-Bayoumi and Bassnan and then the hijackers—like they're being watched, but they don't really want to be watched and like you get these guys off my back kind of thing, you know.

But that is probably not true. If we look at these people like al-Bayoumi and Bassnan, they couldn't have been more supportive of the very things that Al-Qaeda was doing. Like, killing Westerners, using terrorism as a tool, and so forth. For instance, it was discovered just shortly after 9/11, one of them—I have to look up in my notes which one—I think it was Bassnan was at a party in San Diego. He hadn't left the country yet. And there was a group of people seemingly like-minded Wahhabist people where witnesses say he was cheering the success of the 9/11 attacks and calling the hijackers great heroes and sort of—that sort of language.

So, this is not someone who is like: "Oh, I've got to find out if these people are doing something bad like, you know, potentially going to blow something up and so I've got to pass a warning on." They were like: "Right on! Go for it. Blow something up. Kill some Westerners." You know, they were ideologically just as extreme as the hijackers themselves. And they had a long—both Bayoumi and Bassnan had been investigated previously for terrorist connections. These are not—like you would think, you know, if the Saudis were legitimately worried about stopping some sort of Al-Qaeda penetration of the United States, they're not the people that you would put in those jobs. And it's not like this is some sort of mistake that the Saudis wouldn't have known. I mean, one of them had a connection going all the way back to the blind sheik in the early 1990s, who was one of the people behind—the sort of the religious leader—behind the blowing up of the World Trade Center in 1993, and so on and so forth. I mean, the more you dig, the more you see that there is this very obvious terrorist connection and terrorist loyalties amongst these supposed Saudi minders.

Also, and they're not just watching—they were funding; they were helping. You need a flight school? Here, we'll get you set up with someone who can do that for you here. We'll pay your rent, and all down the line. This is not just people keeping an eye on potentially suspicious people, but that's how it's largely appeared in the press.

JON

Well, let's get back to the 28 pages, one of the revelations from the pages. What we've heard in the past is that the payments went from Princess Haifa's account directly to one of the wives—I forget, al-Bayoumi or Osama Bassnan—but, we found in the 28 pages a direct payment to Bassnan from Prince Bandar. It says.

"On at least one occasion, Bassnan received a check directly from Prince Bandar's account. According to the FBI, on May

14, 1998, Bassnan cashed a check from Bandar in the amount of thirteen thousand dollars. Bassnan's wife also received at least one check directly from Bandar. She also received one additional check from Bandar's wife, which she cashed on January 8, 1998, for ten thousand dollars."

That was on Page 427. That was one, I think, one of the bigger revelations in the pages. What do you think?

PAUL Well, I think that's interesting. There's also the fact that in 2002, I believe in May, when the King of Saudi Arabia and Prince Bandar and sort of the royal entourage was in Houston. Then I believe it was Bassnan also went to Houston and he lost some, I think he lost his passport there, so, there was proof that he was in Houston on the same day. And, you know, the 28 pages mentions that he met with a high-ranking royal while he was there.

JON I just wrote an article about that, and in the entry on HistoryCommons.org it describes the individual that he met with as someone that traveled with suitcases full of cash—and the only person I can find described like that is Prince Bandar. So, is it possible—

PAUL Well, it may not have been Prince Bandar, because the 28 pages always refers to him as the ambassador. And in that particular passage I noticed that it had mentioned it was a royal. So, it may or may not, but it's kind of a moot point, because usually when you're—when you're dealing with these sort of people, you've got to realize that Prince Bandar has to be savvy that he is being monitored by, certainly, U.S. intelligence and possibly other intelligence agencies. The Mossad, I'm sure, would want to know everything he's doing. Right? So if they, you know, usually use third parties or cutouts of some type. That's why you wouldn't, you probably wouldn't find Prince Bandar's phone number directly with Abu Zubaydah. But we find that his bodyguard has the phone number. (Right) So, you have someone one step removed who can just pass messages on.

So, you know, I would be shocked if there was a direct meeting. But there is no need to have a direct meeting. They know how to do these things through these third parties. Right.

But, the fact that he would be going brazenly after 9/11, and meeting with the entourage of the King of Saudi Arabia is pretty ballsy just in it—no matter who you met with within that entourage, you know. How is it that he

hadn't been arrested yet at that point? It's pretty incredible. I mean, like that thing I mentioned about the party, that was known very shortly after 9/11 and yet he continued to stay in the United States all the way until the end of 2002.

JON And they finally let him go because of Visa violations.

PAUL Right, and there's only days after he left that we started to get the first news stories that revealed his connection with the hijackers. And, so, that had been held until he was out of the country.

So, the whole thing was very suspicious that these people—and I'll go into this more later—seemed to act with impunity, who are connected with the Saudis, that the U.S. has such a hands-off policy that the mere fact that he would not even be worried for a whole year and continue to live in the United States sort of says a lot. We have to remember that this was a time when the United States was just picking up every Tom, Dick, and Harry that was Muslim and throwing them in jail. There were between a thousand and 2000 people in United States that were held for months after 9/11. A lot of them being held as quote unquote "material witnesses." And the vast majority, all but maybe one or two of them, ended up having no connection whatsoever with anything having to do with terrorism or Al-Qaeda. And, yet—you still have al-Bayoumi feeling like he doesn't even have to leave the country. And, you know, then you have Guantanamo opening up. You have all these reports already coming about people being mysteriously renditioned, which started to happen within days after 9/11, even from, you know, from first-world countries. There were a couple of people, for instance, renditioned from Sweden just a week after 9/11 and—put in some torture dungeon in some Middle Eastern country and, yet, you know, he and others—that we can go into some of the others—you know, they just seem to be like not even worried.

JON Right. All right, so, let's get into the next question. Since the 28 pages were released, the Saudi ambassador and the U.S. Government have come out on several occasions and said that there was nothing new in the recently declassified 28 pages. Obviously, we just talked about that to a great extent. What do you think about people like John Brennan coming out and saying that there's nothing in those pages? Or the Saudi ambassador referring to us as conspiracy theorists.

PAUL Well, I would just say of course they're going to say that, because there's been a cover-up from day one, or day two, after 9/11 until today and, so, why would they change their behavior now? They're just going to keep covering this stuff up. There was a lot of information in there that was new. We talked about the Bandar connection, but there was a lot of other interesting stuff in there.

I thought it was, for instance, quite interesting what it said about a couple of the bin Ladens who were living in the United States, like Abdullah bin Laden, who was living in Washington D.C. He was actually working at the Saudi Embassy at the time and he also was working for some Saudi charities, which often turn out to be a front for terrorist activity. He was working with a group called WAMY (The World Assembly of Muslim Youth). And, so, the 28 pages mentions that he's a close friend of someone called Quadir Harumani, who is—I've looked at all this stuff very closely with the 9/11 Timeline. Never heard of this guy before, but apparently, he was an associate of Mohamed Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi, two of the pilots of the 9/11 hijackers. Prior to 9/11, he'd been under investigation before 9/11 and Abdullah had been under investigation before 9/11 for terrorism ties. And, yet, despite this Abdullah was able to leave the country on one of these flights that took place just two or three days after 9/11. And you probably remember, there was all this controversy and that was considered a conspiracy theory for a while, and the 9/11 Commission kind of put out a statement in their report that sort of pooh-poohed it as, well, you know, yeah, those flights took place, but that—they got a chance to be interviewed before they left.

JON That's exactly what they said. One of the people that left on those flights was somebody by the name of Khalil bin Laden, who was the brother of Osama bin Laden. And he was wanted in Brazil, I think, for terrorist reasons.

PAUL Right. But here we have with this Abdullah bin Laden, it seems a direct connection with some of the hijackers through this close friend. And then, I believe I read somewhere else about Abdullah bin Laden that one of the members of the Hamburg cell—not one of the hijackers, but one of their associates was found with the phone number of Abdullah bin Laden. So, in retrospect, it's looking awfully suspicious that this person was somehow involved in the 9/11 plot. And we have to remember also that the hijackers, a few weeks or months before 9/11, a bunch of them moved to Falls Church, Virginia, which is very near Washington, D.C., and that's

where Abdullah bin Laden worked. His job was where he worked at this WAMY organization was three blocks from where four of the hijackers were living, including Nawaf al-Hazmi.

So, to have this person just put on a plane within three days of the attacks, I'm sure that what they knew at that time was very limited. You know, how much can you learn that quickly. (Right) So, they never got a chance to find all these connections until after he was out of the country and out of reach forever more. Because once you're in Saudi Arabia, you're never going to be accessed again.

So, you know, that was a real, real travesty and they did interview them, but they were apparently, basically, like literally interviewed sort of on the tarmac, you know, very quickly like: "Before you hop on the plane, do you have any ties to terrorism? No? Okay." It is very perfunctory. They didn't know what to ask and they just got on the plane. So, you know, that—what we learned now from the 28 pages is that that's yet another thing that the 9/11 Commission was totally wrong about.

JON Well, why do you think the pages were kept classified for so long?

PAUL Well, again, I mean, you know, we just see this ongoing cover up. And, I think, the Saudi connection, in particular, is one of those sore spots that the cover-up in a sense began decades before 9/11. There's always been this very sensitive issue. I have things in the timeline, you know, going back to the early 90s where there, for instance, there was a wiretapping of some of the Saudi royals that happened at that time because of concerns about terrorism ties and then they stopped the wiretapping because they basically said: "You can't do that. They're Saudi royals. Our relationship with them is too important. We can't risk it. I mean, we don't even, basically, we really don't even want to know if they find there's terrorism ties." So why are we even doing this. Right.

JON There are several instances in the 90s of Saudi protection. There's Vulgar Betrayal with Robert Wright. Let's see—1996, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia allegedly collaborated on illegal weapons deliveries to Bosnian Muslims. In June 25, 1996, CIA agents are told not to track militants in Saudi Arabia.

PAUL Right, we could go on all day (Yeah), because the Saudis are so tied to terrorism that they said at one point when the CIA sort of had a rare chance to meet with some of their counterparts in Saudi Arabia with the

intelligence agency there, they were sort of walking around the building and they noticed that a lot of the computers of the people working on the intelligence agency had screen savers that were a picture of Osama bin Laden. (Laughs) And so, the intelligence agency that supposedly kicked Osama bin Laden out of the country in the early 90s, here we are in the late 90s, you know, are openly showing that they're supporters, like they wouldn't even lose their job for having a screensaver with the big smiling picture of bin Laden.

So, and you can just go on and on that—it mentions in the, I believe, in the 28 pages somewhere that 70-80 percent of the people of Saudi Arabia at the time of 9/11 were believed to be supporting Osama bin Laden in the sense that they were hoping that he would be successful in his war against the West. So, that has been a constant problem that they have been this big supporter of terrorism and yet because of diplomatic reasons, because we're so addicted to the oil that comes from Saudi Arabia, especially, that the 28 pages also mentions that there was no unit, no particular focus, anyone who'd been tasked prior to 9/11 to look into that. Every time someone did, they would be told go look into something else.

So, we see that that continues after 9/11. We can see that continues all the way until this day. It's the surprising thing is that they even got the 28 pages released at all, because, there's been so much cover up about this that goes back so far or that the 28 pages were ever compiled in the first place. And that's a whole other thing that I could go into is that, to me, that sort of half of the interest about the 28 pages is not what's in the 28 pages, but what's not in the 28 pages. Because that's a snapshot in time, right. That was compiled in late 2002, so we can look at what else did the U.S. intelligence community know in that time period that was very much relevant to the Saudis? And how come that stuff didn't get into the 28 pages?

For instance, we now know it took many years to find out about this al-Hijji family in Sarasota Florida. I'm sure you know all about it. You know, it didn't come out until 2011, I believe, that there's this family, seemingly normal family living in a suburbia, you know, typical home in a gated community. But before 9/11, I think, about two weeks before 9/11, they left in such a haste that they left food on the table, in the refrigerator, cars in the driveway, three cars behind, one of them brand new. They left the pool machine running, the pool filter, clothes in the closet. They just got up and left. Like they had to be out of the country in 15 minutes kind of thing. And then we find out that because of the phone calls, the phone records, and also

because of the gated community, they were able to track the license plates of the cars coming and going, and we find that Mohamed Atta visited. They find, what's his name? Marwan al-Shehhi visited, Ziad Jarrah.

And, then, what I find very interesting is this other fellow, who is not one of the hijackers, Adnan Shukrijumah—who I hope we get to talk about a little more later—but he's ended up years later it seems have been that he is kind of the operational commander of Al-Qaeda. So, this is not just some guy, even at the time, before 9/11, he was already under investigation by the FBI for two separate terrorism plots and, yet, he seems to have also been connected to this house. And, then, that was not mentioned at all in the 28 pages.

And that, to me, is possibly the most important connection between the Saudis and the hijackers that's ever been discovered. Maybe even more than all this stuff in San Diego. The father of the family, I don't know why he has a different name, but the father of the al-Hijji family is known as Esam Ghazzawi, he was apparently an adviser to a nephew of the King of Saudi Arabia of King Fahd.

So, again, we keep seeing all these connections that go back to not just—maybe here's some, a few people in Saudi Arabia, a private business person or whatever who wants to fund terrorism, but we're finding connections that go right up to the top.

JON

That is the end of Part 1. Please be sure to check out the other three shows in this series. Thank you.



Chapter/Episode 31 – Paul Thompson – Part 2 – July 27, 2016

Jon Gold (JON)

Paul Thompson (PAUL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host Jon Gold and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week I'm having a four-part series that covers a multitude of issues. This is Part Two.

Well, just so everybody knows, right now there is a judge that's looking over 80,000 FBI documents concerning the Sarasota incident to try and release them. And it's the *Broward Bulldog* and Dan Christensen that's fighting for that right now.

PAUL Right, or we could—sorry to interrupt—but, we could also point out that, you know, I mean, I can just go on and on about all these Saudi connections, but there's this other very interesting thing that only came to light in the past couple of years, which was that Walid bin Attash, who was one of the really key players in the whole 9/11 plot. And, right now, is sitting in Guantanamo waiting for some day if there is ever going to be a trial.

He, apparently, came to the United States in the middle of the year 2000, and was able to get through customs at the L.A. airport because he was met by some Saudi dignitaries from the local consulate and they had a special arrangement with the U.S. Government where anyone who was guided in by somebody from the Saudi Government would not have to go through customs. So, there is no record, whatsoever, no passport stamp, nothing. This person just, sort of, glided into the United States like a ghost and was able to leave the same way, and the only reason they were able to figure it out—or, I'm not quite sure how they figured it out—but, that they were able to find some security footage of him in the L.A. airport. And, apparently, they had some informant who also mentioned him, you know, being there at that time.

But, that's stunning information. That was known before the 28 pages was put out. And if you would have added that into the 28 pages, it certainly would have shed a whole new light on some of the figures that are mentioned, like this guy Thumairy, who is one of the consulate officials and is not mentioned very much, but he seems to have been one of the people working with bringing this Walid bin Attash in and out of the country. And, I could go on.

There's another thing—I think I'll just mention one more thing. There was a person named—let's see if I can think of his name here. His name was al-Rasheed, I believe—Saud al-Rasheed—and the U.S. found out about him in the middle of 2002, when they were doing some investigating of a Al-Qaeda safe house in Pakistan that U.S. forces had taken over in a raid, and they found the CD that contained the pictures of al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar and one more of the hijackers and then also a picture of this al-Rasheed person. And then they had passport documents and all kinds of other documents.

And it seemed clear that not only was this al-Rasheed one of the associates, but that he himself was apparently a candidate to be one of the 9/11 hijackers. And, the U.S. put out a big wanted poster and his picture and everything later in 2002, and there was a worldwide dragnet but, apparently, he went to Saudi Arabia and turned himself into the authorities and they never let anyone interview him. So, he's just sort of vanished off the face of the earth.

But, what's really interesting about this guy, is that his father turns out to have been a man named Hamid al-Rasheed, who is a Saudi Government

official, who was the very man who paid a salary to Omar al-Bayoumi, who's one of the minders of the hijackers in San Diego.

So, it's a small world after all. Do you know what I mean? (Absolutely). Think how much if you had that added in to the 28 pages, that would reinforce some of the other points that are being made. And that was known at the time the 28 pages were written, known by U.S. intelligence, but it seems there's all this stove piping, you know, where one agency wouldn't tell the others or the investigators what was going on, might even be one branch of the FBI in one city doesn't know what the one in the other city's doing. And, you know, so, we can make the 28 pages the 50 or 100 pages that would have just as much stuff. And that's only what we knew in 2002. And, presumably, we've learned even more since then. So, I would love to see some day. I don't know if it exists and probably doesn't exist, but a compilation of everything that the U.S. had on all the Saudi connections to the 9/11 hijackers.

JON Well, it does seem to me that you should have been the one to write the 28-redacted pages.

PAUL [Laughs] That would have been nice.

JON Yeah, there are still redactions. What do you think they're still keeping classified?

PAUL Well, I think that what we find in—when information like this gets released, is that they are doing it grudgingly and they just release the stuff that people pretty much know already, for the most part. So, they can talk—I mean if nobody knew about this al-Bayoumi and Bassnan stuff, I'll bet you most of that would be blacked out. But because it's been in the media since 2002, they feel like—it's not going to hurt us much to put that out there. So, what we see that gets redacted is the information that we still don't know much about.

And there's all kinds of other figures that get mentioned, and in some cases, we don't even know what their names are because their names are redacted, or we get a whole paragraph about them redacted, so, you know, who knows what that even is. But, it's a general rule that if it's in the media, if people know about it, okay, we'll release it. If we don't, we won't. It's not—it's supposed to be based on, right, we're only redacting the stuff that we

have to because of quote-unquote some sort of "national security concerns." (Right) But that's not what actually happens.

JON It seems to me that the whole purpose of redacting the pages was to protect Bush. Because, essentially, Bush protected individuals who were closely connected to the 9/11 attacks. That's the story that most media outlets should be running right now, but they're running the exact opposite and saying that there's nothing to them.

PAUL Well, yeah, the media has just totally fallen down on their job. Not just on this, but on everything. Investigative journalism is dead, basically. You know, the media has really been hammered. I thought it was in pretty bad shape at the time of 9/11. But since then—there were all these buyouts and mergers and staff always getting cut. And, since then, we've just seen the Internet becoming more and more prominent and people getting their news for free, so people don't have the money to have a staff in every country like the way it used to be, you know, back in the 70s or 80s. You would have CBS News, NBC News, every major news organization would have people in countries all over the world just doing reporting, and that doesn't happen anymore. They have to rely on what the U.S. Government tells them or other people with some agenda handing them some press release.

You know, I read a statistic once that said the average journalist at a major news organization now writes two and a half stories a day. So, if you think about the amount of time it takes to really look into something, to dig up something new, they just don't have the time to do that. They just, something comes across their desk and they just, basically, there's a stenographer that retypes it up.

So, you know, the media really has fallen down on the job and it becomes more and more like people like you and me kind of end up having to do the job that the media should have been doing and say: "Hey, you guys missed this. Look at this."

JON I always say that if the media had done its job, I would never have had to do what I've done over the last 14 years. (Right) And you wouldn't have had to do what you did.

PAUL So, I mean, to get back to protecting Bush. Think about how mind blowing it is that this Prince Bandar's nickname is Bandar Bush. I mean, he's not just not just some diplomat. He's as close as can be. And I read that—I recently

read, this surprised me—that even after he left office in terms of being the ambassador, he later went on to have important positions in the Saudi Government, but he is no longer coming to the U.S. and living in the U.S. all the time. And then Bush and Cheney also left office in 2008, but they stayed close, apparently, that to this day they're friends, and they advise each other, and continue to maintain very close relations.

So, this is a big, big egg on Bush's face that one of the key figures in the whole 9/11 plot, may be one of his closest friends.

JON His father brought him in to educate him on foreign policy in 1997, I believe. (Yeah)

All right, so let's get to the next question, which is the Yemen Al-Qaeda hub is a central part of the story concerning 9/11. What points of interest about it are most interesting to you?

PAUL Well, you know, this gets to so many different things. It's amazing to me that the media and the general public have looked at certain aspects of the 9/11 story and then overlooked others. Even if you look at either the so-called conspiracy theorists or the truth movement or what have you, I think some very important things that are extremely damning for the U.S. Government have just been overlooked. One of them is this Yemen hub. And a lot of it is because it has been so closely held as a secret that we didn't know most the basic facts about it until years after 9/11. James Bamford, an author—he did a couple of books that really opened up a lot of eyes on this, but didn't come out till 2006, 2008.

So, a lot of people don't know, and to get to the core of it is it's, I mean, it just, even thinking about it right now talking about it with you it just, sort of, my mind is blown all over again (Laughs), because in 1996, Al-Qaeda set up this hub. It was in a three-story building in Sanaa, Yemen—it's the capital of Yemen. And it was run by this guy named Ahmed al-Hada, and he was sort of this father of a terrorist family. He had like five or six sons, or sons-in-law, and every single one of them ended up being an Al-Qaeda operative and he himself was photographed with bin Laden and so forth. So, this is sort of like everybody in the family is diehard Al-Qaeda.

So, they figured this was a really loyal supporter and they set up a communication hub there, and the idea was that you would have, at the time, there were certain countries—Egypt is a really prominent one—that

the Government was trying to stomp out terrorism and so they would say: "We're just going to block all the phone calls from country A to country B because we know that a lot of the people who are making those phone calls are these Islamic militants." So, for instance, Egypt did not allow any phone call. If you were just a random Egyptian citizen, you were not allowed to call Afghanistan. I mean, Afghanistan back then was pretty much a basket case. You know, the Taliban in control. Not a lot of people had phones that could call internationally. So, it is probably true that, you know, a significant portion of those were people like bin Laden with his satellite phone and other militants, right?

So, what they did is they—and there were other cases like that. It's very hard for you to call from one country to another, or if you did, that might put you sort of—immediately in a suspicious person-to-be-investigated category. So, what they did was you would go through the hub, just literally like a human switchboard, you would call the Yemen hub, say, if you're in Afghanistan and you want to get a message to your co-conspirator on some plot who is based in say Sudan. And, so, you would pass the message through that hub. And it seems that almost immediately U.S. intelligence figured this out. Because Al-Qaeda had extremely poor operational security starting from the top. And that Osama bin Laden had a satellite phone, which he bought in around the same time 1996, that the hub started, and he would just call people all over the world who were involved in plots, like a hands-on manager. And the U.S. intelligence NSA learned his phone number almost immediately and began monitoring that at the highest priority. So, he made dozens of phone calls to the Yemen hub.

So, then, from there, it was not long before U.S. intelligence realized this was an intelligence goldmine, and they not only monitored the phone calls, but the CIA and the NSA got together, and they physically bugged the building itself. Somehow, they got people inside, planted bugs on the inside of the building. They had a mechanism that they would take a picture, you know, high-quality picture from some kind of zoom, maybe they had a telephoto lens down the street or something, of everybody who was coming and going from the building. They even had a satellite in the sky that was pretty much dedicated just to this hub and collecting information about this hub.

So, it couldn't have been any more important in terms of intelligence collection. And, I don't know when it happened, but there's a story that the FBI, they had their bin Laden unit that they put up a big map of the world

on the wall and they would put a little push pin at every single place in the world that there would be a phone call from that location to the Yemen hub, and it gave them just this worldwide map of exactly whatever Al-Qaeda's presence was in any given country. It was an incredible, incredible intelligence goldmine. (Right)

And, so, we have to remember that this hub was not exposed as in terms of Al-Qaeda realizing that they had been bugged all the while and that their phone calls had been monitored all the while until early 2002. So, that's well after 9/11 and before that—

JON I'm sorry. It's very hard to think that anything that was said or done within that building was not known to intelligence agencies.

PAUL Right. Well, the question that you have is the sharing question. And it's definitely a real problem that these intelligence agencies did not share, and it continues until this day. That that's always—that people have their little fiefdoms and they don't want to share their information, right? And it seems like that the FBI often would sort of have to beg, borrow, or steal to get information about the hub. They were not—because they don't have—the FBI has no foreign capability. They could not directly wiretap the hub themselves, so they had to rely on the good graces of the CIA or the NSA to share the information with them.

But it's very significant though—

JON One thing—

PAUL Sorry, let me just say one more thing. It is very significant when you look at the failures of 9/11, that both the NSA and the CIA had this joint monitoring of the hub. So, because the NSA has been notoriously bad about sharing their information. And when you look at the stories about the hub, and we'll get to in a minute how, you know, al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar in San Diego were calling to and from the Hub. Right. There's been all these stories in the media that the NSA knew that, and they never shared it, and they claim it was because of the laws at the time that they were not allowed to share it, blah blah blah. And, so, we need to have all this surveillance and allow even more surveillance, and they've used this story as a justification for these very expansive surveillance programs.

Well, that's totally relevant, because the CIA was getting the same information that the NSA was. They had—it was CIA people who went into the hub, and because the NSA doesn't have this operational capability and had planted the bugs, and it had planted the photographic equipment and so forth to get everything monitored in every possible way. Right.

So, you know, continuing back to the main story of the hub—were you going to say something?

JON I was just going to say something with regard to the sharing problem. There are individuals that make decisions not to share information. It's not just some—where it just doesn't happen, or you just don't share. There are individuals that make that decision. And I believe that those individuals need to be held accountable and were not.

PAUL Yeah, and we have to find out why the heck would they not share something that is just—a smoking gun. This is some incredible thing that you have—we're going to blow up this building in five days—and you know that, and you don't share it.

And that's exactly what happened with the Yemen hub. Because—I've not only looked into 9/11, but I looked at all these terrorism acts and connections going all the way back to the 1970s. And the Yemen hub is very much involved in the embassy bombings in 1998, and the USS Cole bombing in 2000, which you know took place just 100 miles or 200 miles from the Yemen hub. That was another city in Yemen. And, so, they were not just a switchboard, but, like this Ahmed al-Hada and different people living in the hub were directly involved in these different terrorist activities.

And Osama bin Laden himself, for instance—when the embassy bombings happened in Africa in 1998, in Kenya and Tanzania, bin Laden himself called up the embassy bombers, the people in Kenya and Tanzania, in the days before and the weeks before the bombing and would talk to them. We don't know what the contents of those phone calls are, but it's pretty mind blowing that we know that—the NSA claims that from way back that they not only bugged the satellite phone of bin Laden, but they considered it so important that any time, 24-hours a day, if there was any phone call, they would get it translated within an hour. And he was—he made hundreds of phone calls—and he was calling all these people around the world that were, like in the embassy bombings, were the direct bombers that were taking part in the operational cells. And then you'd have phone calls

between those people and the Yemen hub, and then bin Laden and the Yemen hub, and so on and so forth.

I mean, you can make the spider web of all of these connections. And these people, as I said, had very poor operational security. Sometimes they would talk in coded language—but in such a way—it's pretty amateurish like we're going to deliver the package next Tuesday or, whatever. It doesn't take a real genius to realize the package might mean the bomb. You know, there was sort of that level of security. It was not like these calls were encrypted or they were talking in some indecipherable code. Right.

So, we have to wonder, not only why the 9/11 attacks weren't stopped, but how Al-Qaeda was able to do anything. It was while the Yemen hub was in existence, because it was just like a golden path. This is exactly what we're doing and who's doing it where. And, I would love to see more of that declassified because we don't know, in most cases, what the contents of the phone calls are. But just knowing that this person called that person on that day, you know.

Like for instance, in the days leading up to the embassy bombings, the phone calls with the embassy with the Yemen hub grew more and more frequent. And, even when they were in the car or the van driving on the way to the bombing that was going to take place, they were still on the phone talking with the Yemen hub. So, how is it that you're monitoring that, you know, to the highest level, like this is literally, you know, bin Laden's phone and these are THE two things that are the most important intelligence gathering points you have—period. And you wouldn't catch on that they're going to be bombing an embassy. It's inexplicable. And, so—

JON I'm sorry. The 9/11 Commission barely investigated the NSA. And one of the lies that we found was that—you mentioned that the NSA was monitoring the two Saudi San Diego hijackers making phone calls to the Yemen hub, and at the time, they said they could not identify where the calls were coming from, only where they were going to. But we have now from NSA whistleblower Bill Binney and, I think, from Thomas Drake, who confirmed it to me that they were well aware of where the calls were coming from, which means the NSA knew that these two hijackers were in the United States.

PAUL Well, you know, what we find over and over again is that there are these limited hangouts where the Government tries to release just enough

information to explain something that's, you know, that they're forced to explain. For instance, for a long time it was thought that the U.S. intelligence didn't know about the Yemen hub until shortly after the embassy bombings. And that's why they were not able to stop the embassy bombings. It was only the phone traffic afterwards where they caught on, right? But, you know, we learned and Drake and Binney, as you mentioned, have confirmed this that they knew about the Yemen hub and they were monitoring it from, you know, two years prior.

And, so, they try to put forth these cover stories or limited hangouts, as you call them, and like will this float? And if the media is gullible, and if the general public—no one's really questioning it, sometimes it sticks. But we have to look with a more critical eye and say: "Does this make sense?" And, of course the idea that the NSA, which is all about—well, not all about, but a big part about—monitoring phone calls that they would not be able to figure out where a phone call is coming from? Are you kidding me? That's just laughable. Right?

But, you know, there's a lot of people out there who just, they don't know much about this, and they just take it at face value because here's some important U.S. official who's saying that, and they just implicitly trust these people.

But to get back to the story—the Yemen hub—we have this incredible intelligence data point. And the really—one of the really mind-blowing things about the Yemen hub is the fact that Khalid al-Mihdhar is the son-in-law of this Ahmed al-Hada, who is the man who owns the building and lives in the building. And, so, when Khalid al-Mihdhar—he's normally around the world taking part in all these operations, militant activity. He kept his wife and his children living in the Yemen hub. So, he would very often physically go there and he'd want to visit his wife and he had a toddler-age baby, aged kids. He'd want to go visit them. And, so, in the tail end of 1999, U.S. intelligence had him—Khalid al-Mihdhar—at the Yemen hub and they were monitoring him, and they were monitoring phone calls that he was making to various other people around the world and they were arranging this Malaysia meeting that was going to take place, I believe it was beginning on January 5th in Malaysia.

And, so, U.S. intelligence was, for once, seemed to be on the ball, and when he left to go to Malaysia he stopped off in the United Arab Emirates. And while he stayed the night there they had some people sneak into his hotel

room and take a picture of his passport. And it showed that he already had a visa to go to the United States, which was a real mind blower because, at this time, there really had been no direct evidence of any Al-Qaeda activity in the United States. There'd been different people suspected here and there, but nothing rock solid. And this guy Khalid al-Mihdhar was as die-hard core member of Al-Qaeda as you can get.

He started off fighting in Bosnia in the early 1990s and then he fought for the Taliban and he also fought in Chechnya, and he was taking part in all kinds of operations. He was involved in embassy bombings, for instance, in '97. He got on the bad list of the Saudi Government because he and Nawaf al-Hazmi were found to have been trying to smuggle weapons into Saudi Arabia, which you know kind of breaks their usual like: "We'll let these terrorists go do their terrorists thing, if they're attacking, you know, terrorists or if they're attacking some other, Chechnya or something, but they're attacking Saudi Arabia. That's a whole other matter." That becomes, you know, they go straight to the top of these, are the people we've got to stop. Right.

So, this is the context of going to Malaysia. And, I believe—I'm a little vague on the details because it's been a while, since I've really done all this 9/11 research, but I believe Nawaf al-Hazmi was also at the Yemen hub and went also to Malaysia but took a separate route. And the U.S. Government claims that they kind of lost him along the way, but that should have been of no matter because then they were monitoring the Yemen hub. And, you know, you have Khalid Al-Mihdhar, Nawaf Al-Hazmi, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who's the 9/11 mastermind. You have the guy we mentioned earlier, Khalid bin Attash. You have, possibly, Hambali who's this Southeast Asian Al-Qaeda mastermind. You have a whole bunch. There are about a dozen people, possibly some of the one or two of the 9/11 hijackers. They all get together in this condominium outside of the capital of Kuala Lumpur and they meet for like four days.

And the story is that the CIA had the Malaysian Government do the monitoring systems taking place in Malaysia and that the Malaysian Government botched the monitoring, and at the end of the four days they said: "Oh, sorry, but we have no idea what actually was said inside the condominium." Which, personally, I think that's just another limited hangout story because it would be so embarrassing that we find that the U.S. had four days of all the top leaders pretty much except for bin Laden

discussing not only the 9/11 plot, but also being planned at the same time was the USS Cole bombing.

But, let's just say that they didn't know what was being said within the meeting. It also shouldn't have been really that important because these guys, as I said, they were so poor on their security that they would just talk about these things pretty much openly. And the Malaysians did a lot of recording of them outside of the condominium.

We know, for instance, that they took a lot of photographs of them. But it's less known that they also took a lot of video footage of them, of the participants of the Malaysia meeting, which should have been an intelligence bonanza. Right? (Right) And, then we know that the U.S. Government considered this so important that at the time that the Malaysian meeting was happening that people in the Government at the cabinet level, you know, heads of intelligence agencies were being given sort of as-it-happens briefings about what was going on in the Malaysia meeting.

But then things get strange, because then the story is that the meeting ends and all these participants go their separate ways. And it's just whoopsie daisy. U.S. intelligence just somehow lost track of everybody. And, about two weeks later, Khalid Al-Mihdhar and Nawaf Al-Hazmi got on a plane from Bangkok, Thailand and flew to Los Angeles and then proceeded to spend, especially for Nawaf al-Hazmi, just pretty much most of the rest of the two years living in the United States. And how on earth is it possible that intelligence agencies would not notice this and that—

JON Well, that brings us to our next question. But, go ahead. I'm sorry.

PAUL Well, and then, furthermore, we do find evidence that they knew, particularly in the CIA, and that they did not share that information with the FBI. And then this gets to a whole mystery which I'm sure you want to discuss, which is Richard Clarke's theory about: "could the hijackers, especially, Nawaf Al-Hazmi and Khalid Al-Mihdhar, have been people that the CIA were hoping to turn to become informants." (Right) And the idea would be that: "So, we'll just let them go. We will keep a close eye on them, but we don't want to tell the FBI, because they've got a whole different mission, and their goal is to catch people and put them in jail." And we just want to string this out and see what we can learn and, potentially, turn them, so that we can—it's believed the CIA had no informants within Al-Qaeda at the time. The whole U.S. intelligence had no informants and they really

wanted them and they thought well this is a really golden opportunity.
[Right]

So, that's the theory and—

JON Well, I have a couple of problems with the theory. Number one: How long does it take to realize that people are not going to turn? Because they were here for a long time. Number two: Why didn't they select terrorists outside of the United States so as to not put any Americans at risk.

PAUL Right. Well, you know, we can—one sort of aspect of the theory also is the thinking that your average CIA agent is a white guy, doesn't speak Arabic, you know, it would be very hard to get close to someone like this. So, you would enlist the help of the Saudis and, thus, this would explain why you have Bayoumi and Bassnan keeping a close eye on these two guys when they're living in San Diego. Right. But there are, as you point out, there are all kinds of problems with this.

Well, one problem is that there was this USS Cole bombing that took place in October 2000, and Khalid Al-Mihdhar, he kind of stayed for about six months in San Diego and then he left. And he seemed to be this international jet setter. He went to a lot of different countries, doing all kinds of different things. We have to remember that Al-Qaeda, at least back then, was a very small organization and there were really it seems less than 100 people that were truly trusted, and out of those probably, you know, some portion of them were, for whatever reason, not willing to actually take part in operations. So, there may have only been a few dozen that were the real actionable people.

And, so you find them they're often recycling the same people over and over again in different operations, which for any organization, especially a terrorist organization, is idiotic because like let's say you have the embassy bombing, right? Immediately, thereafter the U.S. starts an investigation and lo and behold Khalid Al-Mihdhar was one of the people that took part—not, you know, he wasn't one of the bombers, but he was indirectly involved—and then he's involved in the Cole bombing. So, a good investigation of the embassy bombing should have stopped the Cole bombing just from him alone. Right? As well as a bunch of other people that were involved in both. But then, there's two major—the two big Al-Qaeda operations—use the same guy for the 9/11 operation. So, if anybody has really done any of their homework on the investigations for either of those two things, they should

be able to stop the 9/11 attack. Khalid Al-Mihdhar actually was in Yemen at the time of the Cole bombing. It seems he had a pretty significant role in that bombing. So, if you've been watching him and Nawaf Al-Hazmi in San Diego for the last, whatever, nine months or so, and then for some reason, inexplicably, that hasn't led you to stop the Cole bombing, which in and of itself would make no sense, because the whole point would be to be gathering intelligence and figuring out who are these people working with? And, like I said, they had such poor operational security with the phone calls to the Yemen hub. It should have just been a, you know, just an open book. Right.

But, let's say you screw up and you don't stop that, then these guys continue to move around the world and move around the United States and you're still doing nothing? You're still just watching them for another year and a half?

JON It's unbelievable.

PAUL I mean, that doesn't make any sense. You know, there's rules about informants, like if you are moles—let's say you're a mole within the mafia, right. And if you start doing actual say assassinations on the behalf of the mafia, that's the point that the whole operation says: "Whoa, stop this guy. Pull him out. Maybe charge him with murder." You know, you don't just continue to use that person as an informant, no matter what they're getting, because that person has just killed people. You know, that's how law enforcement has always operated.

So, the idea that these people would be allowed to take part in the Cole bombing, and then you're just continuing to allow all this to happen, just doesn't make any sense. Furthermore, I mean, if you're looking at who would you turn? These guys would be last on your list. As I said, they fought in Bosnia; they fought in Chechnya; they've taken part in just about every Al-Qaeda major terrorist operation of the last 10 years, and you would expect them to all of a sudden say: "Yeah, I think I'll go join the U.S. and work for them." What are the odds of that happening? It makes no sense.

JON It makes no sense to me. But I don't have an honest theory as to why it did happen. I mean, if you want to go for the low-hanging fruit, you say well, they did it to protect them to allow them to do the 9/11 attacks. But, I don't

know that. I don't know why they did it? But I don't think Clarke's theory stands up to scrutiny.

PAUL I mean, if I were to be generous and play devil's advocate, you might argue that there was a—you could argue a lot of different things—but one thing you might argue is like maybe the Saudis are playing a double game, because these people like Bayoumi and Bassnan really had their loyalty with Islamic militancy, that they would say: "Oh, yeah, we're watching these guys and they're just living normal lives. Nothing to report. They haven't contacted anybody anywhere and so on and so forth, right?" And, so then it's just this colossal screw up, and the CIA got played by the Saudis and they never figured it out until it was too late that these guys really were, you know, Al-Qaeda.

But, that doesn't make any sense either, for a lot of reasons. One is that, as I said Nawaf Al-Hazmi was on the move for most of the time. While now—sorry, Khalid Al-Mihdhar was on the move, while Nawaf Al-Hazmi generally stayed in United States. And Khalid Al-Mihdhar was involved in just all kinds of intrigues. And on three separate occasions, he went back to the Yemen hub and lived there for significant periods of time, like maybe a month or two months. And you have to remember how monitored the Yemen hub was, right. And how poor their operational security was. If he was back in the Yemen hub, do you really think that he wouldn't tell these other people like, you know, the father-in-law, Ahmed al-Hada and all his brothers and brothers-in-law and so forth, who are all these Al-Qaeda people.

You know: "Oh, yeah, I'm taking part in the Cole bombing. It's going to come up in a couple of months. Can you help me out with this or that? And I'm going back to the United States. I've come from the United States, I'm going back. And I'm going to be doing this and taking part in this operation. I've been learning to fly planes."

I mean, these guys were being monitored in the Yemen hub 24 hours a day and his wife was there. And you're telling me he would have kept all of this completely a secret from everybody else in the Yemen hub? That doesn't make any sense.

JON It's inconceivable.

PAUL Right. And then you have these phone calls from the United States to the Yemen hub, back and forth. We know of a few of them. We know that not only did they know the NSA and the CIA knew the phone number, but they also knew the content. In some of the 9/11 Timeline entries you can find some details about the content. I was just looking up something related to the 28 pages with this other document. I forget what it's called—the Document 13 or 17, or whatever that came out—what's that document called?

JON Document 17.

PAUL Document 17, right.

JON That's what Mike Jacobsen and Dana Lesemann (RIP) wanted to look at.

PAUL Right, that gives some mentions of some of the things that were said in a call from the spring of 2000, for instance. You know, just kind of mentioned in passing. So, we know that this stuff was recorded. But it seems like there was a lot of stove piping that was going on that the FBI in particular was not being told. There's this whole story about Ali Soufan who was the FBI agent who was pretty savvy and competent, and he spoke Arabic. He was investigating the—I forget, I think he was investigating the Cole bombing—and very quickly got onto the trail of not only Al-Hazmi and Al-Mihdhar, but the Malaysian meeting. And he didn't have solid proof, but there were a lot of lines that were pointing to something happened that was important in Malaysia in the beginning of January, and he went to the CIA, repeatedly, and with increasing specificity and said: "What do you have on this?" And they kept saying: "Nothing, nothing, nothing." You know?

And, eventually, on 9/12, the day after 9/11, he was in Yemen still doing investigative work about the Cole bombing, and he got sent a package and it was a big detailed document about the Malaysia meeting. And he said he was so upset that he immediately went to the bathroom and threw up, because it showed that obviously, in the last 12 hours or whatever this wasn't collected by the CIA. This was stuff that they had had for months and months and months—probably since the Malaysian meeting—and that they hadn't deliberately not shared with him or with other people like him who could have really used that in their investigative leads. Right.

So, it's totally understandable when people think like how on earth could these attacks have happened unless somebody within the Government

wanted them to happen? Because this is just so inexplicable. I don't know. You know, I can't go there, because I can't determine what these people were thinking. But to me it almost doesn't make a difference because if you're doing this on purpose or you're doing this because of sheer incompetence, either way, it's so bad. Incompetence is so ridiculously bad that you should be in jail anyway.

You know, like to have these guys go ahead, do the Cole bombing, and the only logical explanation that would be semi-charitable is like I said you're following them for intelligence or trying to turn them and you let them go for another year and they're meeting, phoning, you know, crossing the U.S. repeatedly with practice flights that they would get on these 747s, you know, and have trial runs. And they met in Las Vegas, the whole group would get together and, Atta would meet with Al-Mihdhar, and blah blah blah, to have all that go down, and still we didn't stop 9/11. How on earth is that possible? That would have to be such incompetence that, you know, if anyone has ever been put in jail for gross incompetence, it should be those people.

JON And, yet, what happened was people were rewarded and promoted who shouldn't have been.

PAUL Right, so, I wish that even those people who are of the thinking of the U.S. Government being behind this, that they would pay more attention to this Yemen hub, because it is—and the movements of Al-Hazmi and Al-Mihdhar. Because it's like—you pull on this thread and you just keep pulling and pulling and it just gets stranger and stranger. Why weren't these guys stopped? For most of the other hijackers, the quote unquote "muscle hijackers" a lot of them only came into the U.S. two, three months before. Maybe a little more than that. But they were kind of trickling in near the end there. Right. But these two guys in San Diego, they were living so openly. Nawaf Al-Hazmi even had his name in the San Diego public phone book. (Laughs) They were not trying to hide. They had credit cards in their name. They had bought a car in their name. They had bank accounts in their name. It just goes on and on. If there was any search of any database, how do you not pick these people up.

And, in fact, there's a little aside. There was a—it was around September, no October 22nd or thereabouts—the CIA finally gave the names of Al-Hazmi and Al-Mihdhar and a couple other people to the FBI and mentioned that they had, at least one of them if I recall, had this visa to come to the

United States. Right. So then the FBI was tasked with searching for them. And at that point, if they would have conducted a competent search, or even really just any search, they should have picked them up right away. Because, even up until the day of the attacks, they were moving around, yes, and they were staying in sometimes different hotels and so forth. But they were continuing to do everything in their own name. They would even to the point of buying pizzas delivered to a hotel room, using a credit card, which talking about poor operational security. I mean, when I was a teenager I worked for a summer as a pizza delivery guy. I don't think there was one person in the whole summer that paid for a pizza with a credit card. It's just strange.

And, so they had all these databases. They had a police database, which they had been in because they had gotten into a few minor run ins that got them into the police database. They had some card databases that they had gotten into. They had a bank database. They had credit card database. They had—you go down the line. There were like eight or nine sort of major databases, which they found just after 9/11, if you just type in the name Nawaf Al-Hazmi, and there's different ways to spell it—but with a dash or without a dash and so on and so forth. But even different variants they found were in these different databases and they would have pointed just like a giant red arrow to where these people were. At the very least, even if you couldn't physically locate them, you would have found, very quickly, from their immigration records that they, in fact, still were in the United States.

And, if you would have put out an all-points bulletin, I would think that the hijackers would have had to cancel the operation right then and there. And for some strange reason—there's some apparent low-level FBI agent was assigned to search for these two people and they claimed that they looked into the databases but somehow missed them all. Which, there's so many things about this that just make you scratch your head and just say: "What the heck is going on here? How is that possible?"

JON Yeah, well, unfortunately that applies to a lot of things concerning 9/11. (Laughs) What can you tell us about the Al-Qaeda support network that exists within the U.S.

PAUL Well, before I want to get into that, I want to totally switch gears, because another question that you were telling me you wanted to talk about was to look at sort of a bigger picture of the War on terror and how the U.S. has

behaved. And let me just kind of get into that first, because I think some of the stuff you have to kind of set the scene to understand the overall milieu. I think it's very important for anyone trying to understand not only 9/11, but geopolitics for the past 30-40 years up until today has to understand this.

And it goes all the way back to the 1950s, if not earlier, which is the idea that after World War II ended, the U.S. was involved in the Cold War with the Russians and was very keen anywhere and everywhere in the world to defeat communism and even socialism. And, so, there were all these middle eastern countries that were very important strategically, and sometimes they would be toying with socialism or leftism of various sorts. And the U.S. didn't like that. And the U.S. Government found out pretty early on that they had sort of a natural ally with fundamentalist Islamists. Because those people also really hate communism. They're sort of naturally politically conservative and often at odds in terms of—this radical group wants to overthrow the Government and some communist group also wants to overthrow the Government. So, they both are fighting with each other to see who's going to be successful, if you will. Right.

So, the U.S. learned early on, at least into the 1950s, that they could use these Islamists kind of as pawns in a larger chess game, kind of as tools for foreign policy. Like, let's say you have a country that is—was an American ally but is now toying with leaving the U.S. orbit. You could support a fundamentalist rebel movement in that country and kind of turn on the spigot, turn off the spigot, in terms of providing the money and weapons until the country gets the message that if you want this problem to go away, you help the U.S. Or, sometimes it would work where there would be an opponent of the United States and the U.S. would support some rebel movement in order to harass them or overthrow them. You know, various means.

But the bottom line is that when you're dealing with the Muslim world, most of the time if there was some sort of rebel movement, it would be these fundamentalists. Because most of these countries, practically all of them, had some sort of corrupt royal leadership. A lot of these countries would have a lot of oil money and these people would become personally very wealthy and very corrupt, and then the public, as a whole, would be dissatisfied and suspicious about the corruption at the top and so there would be this sort of natural call to let's go back to the purity of Islam as the way it was practiced long ago and kick out these corrupt Westernized bums and have this sort of pure vision of Islam to replace it. Right. And we see

that all the way. I mean, that's kind of ISIS's message. And that's basically Al-Qaeda's message, and so on and so forth.

This has happened over and over again in different countries that there's always these movements coming up. And what the U.S. has found is that that they could use these as tools. Like a really classic example would, of course, be what happened in Afghanistan in the 1980s, where Russia got heavily militarily involved there. And the U.S. worked closely with the Saudis to give them kind of the Russian version of their own Vietnam where they got in this quagmire and the U.S. was pouring in billions of dollars to aid the mujahideen rebels. Right.

JON Wasn't Bandar involved in that, as well?

PAUL Probably, yeah. I'm a bit foggy on some of the details, but I would be surprised if he wasn't. And, you know, everybody—a lot of people. I wouldn't say everybody because some people now don't even know what 9/11 is, but a lot of people know that that's how bin Laden got his start and most of the top people in Al-Qaeda, they all sort of got together and found common cause in this Afghanistan fight. Right.

But you can look at other things that have been more recent where it's a similar sort of situation. Another almost exact parallel is Chechnya, starting from the mid-1990s, where again the United States thought let's have this big thorn in the side of Russia. They're fighting in Chechnya against these Islamist militants. So, we will do what we can to support them and the more Russian soldiers they kill and the more problems they cause with the Russians, that's good for us from a zero-sum game in terms of political strategy.

Or, you could go look at Bosnia in the early 1990s, where exactly the same thing happened. Where the members Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbians, you know, the U.S. wanted him out and the other two countries involved there when Yugoslavia broke up, the main ones were Croatia and Bosnia. Now, Bosnia was—basically, everyone in Bosnia 90-or so percent of the people are Muslim. And, so, it became another cause for Islamist militants. And al-Qaida got very involved. Bin Laden, personally, got very involved. I know of two reporters who personally saw and spoke to Osama bin Laden in Bosnia in the waiting room to go meet the President of Bosnia, who is a Muslim. It's in the timeline. And it was believed that he would meet with Osama bin Laden, the President I forget his name, on a weekly basis and

that bin Laden for a while he was pretty much living most of the time in Bosnia going back and forth between there and Sudan. And both of these reporters, I think one of them was for the *London Times* and the other was for *Der Spiegel*, when they later had the trial of Milosevic, they actually testified in the trial, under oath, to this effect that they had seen Osama bin Laden there. And it just got no news coverage, even though it was in the paper as so many things are, you know, page B12, or whatever.

JON

That is the end of Part 2. Please be sure to check out the other three shows in this series. Thank you.



Chapter/Episode 31 – Paul Thompson – Part 3 – July 27, 2016

Jon Gold (JON)

Paul Thompson (PAUL)

JON Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week I'm having a four-part series that covers a multitude of issues. This is Part Three.

PAUL Crucially, Osama bin Laden had this fake charity and the Bosnians were in a real fix because the Serbians, when Yugoslavia broke up they basically inherited the Yugoslav military, so they had tanks and planes and artillery, and the Bosnians had nothing. And, then the United States and the European Union at the beginning of the war said: "We're going to have a total ban on all weapons going into the whole region." You know, the former Yugoslavia. So, it would have been just a slaughter that the Bosnians and the Croatians would have been defeated.

But what happened was that the U.S. had kind of a nudge-nudge, wink-wink where they let the Saudis and a lot of people in the Arab world fund, to the tune of billions of dollars, weapons and supplies coming in to fight the Serbians, because that was kind of the idea—that we're on the same side there. Right. So, there was this one fake charity of bin Laden's that they

believe, I think, two billion dollars of money from the Middle East passed through that charity into Bosnia.

And it goes even deeper than that. There was a need—that Serbia is a larger country. Bosnia is pretty small for just sheer numbers of people fighting. So, there were a lot of people from the Muslim world just like in Afghanistan where it was like this call. Come join the holy war. And people from all over the world come join the Bosnian holy war.

And that, again, nudge-nudge, wink-wink that the United States and other Western countries gave because they wanted the Serbians to at least be stopped from conquering their neighbors, that they would not only let this happen, but often encouraged this to happen.

So, for instance, there were Al-Qaeda linked charity fronts in the United States that would pretty much openly call for people to come fight in Bosnia. And they did. And, this happened in Britain and other places. And there's even stories that have been reported in mainstream media that the United States would fly them over there on C-130 military aircraft and drop them off because it's like who would we rather be fighting here? U.S. soldiers or some of these militants. (Right)

So, this happened. Now, interestingly it turned out that a bunch of the people who went and fought in Bosnia later came back and, actually, while the Bosnian war was going on, and took part in the World Trade Center bombing in 1993. So, this policy always had a blowback element. They call it blowback, where you're playing with fire. You're dealing with these people in these hotspots kind of hoping that they will go and kill or harass your enemies. But these people generally hate you too. They're fundamentalists and they—the ones that say: "We hate Russia in Chechnya, they also say we hate Israel, and they also say we hate the United States," and they would be just as happy to be killing people in those countries, if they had the chance. Right?

JON Well, it's interesting, the shenanigans that took place during the '93 bombings with regard to Emad Salem and the FBI.

PAUL Well, we could go into so many different things. (Laughs) Yeah, I mean, there were, again—and so many times it turns out they're informants or wiretaps or whatever, that they're a good reason to stop these attacks. And,

again, it's incompetence or whatever. I think in the case of the World Trade Center bombing I think that that was incompetence.

You know, people forget that that bomb that blew up killed six people. It came very close to killing tens of thousands of people. It would have made 9/11 look small, because they planted a bomb in the basement and it would have—they had forensic experts, bomb experts, look later and they said: "If they would have just used some more explosives to have a bigger bomb, it would have knocked the whole, one of the towers, over." And, you know, in the middle of the day, there are tens of thousands, sometimes up to 50,000 people there who could have been killed in one stroke. (Right)

So, you know, one of the things about 9/11 that's, thank god, is that because they attacked so early in the morning, before people generally were at work at nine, the number of people inside the towers were much less than it otherwise could have been. If they were going to maximize the body count, they could easily, they would have done it in the middle of the day, they would have killed tens of thousands of people.

So, yeah, I don't, you know—So that was a close call, you know, that they, the U.S. intelligence knew: Boy, we almost lost 50,000- 40,000 people in downtown Manhattan because of this blowback policy.

So, you would have thought that they might have learned something. And there's even a story that came out about a year later that was kind of an apology story from the CIA. It said that there was an internal investigation and basically realized that it was their screw up that allowed this to happen. And that almost every single person involved in the plot was somehow connected to the CIA. Because they had—they were grabbing these militants off the streets in New York City in different places and saying go fight in Bosnia or go fight in Afghanistan. And, you know, and kind of working with them in these overseas intrigues only to find that it would come back and, literally, blowback.

So, this is the kind of the larger context that you have to look at not only 9/11 but, you know, these other terror incidents and wars that take place—that we always do this supporting of these Islamist movements thinking that we'll be very clever and we'll use these people as our pawns and our stooges and then they end up attacking us as well. You were talking earlier about ISIS. This is a good example with ISIS. It was not that long ago when Senator John McCain met with a bunch of ISIS people, before they were

known as ISIS, and gave some interviews saying: "Why aren't we supporting these guys? We should be giving them money and weapons." And now he wishes that interview could be wiped off the face of the earth because it looks so bad. But, this is the—like we never learn our lesson about: "you play with fire, your hands get burned."

We can see this, also, very much in Libya with the 2011 war. Right. And then after that ended, we thought: "Well, there's all these weapons. The country is just sort of overflowing with weapons because even before the war started, Muammar Gaddafi stockpiled a crazy number of weapons and, boy, wouldn't it be nice to have these people fighting Assad in Syria to have some of that weaponry." So, you know, it's still kind of a bit mysterious, but there have been credible news reports that the U.S. set up a secret program to take the weapons from Libya and bring them over to the Islamist militant fighters in Syria. And, you know, that again was like how was ISIS started? We were one of the main factors with that program that would seem.

So, you know, we never learn these lessons. But if you're looking at why a lot of these terror attacks happen, you might think that it has to do with this strategy.

To give you an example. There is the case of Zacarias Moussaoui. Now, I don't know if this is well known, but I think it's not that well known, is that he was a recruiter for the Chechnya war. And this was well-known within intelligence circles in the West prior to him being arrested shortly before 9/11. The French had files on him, and the British had files on him, and the U.S. had files on him. And he would go back and forth between Western countries and Chechnya and find dissatisfied youths who were Muslim and say: "Hey, go join the holy war and find a cause, find a reason to, you know, think you're important, blah blah blah."

And, so, if you are looking at why nobody seemed to care about Moussaoui when he was arrested in the middle of August 2001, I think it has directly to do with the fact that he was serving this role in Chechnya. A lot of people talk about this idea of "good terrorists" quote unquote and "bad terrorists" quote unquote. And the idea of the good terrorist is that's somebody, or you might call him quote unquote "freedom fighter," if you're knee-deep in the propaganda, the idea that that's someone in some rebel movement that we want to see succeed. And, so, then we want to support them. But, if they're fighting some cause we don't want to succeed, then they're a bad terrorists. But what they're doing—blowing things up and killing people—is the

same. Right? And what we find is that, oftentimes, it's the same people that they go from one country to another. And, you know, it's this small core of Islamic militants. A lot of the people—I was doing some follow-up research on what happened to some of the people in the embassy bombing that didn't get caught, and a couple of them now are fighting for ISIS in Syria.

So, there's this blowback effect that we protect, or look the other way, for the militants who are doing things that we want them to do.

So, remember, there's this FBI agent working with Coleen Rowley in the Minneapolis department of the FBI. I believe his name is Harry Samit. He later testified that he tried to contact everybody he could within the U.S. Government about the fact that they had Moussaoui, and that he was talking about, you know, wanting to fly a plane and asking questions about crashing it into the White House, and all this stuff that was so damning and incriminating. He went to the CIA, he went to the FBI, he went to—just a whole alphabet of different agencies. And every single person just pretty much shut the door in his face.

JON I think we refer to that as criminal negligence.

PAUL Well, yeah. And when he testified, he made a statement that I thought was really interesting. He said: "I came to the conclusion that—and I'm paraphrasing—that there is no amount of evidence I could have had that would have gotten these people to do something about him. Like there was just something about him that no one was going to do anything, like he had this protected status." And you could easily see that, you could imagine, someone in, you know, say the CIA, would know his history of being a recruiter for Chechnya and say, you know: "He's one of the quote unquote good terrorists. Let him go." And that has been such an idiotic and tragic policy that, you know, people a lot smarter than me, like there's a guy named Chalmers Johnson who's written a lot of books about blowback and has pointed out that it has failed, over and over and over again. Not just the terror aspect, but when the U.S. Government tries meddling through coups and assassinations and so forth, there's always these side effects that are not anticipated and end up just making the situation worse than it was before.

So, one other thing I want to say, just to finish off about this idea of this larger context that is, I think, very revealing is that one of the, I wouldn't say architects of this policy of using Islamic militants, but he definitely took it to the next level and really ran with it, was Zbigniew Brzezinski,

who was the national security adviser under President Carter, and he was a real war hawk. And he had this idea of, he called it the arc of crisis of this sort of arc around the Soviet Union, and he wanted to stir up trouble in a lot of these countries which would give the Soviet Union a lot of trouble. You know, like for instance, there are a lot of countries nowadays that are independent but were Soviet republics back then, like Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan and so on. And he thought: "well, wouldn't it be great, if we could use these Islamic militants and sort of point them in the direction of the Soviet Union and then cause all kinds of trouble for them and it will be like kind of no cost for us. No American lives are lost." Right?

So, he was interviewed about this in 1998. And it is very revealing. That he, as part of this arc of crisis policy, he was basically the one that really initiated the Russian war in Afghanistan. Because he did all these destabilization projects prior to the Russians coming in that kind of forced the Russians to come in. The CIA was involved in intrigues there and funding Islamist rebels, and so forth, as they do over and over again and, as I said, in this general policy that goes back decades.

So, here they were doing it in Afghanistan. So, someone asked him, a journalist asked him if he regretted starting the Afghan war. And he said quote: "Regret what? That secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap. And you want me to regret it? The day that the Russians officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter: We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War."

Then he was asked if he regrets quote "having given arms and advice to future terrorists" unquote—which, by the way, I think was a very far-sighted question to ask him back in 1998. But he responded quote: "What is more important to the history of the world—the Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some stirred up Muslims or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the cold war?" Unquote.

And then the interviewer said quote: "Islamic fundamentalism represents a world menace today." And Brzezinski said quote: "Nonsense. It is said that the West has a global policy in regard to Islam. That is stupid. There isn't a global Islam." Unquote.

So, he was basically thinking: "Boy, these are just a bunch of rubes, a bunch of fools. These Islamist terrorists who will just, we'll just point them in the direction and they'll just go stir up trouble and blow things up and kill people and they will be unwitting tools thinking that they're anti-Western when they're actually, you know, fulfilling our foreign policy objectives." And, in some ways, you could say they had some successes with that. Like, yes, Afghanistan did become the Russian quagmire, the Vietnam War for Russia, right. But—as time went on the blowback just grew stronger and stronger. And, what's amazing is that to this day that we still do this. For instance, you know, in Syria or in Libya we can see recent examples where we just couldn't resist the temptation to say: "Well, okay, we'll support the rebels in Syria, but we'll only support the quote unquote "moderates." And this is something that you can go back decades where it's like they're always looking for the moderates and it always turns out that the supposed moderates are saying, you know, death to America, and would be just as happy to be blowing up a building in America as anything else that they're doing. (Right) And we're just fooling ourselves over and over again thinking that we can manipulate in this clever fashion without having the blowback effect.

So, you know, we're already going to be getting blowback from ISIS and it will go on for probably the next couple decades where people will come back from those—let's say ISIS gets defeated and, you know, the different people will scatter to the four winds and they'll still have their same ideology and they'll say: "Well, gee, now I'm over here in Algeria. I'll blow things up over here, or wherever they happen to be."

JON One of the things that's happened as a result of ISIS was it gave us the opportunity to go back to Iraq, which is where we wanted to be in the first place. If you remember, George W. Bush signed a Status of Forces Agreement that said everybody had to be out by a certain time. And Obama fought to keep troops in Iraq and couldn't do it because he couldn't get immunity for some of the crimes I believe we committed. And, so, we had to leave or withdraw. Now, because of ISIS, we have the ability to go back into Iraq. And we're slowly sending more and more soldiers into Iraq.

PAUL Well, I kind of disagree with that. Personally, I think that Obama, if he had a magic wand and he could make ISIS go away and just everything with Iraq go away, he'd be very happy to do that and have no troops in Iraq. I think one of the reasons ISIS happened was because he kind of overreacted from what happened under the Bush administration. And he just was like: "I

don't want to hear about Iraq. I'm sick of Iraq." You know, like with the time leading up to when ISIS just burst on the scene and started taking over major cities, the U.S. had really no involvement in Iraq. They weren't talking to the Government there. They weren't engaged in any way. Obama just wanted out. And, I think, in a way, that was an intelligent policy. Because Bush's idea, in the first place, to have—you've got to have all these military bases in the Persian Gulf was a foolish one. You don't. Why do you need all these troops in the Persian Gulf in the first place? They have these bases, like I said, in a few of the tiny Gulf states like Bahrain, which provide, I think enough security if something dramatic were to happen—like say, Iran were to suddenly up and attack another country, you have aircraft carriers, you have different things in the region already. Right. Why do you need 100,000 troops to be stationed there? It's very costly and you're not getting anything for it in return.

So, I don't see why Obama, if he's smart—maybe he's dumb—but, why he would want all these troops in Iraq? His attitude has been, you know, make this problem go away. And, also, in Afghanistan. I think in both those things, he keeps troops there because he's in a sort of a damned-if-you-do/damned-if-you-don't, where if you pull the troops out, then all of a sudden, the Islamist forces are going to completely take over. Like in Afghanistan. So, you kind of, you can't, you're forced to, sort of, have some troops there, but he keeps trying to bring it down to as few as possible, because he sees it's like this quagmire. So, I don't think he wants to be—Iraq is going to be, let's face it, it's going to be a quagmire for a long time. Why do you want to be losing lives and, like a money pit, constantly throwing more and more weapons and troops into that big money pit. Are you going to get any oil out of it? You're not going to get any oil out of it. That country is so messed up that it will not be a major oil producer, putting new fields on line, you know, I don't think for decades. So, what are you spending all that time and money for putting troops in there?

JON I don't know. I just remember that he did fight to keep us in there. So, anyway, let's move on.

PAUL Well, yeah, I mean, I think it was the same idea with Afghanistan. I think he would have been happy to keep, you know, 10,000, 20,000 troops in there. You know, in an ideal world. But to have, like the original Bush plan was to have this sort of major military presence and then it's kind of like, you know, the U.S. has this gigantic club that would keep any country in the Persian Gulf region in line by saying: "Look, we've got this army right on

your border, so you better do as we say." And, you know, there was even talk, I remember, it was reported in *Newsweek*—I even for some reason remember the details—some people within the Government saying: "Everybody wants to go to Baghdad, but real men want to go to Tehran." They were already thinking not just militarily dominating, you know, Iraq but that use that as a springboard to just control Iraq and Iran and the whole region. And, I think, Obama's coming from a different place.

JON I think back in the Bush administration they were using their ISI connections to use Jundallah to go into Iran to commit terrorist attacks—so that brings us into another—

PAUL Yeah, but before you get off that, it's just another classic example of thinking like we can be so clever and use these Islamist military groups to, like I said, like turning on and off the pressure for these countries like: "If you mess with us, we will stick this thorn in your side—in the form of some rebel province or, you know, terrorist group that's bombing your capital, or whatever, and do that as a way to it's like politics through whatever Machiavellian means you can manage." And I think it's a) highly unethical and b) has just been shown, time and time again, to just blow back and cause way more trouble than it's worth.

JON So, what is the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan?

PAUL That is a very good question, and it's interesting, you know, you look at the 28 pages, there's nothing in there about Pakistan. But you could write a hundred pages more on the Pakistan ties to 9/11. But, the thing is, Pakistan has a different role than Saudi Arabia does, and they've been working kind of hand-in-hand in a lot of things, going way back. And, you know, you could look for instance at their cooperation to support the Mujahideen back in the 1980s. But it goes a lot deeper than that.

Basically, in a larger sense, Saudi Arabia has been the money guy. They've got all that oil money and they're always funding different things. They like funding fake charities a lot. And Pakistan has been the operational guys. The ISI actually goes in and does things and kills people. And, you know, it's boots on the ground, sometimes even quasi-military operations. So, the two have these different functions. And when Pakistan needs money, they go to the Saudis, and when the Saudis need operational support, they go to the Pakistanis.

So, that's the way it's worked. And the Pakistanis have had such deep ties to both the Taliban—well, first of all, the Taliban, pretty much everyone in the know will admit that they are a branch of the ISI. They're just a puppet of the ISI. (Right) I remember one time I turned on the TV and I was watching the *MacNeil/Lehrer* news hour, which is very vanilla news coverage. They're not going to go into anything startling that, you know, like investigative journalism. But they had a panel of like five or six experts. And every single one of them they said: "Oh, yeah, Taliban. They're tools of the ISI."

I was like, wow! I'm surprised that there are—that even these, you know, mainstream pundits all accept that as fact. Because it's still kind of a "conspiracy theory" idea, because we are allies with the Pakistanis and we're enemies with the Taliban. So, it's like, does not compute. How can that be? It must not be true. And it's been true for not only since the formation of the Taliban that they were basically a creation by the ISI, and we even have quotes from even the prime minister of Pakistan at the time, Benazir Bhutto, said: "We gave them carte blanche. We gave them everything." Meaning the Taliban, that they were just—they were propped up entirely because of Pakistani support.

So, they haven't even tried to deny it. But where it gets more controversial is the idea of that still being true after 9/11. And the evidence for that is overwhelming. And I remember seeing 2005, 2006, seeing these news reports. And it just seems so strange to me that this stuff could be talked about in a mainstream way. Like I remember what might have been *Dateline* on ABC—or not *Dateline*. What's that other program? Their version of *60 Minutes*, whatever that is. They had a big piece about this and they were talking about how in Pakistan that there were all these terrorist training camps. And even training suicide bombers, and not just one or two, but dozens of these training camps. And some of them were for Al-Qaeda and some of them were for the Taliban, and you could go to a map and you could say, you know, here, there and there. And exactly, we've got satellite photos of them all and it's all totally known. Right? And it's 100 percent known by U.S. intelligence that these people are all being trained and funded by the ISI.

And what every single recruit from these training camps does they merely cross the border into Afghanistan and they start fighting U.S. soldiers, and they're blowing them up in suicide attacks or shooting at them with

weapons. And at the same time this is going on, the Pakistani Government is the target of billions of dollars of foreign aid from the United States.

So, this has happened for years and years, in an open way, that we were basically funding the very people that were killing our soldiers.

JON There was a political cartoon that said, I think it was an American taxpayer talking to somebody in Washington, saying: "Should we write the check to Pakistan or should we send it directly to the Taliban?"

PAUL Well, I'm surprised there even was that cartoon, because the American public has been, generally, clueless about this and the media has just been lapdog and hasn't made a big deal out of it. It was just like: "Well, what are you going to do? It's just one of those things." For some reason, this was just accepted as normal for year-after-year-after-year. And it still continues to this day. This goes, you know—just like we have had this policy of using terrorists as a foreign policy tool. Other countries have done the same thing.

We've already talked about how Prince Bandar has done this with the threat he made to Britain or with the support he's given to ISIS. Well, Pakistan has been one of the most blatant users of this strategy, in particular, with India.

JON Kashmir, yeah.

PAUL Yeah, it was particular in the Kashmir region. It goes all the way back to the 1980s, where Pakistan is a much smaller country than India. You know, they're outnumbered 5 to 1, 6 to 1 in terms of population. So, their army is similarly outnumbered. So, if there ever was a conventional war, Pakistan would just be slaughtered. And there have been a few wars going back to the 1970s and earlier, where they just barely hung on.

So, they decided the only way they could really even things up is through guerrilla warfare in Kashmir where you have a small number of people, but because they're using these terrorist or guerrilla warfare type tactics, they can pin down a large number of the opposing side. You never know where they're going to strike next. And they've even supported attacks within India itself. Most particularly the Mumbai attack in 2008, that ended up killing about 150 people—that was directly tied. One of the bombers—or it wasn't a bomb, it was more like a machine gun attack that went on for over 24 hours. One of them survived and fingered the ISI as being their funder and trainer and so forth. And that almost led to another hot war between those

two countries, because India was so outraged when they got this direct evidence.

So, Pakistan has been playing this game for a long time, and if you go back to Al-Qaeda and what was happening before 9/11 and what was happening after 9/11, it couldn't be more obvious that these guys were their official sponsors and were funding them and training them in every way.

And, so, I know you're going to ask, because we talked earlier before this phone call, you're going to ask about the money that went from, seemingly from, what's his name? Mahmoud Ahmed, the head of the ISI at the time, to this guy Saeed Sheikh, who was a pretty active terrorist, Islamist terrorist, who is now in prison in Pakistan, to the 9/11 hijackers. There was a belief of about hundred thousand dollars that was stolen through criminal means in India, so it could be sent to the hijackers without it directly being traced to Pakistan. That was the idea.

Now, I don't know if that's true or not. It very well could be. It's possible that that could be Indian propaganda, because it would be in Indian interest to—to tie Pakistan to the 9/11 attacks in this way and make them look bad.

So, I don't know the facts, you know, the raw data.

JON One of the things I've noticed over the years with regard to the Indian news coverage of what Pakistan does is that, oftentimes more than not, it's accurate.

PAUL Yeah, I hadn't seen—I mean, we have so much stuff that for real, it's like why would they need to make stuff up? Because Pakistan is constantly messing with India. And so—you don't need a bunch of propaganda because the reality is like enough to practically bring them to war.

So, yeah, I too have noticed that where I have seen that in other countries, including the United States, where we see a lot of ridiculous propaganda that's easily identified as such. And I haven't seen that, generally, with the Indians. But, I will say that, admittedly, is a possibility. But I would also say it's almost a moot point. Because the larger context of the ISI support for Al-Qaeda and for the Taliban is so strong, you could argue that neither group would exist in anything near a successful form if it weren't for the ISI. They're basically tools. One is the Afghanistan version. The other one's the international terrorism version that wouldn't exist without ISI support.

And, so, there's no way in heck, in my opinion, that the 9/11 attacks could have happened without the head of the ISI Mahmoud Ahmed giving at least a tacit okay. It's just impossible, because he was the guy that was propping them up in every way. You had to—you didn't want to cross your sugar daddy, basically. They wouldn't do that if Pakistan said no.

To give you an example, in the days after 9/11, it was reported that Mahmoud Ahmed went to Pakistan and met with the Taliban leaders and encouraged them to hand over bin Laden. But, at the same time that story came out, there were other stories that came out that said that was just the cover story and what he was really doing was he was going there and he was telling them: "Don't turn over bin Laden. Fight the Americans and we will help you all the way."

And I believe the second version of events, because that's exactly what happened. That the ISI, at the time that the U.S. in October, starting in October 2001, was bringing their troops and landing. It was very strange, because Pakistan was an absolutely essential logistical stop that at the time—it's happened since then, we've developed some bases in Central Asia—but, at the time, there's really no way to get a huge number of U.S. troops into Afghanistan without them going through Pakistan. So, Pakistan is like: "Oh, come on in. We'll help you out. And here, logistically, we will give you gasoline and landing strips and everything. And come right on in to Afghanistan."

Meanwhile, ISI officials were embedded with the Taliban and they were advising the Taliban how to fight the United States successfully. So, talk about a two-sided game. It couldn't have been more obvious. There were mainstream articles that came out at the time that were saying, you know, that the ISI would be giving the U.S. advice on how to fight the Taliban. And then, at the same time, they were giving the Taliban advice on how to fight the U.S. And that the U.S. knew this and that they were just, again, like what can you do? We'll just have to blunder through and do as best we can. But that's just how Pakistan works, and you can't stop them from doing that.

JON Just give them more money. And continue calling them our ally.

PAUL [Laughs] Keep giving them more money, right. And so, you know, and then Seymour Hersh came out with this bombshell story about there was this

town in northern Afghanistan called Kunduz, which was a Taliban stronghold, and it was surrounded by U.S. troops and they had nowhere to go and they were all going to be rounded up. And then, for several weeks there was this airlift. And night-after-night, there would be these cargo planes that would just take all these fighters and bring them back into Pakistan. And a lot of them were Taliban, but many of them were Al-Qaeda. And it's believed that some of them were Al-Qaeda leaders and even members of bin Laden's family were taken on these planes, and in an open way, when the United States controlled the skies of Afghanistan and they knew these flights were happening, and it was only a secret to the American public.

You know, people have talked about this from the military. You know, have come out later and they said: "Oh, yeah, we knew those flights were happening." And this was like done as a favor to Pakistan. And the reason why, one of the reasons why, was because so many of the people in Kunduz at the time were ISI advisers and it would have looked really bad to have them all been—roped up and arrested by U.S. forces. So, it was like, well, you know, some of the quote unquote "bad guys" will go on the planes with them, but what can you do? And we keep making these kinds of crazy compromises because of the fact that we were faced with a situation where Pakistan was simultaneously our ally and our enemy.

And so, you know, to get back to the money issue, like I said, it kind of doesn't matter because it's just the—Osama bin Laden, for instance, he would have been dead long ago had it not been for the ISI. It's pretty openly acknowledged, for instance, that in 1998, when the United States tried to bomb bin Laden, the one time it happened—people called it the wag the dog. When, remember there was the Monica Lewinsky scandal and Bill Clinton did these couple of bombings—that it's well known that the ISI tipped bin Laden off. And this happened time and time again. You know, the timeline is filled with instances where there would be some—some big Al-Qaeda figure that the U.S. was trying to get.

And, at one point, they even, you know, snatched some guy away from the U.S. and drove him away in a car, you know, a bunch of ISI guys, because they were so allied with Al-Qaeda. So, you know, what more could they possibly have done to show their true, in my opinion, their true allegiance and really play America for a fool for over ten years? There must just be people in Pakistan that were like: "I can't believe we're getting away with this! You know, that we're killing U.S. soldiers, on a daily basis, with the

people we train and equip with suicide bombs, and they're still giving us money."

JON Well, the one thing is, you know, the 9/11 Commission said that the source of the funding was of little practical significance, and I think that if the ISI was connected financially to 9/11, that would be huge news, because Pakistan is an ally of the United States—and that's why that is significant.

PAUL Well, sure. I'm not saying it's not significant, but in a larger sense, like in terms of the reaction that the U.S. should have had, it shouldn't have made a difference if they found out about that \$100,000 transfer or not. I'm not saying attack Pakistan (No, no, no), especially because it's a nuclear power. But, well, I mean, why the heck would you continue to act like they're an ally? That is craziness.

JON Yes, absolutely. Now, let's get to this question. How credible would you say the 9/11 Commission and its report are?

PAUL [Laughs] Let's say zero. You know, what the 9/11 Commission tried to do was that they realized that there was a certain amount of information that was in the public domain, and they wanted to present all that information in a way so that they could be seen as the establishment-accepted version of events. So, they worked with everything that was, basically, undeniable and tried to weave that into a story that would become the de facto version. But anything that was not widely known already, they suppressed.

For instance, they had a whole bunch of whistleblowers—you mentioned Robert Wright is one of them—who would want to speak with them. And either they wouldn't listen to them—they wouldn't even give them the chance to speak—or, they did and they just said: "That's very nice. And put the testimony in a drawer." Anything that was not, like I said, widely accepted and known, they just tried to bury. And it's a total travesty of a commission. And time has shown, since then, that there have been, you know, things that have come out.

Able Danger is one example, where you knew that they knew about it and they basically managed to suppress that completely from their report. Or there was, for instance, there was an important warning that George Tenet, the CIA director, gave to Bush that was not publicly known at the time the 9/11 Commission report came out, and didn't come out into the public domain until 2006. And it turned out that the commission had that

information about that warning and they just sat on it. And I'm sure that they sat on all sorts of other things.

So, the fact that they have this reputation is pathetic, and it shows how, again, the sad state of our media that they would just so often become stenographers for Government figures and that they just swallow this thing whole has been one of the major disappointments, for me, in terms of this whole 9/11 story. Now, anybody who says anything they just say: "Oh, that's not in the 9/11 Commission report. It must not be true. As if this is the definitive Bible."

JON Well, what's killing me about the 28 pages is that people are pointing to the 9/11 Commission and saying: "Well, they didn't find anything to what was in the 28 pages, and they're the definitive account of 9/11."

PAUL Right, I mean, the 9/11 Congressional Inquiry, actually, did a much better job on far less information, because they weren't such an obvious—I mean, there were some people, like Eleanor Hill and others, who seemed to be genuinely trying to get to the bottom of things. (Yeah) Whereas, I get the impression from the 9/11 Commission that it was just a cover-up from the word go.

I'm really reminded of the Warren Commission going back to the JFK assassination. It's a known fact that Earl Warren didn't want to be on the commission, but he was persuaded to be on the commission because he said he was told by—whatever the people in the know like the CIA director at the time, that there was potential evidence tying Lee Harvey Oswald to the Russians. And so, if this were to become like the story that the Russians killed JFK that this could potentially lead to World War III.

So, he felt like it was his patriotic duty to, not only take part in the Warren Commission Report, but lend his name to it, but basically just be open about, you know, open acknowledge later in life that it was a cover-up from the get go with the express purpose of creating this lone gunman theory in order to prevent this other theory of the Russians being behind it. Remember, Lee Harvey Oswald defected to the Soviet Union for a while. And, so, that was a real alternative theory.

So, he admitted that, you know, we went in there—I don't remember the exact quote from Earl Warren, but it was like: "I did this so that we—we

had the conclusion before we even started, and then we fit the facts to, you know, to go with that conclusion."

And that's exactly what the 9/11 Commission did. They, you know, I'm sure before they started, they had ideas like: "We cannot have anything in there about the Pakistanis. We can't have anything in there about the Saudis." Insofar as there's been stuff that has been widely reported like, say, this Prince Bandar information about Bayoumi and Bassnan, we will have to mention it to some extent in order to downplay it, because if we totally don't mention it, then it looks too obvious.

JON Did you know that when the 9/11 Commission met with Bush and Cheney behind closed doors, with no transcripts, not publicly and so forth, that when John Lehman asked Bush, specifically, about the Bandar 9/11 connection, he quote: "dodged the questions." (Laughs) That, to me, is reason enough to bring him in for questioning, as far as I'm concerned.

PAUL And the fact that you could let him get away with that is just, it's again, it's just—

JON One thing I'd say about the 9/11 Commission is that it was completely corrupt and compromised, but there were good people on the 9/11 Commission. So, that's why it's important to look at the documentation from the 9/11 Commission because oftentimes it contradicts what's in the 9/11 report. So, doubt, you know, all of the conclusions of the 9/11 report, but definitely look into the documentation that they had, you know, from the staffers and so forth.

PAUL Well, yeah, I'm sure. It's kind of the same thing with the Congressional Inquiry. Not so much that the final conclusions there were so—what would you say—a cover-up, as just that everything that was critical there was redacted and remains redacted to this day. It's not just the 28 pages. You look at that thing, it's like a big piece of Swiss cheese. There's lots of pages in there that are completely redacted outside of the 28 pages. So, you know, but in both cases I'm sure there were a lot of good people coming forth with information that got—closed out at some level as it kind of worked its way up the chain.

And what I'm curious about is if you and I were omniscient, you know, we had ability to see all and know all, and you could look at all the documents in the CIA and the FBI and the NSA and everything, would there actually

be an honest accounting somewhere at some level of what really happened, or in their attempt to cover up, did they, essentially, believe their own propaganda or only write down—this skewed version of events. Or is there actually some genuine accounting in there? Not just in terms of the raw data, but as it worked its way up and got into reports and so forth. I don't know, because I think the desire to cover up was so strong.

JON I think getting access to Bush's PDBs that came prior to 9/11 is essential.

PAUL For instance, let's just argue that, for argument's sake, that this idea of al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar being attempted mole or someone that the CIA was trying to follow—if that was the case, was there ever like an internal report that looked at that is like mistakes made and lessons learned and actually lays out the full story? Or was that just so hot that they just said we're just going to deny, deny, deny and just rewrite history from the day after 9/11 onwards? I don't know.

JON Neither do I.

PAUL But, I sure—I think there's still plenty to learn from these documents, you know, that are still to come out or are out but are so redacted that you can't make heads or tails of them. Because this thing is such a gigantic sprawling mess that, and there's so many people in so many levels who have a story to tell that you couldn't keep everybody quiet at every level.

And, so that's what I kind of try to do with the 9/11 Timeline was to take all these little pieces, since no one within the Government ever was going to step forward and say: "Aha, here's the 800-page intelligence community summary of the full truth of 9/11." (Laughs) That was never going to happen. You know, we've got to try to do our best to cobble it together piece by piece.

JON Now, this is a question that might make some people mad, but whatever. I don't do this to be popular. I do this to get the job done. What is your opinion of people who say that the 28-redacted pages reinforces the myth that there were hijackers and therefore should be ignored?

PAUL Well, I have understanding of people who feel that way. Because, you know, people have been lied to so much. There's been such a ridiculous cover up about 9/11 that it's kind of easy to just think that the official story is not true, so just anything goes. And people have just speculated in some

really wild ways like the planes themselves were holograms and all kinds of things. And, but it's unfortunate, because I think that extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence. And there's just a whole mountain of evidence about these hijackers going around from town-to-town doing all the things that they did, and I don't see how that just couldn't be. Sure, there could be a lot of spin and manipulation of that information. But, I think there's no doubt that there were these 19 guys and they were running around and they wanted to be suicide bombers and so on and so forth.

One thing that I remember from when I first started to get involved in this in 2002, was that there was a contingent of people who just thought that the very idea of people being suicide bombers was absurd. You know, that these 19 people would get on these planes and crash them into buildings was sort of in and of itself ridiculous, it couldn't be.

JON Right, thinking all 19 people—I think that's what they said: Getting all 19 people to commit suicide.

PAUL Right. And since then, we have seen that suicide bombing is such a common tactic that it's almost, you know, not even worth mentioning in the news anymore. In Iraq, in Afghanistan, there are suicide bombings on a daily basis (Right), and people—it's like they have, you know, like a conveyor belt of recruits and they put them through indoctrination and they send them off and here's your bomb and go blow up that target. And it's not something that is so incredible and strange. And, historically, it's not either. It's happened a lot of times in history, a lot of places like prior to 9/11, you could look at Sri Lanka, you know, had a long civil war, a lot of history of suicide bombing going on there.

So, I think, another thing that goes on with people who feel that way—it's again, I can sympathize with—is that they want this story to be 100 percent focused on the criminal deeds of the U.S. Government, which in my opinion are criminal. It's just a matter of what are you going to charge them with? At the very least, gross negligence. So, they want to focus on that and that is the most important thing, you know, because there are always going to be people out there who are enemies or want to kill Americans and so forth. That's not really so interesting.

My focus has been really on like what has the U.S. done about that? Why is it that these things have gone forward? And bombs have gone off when they should have stopped? I, too, I am interested in the U.S. angle mostly, but I

think some people for sort of purity reasons, ideological purity or simplification reasons, it would be nice to just say it's just a hundred percent. We just look at the U.S. Government and their misdeeds and bringing in these Muslim fanatics and the things that they've done just kind of complicates the picture and spreads the blame. And, so, they prefer this other vision. But, I think, you got to go where the facts are (Right), and the story actually is, as I said, going back decades.

This American policy of thinking that they can manipulate and use Islamist militants for various purposes and the blowback that always happens. And it seems in some cases, for strategic reasons, letting these people be successful, you know, has come and it's how far do we go with that? Did they let these 9/11 attackers be successful for various strategic reasons? But there's definitely a pattern of that. And that is a decades-long scandal that 9/11 is just like one of the biggest pieces that fits into.

JON Yeah, absolutely. And I do sympathize with people who fall for certain information because there was a time when I believed certain things and I don't anymore. But I do have sympathy for those people, but at the same time I don't think it helps. And it's a hindrance, if anything, when you say not to look at certain things. Because most of the incriminating information exists with the hijackers in the picture. (Yeah) And I don't understand why people insist on taking them completely out of the picture.

PAUL Well, I think that's a small number, but kind of a diehard number. Yeah, but I think as time goes on, that also that viewpoint has dwindled as we just deal daily with the craziness that is this Islamist fundamentalist movement. Like, for instance, what's going on now with ISIS and that there really are these people that behead people and—have sex slavery of innocent people and they do all these terrible things and you realize that human beings—I'm not singling out the Islamic belief by any means—are capable of doing incredibly awful things. And everybody of every religion, pretty much down through the ages, has done really, really terrible things and it's just right now this is something that's happening in a particularly violent way in the Middle East. And, you know, there is blowback and so forth. But, you know, suicide bombing—this is not an invention that happened on 9/11. This is something that happened before, it's happened a lot since and we shouldn't be so surprised that this is part of the world we live in today.

JON That is the end of part three. Please be sure to check out the other three shows in this series. Thank you.



Chapter/Episode 31 – Paul Thompson – Part 4 – July 27, 2016

Jon Gold (JON)

Paul Thompson (PAUL)

JON

Hi, everyone, and welcome to my show called, "We Were Lied to About 9/11." I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People's Network. This week I'm having a four-part series that covers a multitude of issues. This is Part Four.

Back in the 70s, there was something called the Dawson's Field hijackings where I think there were four planes that were simultaneously hijacked (Mm-hmm), not as spectacularly as what happened on 9/11, but you know, so it shows that it could happen. (Right)

So, let's finish off now with a couple of questions. What other areas of interest regarding 9/11 should people be focused on, in your opinion?

PAUL

Well, one thing that I sort of put in my mind to talk about, which I could use this question to talk about, is this issue that if you go back to the 28 pages, it definitely comes up, which is was there a support network in the United States for the hijackers? And I think that's one of the biggest lies that the U.S. Government has put forth and continues to put forth about 9/11.

Because the evidence is just overwhelming that there was a support network.

Now, 28 Pages, they're particularly looking at the Saudi connection and the Saudi Government connection. But, there's all kinds of other connections that people are not tied to that. And, yet, if you were to ask the FBI, they would say there was no support network. It was just like, basically, 19 lone nuts. There were these 19 guys, completely didn't know anyone from Adam in the United States. They did it all on their own working as this little group and that's the end of the story. And that has—you can point to all kinds of official documents that have come out that have said that. And that is the biggest load of bull, and it's really tragic that they say that, because there are people out there who are looking for justice. The 9/11 victims' relatives and many others who would like to see some sort of justice. And there are people out there, alive today, who are still directly responsible in some way or another. You can look at the people—who in the United States Government who should be in jail for their, whatever you want to call it, you know, negligence or worse.

But aside from those, there are all these people who are, actually, part of the Al-Qaeda bomb plot and, yet, they're still not punished. And, I think, that it's like a continuing crime that just goes on every day that this cover story is maintained and that these people are still not brought to justice.

To give you an example, we were talking earlier about the al-Hijji family in Sarasota that seemed to have all these ties to the 9/11 hijackers. Now, I don't know, if they are fellow travelers or if they knew of the 9/11 plot. I don't think anybody really knows, but maybe we just don't have that intelligence, because we didn't really find out about them until after 9/11. But, the fact is that family, apparently, is like living now in Britain, openly, and anybody could arrest them at any time and try to get some answers from them. And, yet, they seem to be living with impunity like they don't even have a concern that's going to happen. Because they know that there's this such pervasive bias that since they have ties to the Saudi Government, they seem to be untouchable.

And, you know, there's a lot of other people around the world today who really should be put on trial. What about these people in Guantanamo like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi bin al-Shibh. It's been 15 years and there still has never been any sort of legitimate trial. There's this kind of quasi-military tribunal that's moving along at a snail's pace. But, it's just a

joke. (Absolutely) There's no justice that you could point to and say that was a legitimate just trial.

And, so, it seems that, with the possible exception of Zacarias Moussaoui, nobody anywhere is ever going to go on trial about 9/11. And, I don't even really think, necessarily, that Moussaoui was connected to the 9/11 plot. I'm sure he was doing a lot of bad things, but it was more like he had this other thing that he had planned going on. So, you can't really say that he was convicted of the 9/11 plot either.

JON Yeah, if JASTA is passed, that would give the families the ability to take Saudi Arabia into a courtroom. And I would LOVE to see 9/11 make it into a courtroom. Can you imagine them calling in Dana Lesemann (RIP), who was fired by Zelikow for gaining access to the 28 pages through a back channel because he was blocking her access to them.

PAUL Yeah, well, that would certainly be interesting. And, I think the truth comes out eventually. You know, we'll find out. That trial may go 10 years before it ever reaches some actionable point. You know, it's been 15 years and still there's been so little movement on that. So, these things it seems are just moving along at a snail's pace.

Meanwhile, a lot of people out there who really are to blame and are dying off. Terrorists generally have a pretty short life, because of the lifestyle they've chosen to live.

JON Speaking of that, did you know Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh recently tried to kill himself?

PAUL Oh, I hadn't heard that. I had heard that he caused a lot of mischief within prison. He almost caused India and Pakistan to go to war by faking a phone call to India. But, no, I hadn't heard about that.

JON He just tried to kill himself within the last couple of years.

PAUL Huh . . . Well, anyway, one thing—we've been talking a long time, but maybe you can make this into a two-parter or something, because I want to go into this whole other thing about the support network idea, which is that there are some people out there who, I really want people, listeners out there, to know more about—people involved in the 9/11 plot I mean—who are just so obviously connected to the 9/11 plot and, yet, they were never

brought to justice. There was never a trial. And, so, it says a lot about this cover-up that the Government seems to, time and time again, they would rather let some of these people go and continue to cause mayhem than to bring them into a courtroom where you would have, basically, all kinds of things that could come up. You could open up a whole can of worms about the 9/11 attacks that, I think, they would just prefer not to ever go there.

And one of the guys that I have been really fascinated about ever since I first heard about him, and yet nobody seems to know about and never talks about, is this guy called Nabil al-Marabh and he's such a fascinating case to me. It's like, you know, it's like some sort of Zelig figure who's just everywhere and involved in all sorts of things. And it's a telling story because he ultimately was deeply connected to 9/11. Arrested by the United States Government shortly after 9/11, and then just let go in 2004. He served an eight-month sentence for entering the country illegally and just deported to Syria. And that's pretty much the last anybody ever heard of him.

And, so, imagine if you had one of the 9/11 hijackers somehow survive and then you just let him go. I mean that's about as bad as it is with Nabil al-Marabh. Here's a guy, he has connections to Al-Qaeda that just go back—you could write a whole book on this guy. He fought in, I think, as far back as Bosnia as a militant. And this is just so interesting what happened to this guy. Because in the late 90s, he moved to Boston and he was part of a cell of at least four really, not questionable, like maybe they were Al-Qaeda, but four definitely Al-Qaeda people. The other three all sort of went off to do other things overseas, bombings, different things, so there's no doubt about it.

And, so, when these guys went off, he stayed in the U.S. and he keeps crossing paths with all these other people. There's not that many Al-Qaeda people in the United States prior to 9/11, but he seems to be this real linchpin figure. After 9/11, he was listed as, I think, one of the 27 most wanted—the U.S. put a most-wanted list out and he was listed as, I think, one of the most five most wanted, in particular for 9/11, as opposed to—other people who were just wanted in general for all kinds of things. He was really tied to 9/11. And, he was seen by many eyewitnesses with Mohamed Atta, with Marwan al-Shehhi. There were phone calls that they had the phone records of him talking to the 9/11 hijackers. There were money transfers that they found through the banks that definitely involved him passing money on from overseas to the 9/11 hijackers.

You could not have more evidence against a guy than this guy. He even was wanted for attempted murder in the United States for stabbing somebody in an argument and then skipped bail and he was never—you know, when they kicked him out of the country, they still never prosecuted him for the attempted murder and skipping bail. There's just something really strange about how this guy was involved in so many things and, yet, seem to have just been ignored and pushed out of the country.

JON I've never even heard of him.

PAUL There's a whole—you know, when I had the *Terror Timeline* book, I have an entire chapter on him. And there's a whole section on him, if you go online to the 9/11 Timeline History Commons. And it just seems like no one has never seemed to notice. It's really weird.

One of the things about him that's fascinating is that he may well have been an FBI asset. There was some—well, first of all, of these four guys in Boston, one of them, I think his name is Raed Hijazi, a story came out that he WAS an FBI asset and, in particular, that he—this Raed Hijazi guy—was helping the FBI regarding heroin smuggled in from Afghanistan to Boston, which in and of itself just raises all kinds of interesting questions that an Al-Qaeda cell may have been tied to that prior to 9/11.

But putting that aside, later on when, I think this was maybe in 2000, early 2000, when Nabil al-Marabh is moving from one town to another town—he kind of moved around a lot in the U.S. and also to Canada—later on they went and they asked people who knew him before he moved and he said to them that he had been approached by the FBI to be an FBI asset and he was seriously considering taking them up on the offer.

And the reason why he was approached was because this other guy, right, Hijazi, he was captured overseas and turned over to U.S. intelligence in the year 2000, and, apparently, he just sung like a bird when he was captured. He was one of those people who just sort of immediately told everything, and he revealed that Nabila al-Marabh was an Al-Qaeda operative living inside the United States.

So, of course, you know, again, the FBI and the CIA they love to try to turn these people. So, it seems extremely plausible to me that his story about

being offered to be an FBI asset right after Hijazi started to talk makes total sense.

And then, interestingly, sort of middle of, or maybe early 2001, he was captured trying to cross the border from the United States into Canada, and he was held by the Canadian Government for two weeks and then they let him go. And the interesting thing about that was that when he was being held, you know, he was in a cell with some other prisoners, and the other prisoners said later on that he seemed very confident that he would be released soon. And he said the reason why was because he had been in contact with the FBI and quote "because I'm special" like that the FBI has this special relationship with him.

JON I think I do remember that story and, and it reminds me of Ali Mohamed.

PAUL Yeah, I mean, isn't this all so strange? And it got stranger, too, because it turns out also that one of the things that he had done for Al-Qaeda, being one of the few people in the United States who was Al-Qaeda, was that he was involved in money transfers from Boston to operatives overseas. And when Raed Hijazi spilled the beans that this all came out. Right.

And, so, then the U.S. Customs Department launched an investigation into this because it involved the transfer of funds from the U.S. overseas. And they found out not only about Nabil al-Marabh, but they found also on the run, but they found also Hamza al-Ghamdi, who was one of the 9/11 hijackers later on, was involved in these money transfers when they were overseas. And then al-Suqami, Satam al-Suqami, another 9/11 hijacker, that he was also fingered being as part of these money transfers.

So, this was before 9/11, that these 9/11 hijackers were being investigated by the U.S. Government because of money transfers that were known to be Al-Qaeda. Right? But from this, based on a guy that they had captured and he was spilling the beans, right? And just days after 9/11, there were some stories in *The New York Times* that just completely went down the memory hole that said that when the 9/11 attacks happened, and they looked at all the names, that they looked at their files and they realized that a whole bunch of these people were already being investigated. And it included a handful of the hijackers, like al-Suqami and a couple of the al-Ghamdis that you never hear anything about because they had been targeted in this customs investigation. And this is reported in *The New York Times* and had several follow-up stories and then it's just totally forgotten. And the 9/11

Congressional Inquiry never looked into it. The 9/11 Commission never looked into it. It was like, I think again, it's like there was such a cover-up from the beginning that if there wasn't enough of a media story, that they would just bury this stuff—20 feet underground and hope that everybody kept it forgotten forever. [Laughs]

But, people like you and me, we can dig up these newspaper stories and still say: "Hey, what about this?" But for some reason when it came to Nabil al-Marabh, everybody just forgot about it, and then he was still in the U.S. after 9/11, and it seems that he was going to be involved in a follow-up plot. He had been doing some training and gotten a license for driving a truck that would be containing hazardous materials. You have to have a special hazardous materials license and he was apparently waiting for the license to come in the mail a week after 9/11 when he was arrested. I think it was like in a 7-Eleven-type store in Chicago. And, so then all these continued stories come out about his ties to the hijackers and everything, and he was one of the very few—in fact, I told you earlier there were over a thousand people who were arrested after 9/11 and there was a story that came out in early 2002, that said Nabil al-Marabh might be the only one out of all of those who actually is tied to al-Qaeda. (Wow)

So, they have this guy and you would think that he would—that this could be the big 9/11 trial. Put him on trial, right? And some people tried to do that. In fact, Patrick Fitzgerald, who was later well-known for trying Scooter Libby for the whole Valerie Plame story—you probably know who Patrick Fitzgerald is, right?

JON Yeah, absolutely.

PAUL Well, he was in charge of this Nabil al-Marabh case and he really wanted to charge him with the 9/11 plot.

And, I mean, I'm just skimming over the story. I mean, there's so many things about this guy that just, you know, like stamp guilty on his forehead. Like when he was caught at that 7-Eleven, he was working, you know, like real dead-end jobs, making minimum wage, and yet, he was found with \$30,000 in cash and another \$30,000 in jewels. (Wow) Amber jewels on his body when he was caught. You know, it's like what the heck is he doing with all this money?

So, then Patrick Fitzgerald in, I think, late 2002, tried to prosecute and he got the word from on high: "No." And, so, you know, being a loyal Government bureaucrat, he decided not to do it, and then, it turns out that while al-Marabh was being held on these minor charges, there was another guy in his prison cell—you know, just a random person—and he kind of got to be friends with al-Marabh and al-Marabh just told him all kinds of incriminating things, kind of boasting about all of the things that he had done. And it corroborated all these other things that had come out and that the intelligence had learned independently—like that al-Marabh mentioned to this prisoner that he had a plan—he was going to drive the truck into the Lincoln Tunnel, and with the hazardous materials, and blow up the tunnel and kill all the people, whatever, hundreds if not thousands of people in their cars. And, he mentioned all kinds of other things. He talked about his connections to the 9/11 hijackers. And just a whole fountain of information.

So, Patrick Fitzgerald went back and said: "Okay, look, now we have like an even stronger case. Let's try this guy." And, again, they said: "No." I don't know who "they" are. We should find out (Yeah), you know, who the higher ups were that kept putting the kibosh on this.

And then there was another prosecutor who independently found out about the case and also tried to prosecute al-Marabh. And, also, got the word from on high to say: "No, you're not going to prosecute this guy."

So, it's just like you couldn't be more clear from Nabil al-Marabh case that there were powers-that-be within the U.S. Government that never wanted to have a real open trial about 9/11, because if they did, it would just be this can of worms, and all these stories about the incompetence and the missed warnings and everything, you could bring all that out in the trial and it would be very relevant. I mean, all this stuff about the Saudis and the Pakistanis. You could, you know, it could all come out. So, they figured this is just one one kind of, relatively, in the global scheme of things insignificant guy, so we'll just deport him on immigration violation charges and send him back to Syria.

So, that's what they did. But, you know, for you and I and anybody who just, if you just look at this one person alone, it becomes clear that yes, there was a support network; there were people there who had a whole cell in Boston. There were people there before the hijackers ever got there that laid the groundwork.

And, you know, I don't want to talk forever, but I could go in equal depth, if not more, about Anwar al-Awlaki in San Diego. He was this imam, you know, religious preacher there. And he was seen many times meeting behind closed doors with Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar.

JON Didn't he have lunch at the Pentagon, as well?

PAUL [Laughs] He did, later on. Later on, after 9/11—well then, so he moved in the middle of 2001, he moved to Falls Church. And then, at the same time, pretty much exactly Nawaf al-Hazmi also moved to Falls Church. And, by this time, Hani Hanjour and some other hijackers were along. So, they all sort of relocated and then they went to his mosque there. So, it's like, again, wow, it's such a small world. What are the odds? (Laughs) You know, and yet, after 9/11, this Anwar Al-Awlaki, he not only lived in the United States openly, but he gave interviews to the media where he would decry the evils of fundamentalist Islam, which of course was totally hypocritical. And, like you said, he even gave some sort of, he had some official role in the capital at one point. Like, oh, here's a good Muslim imam we can kind of hold up.

But, that is really strange, because within days of 9/11, days of 9/11, they found his phone number in the Hamburg cell with some of the—I think Ramzi bin al-Shibh might have been the one who had his phone number. And, you know, evidence quickly piled up that this guy was not just some benign Muslim. And, even as he was in some places talking about—like this benign version of Islam, he would also make other comments that were noted at the time, where he was very pro, you know, praising the hijackers.

Which is, you know, again, it's like we see this double game and how dumb are we supposed to be? Like Musharraf, Pervez Musharraf, the leader of Pakistan at the time of 9/11 until years later, shortly after 9/11, he gave a public speech on TV broadcast in Pakistan where he basically was very defiant and said: "My support is with the Taliban and I refuse to denounce Al-Qaeda." Right? And that was in Urdu. And then he gave another speech in English meant for American audiences where he denounced Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, because he knew that he was speaking to this totally different audience, and—really, was the U.S. intelligence and the U.S. Government so dumb that, apparently, they would let them get away with this just because they're speaking a different language?

But, apparently so, because they never got any flak for it. The media never picked up on it. It's just like god, man, like really? Really? It's not only that

the U.S. Government which had—you could see they had a vested interest that they wanted Pakistan's cooperation at that point. But how is it that the U.S. media doesn't pick up on that when I picked up on it? I would see newspaper reports, and I didn't have any special access. But, these kinds of things, these anomalous things, would just get buried and very little mention.

So, to get back to Anwar al-Awlaki, so same deal with him, where he's putting forth this—public persona of just being a good ole peace-loving guy. And then there's evidence piling up that he's actually very involved with Al-Qaeda and, yet, he lives openly in the United States and even left the United States. And then, I believe, he came back and by this time the case against him had gotten even stronger. And there was a warrant out for his arrest and they arrested him at the airport and then the people who arrested him got a call saying: "Let him go." And so they did.

And, you know, it's just like the Nabil al-Marabh cases. Like we just don't want to, apparently, have these types of people in custody because they might actually say things that could—that are really about 9/11 that could sort of ruin this whole attempt to just make the whole story go away.

So, he ended up moving to Yemen, although, I believe he lived in London for like two more years openly and, again, nobody gave him any trouble. He eventually moved to Yemen and, eventually, it turned out I believe he was involved in 25 terrorist attacks, mostly as a spiritual adviser, but sometimes even on an operational level. And yet, to this day, you know, the powers that be in the FBI and the CIA will say it's an open question whether or not he really supported the 9/11 hijackers and knew about the 9/11 plot. And they have to say that because they maintained this story that there were no supporters and zero. And so, even in a case like this, they just have to totally defy the evidence in order to be consistent with that cover story.

So, it just gets ridiculous. Like: "Do you expect us to be that gullible?" But, apparently, yes. Most people—they're very busy, they don't have time to look at this stuff in depth. And so, they just see, you know, the headlines or, whatever. They get a very surface level. And so they never realize just how ridiculous this cover story is.

And just one more quick thing. There's another guy that I find very fascinating is Adnan Shukrijumah—very hard name to pronounce, who I

mentioned earlier when this whole al-Hijji family in Sarasota, Florida. You know, the story that didn't come out until years and years later, that he was also visiting that family. I found that really interesting because this guy ended up being kind of it seems like he kind of later on ended up taking over the Khalid Sheikh Mohammed role of operational mastermind for Al-Qaeda. And even before 9/11, he was a young guy. He was in his 20s, but he was already—had a long history of terrorism. FBI was investigating him for two different terrorism plots before 9/11, and trying to get informants to get close to him and all this kind of stuff. He was living in Florida. He'd been born and raised in the United States and his father was Imam, who was a very Wahhabist radical Islam kind of guy and he, actually, had been kind of tangentially involved with the whole crowd behind the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, including other links to The Blind Sheikh.

So, when people are kind of puzzled when they said, you know, Able Danger, how did—that based on the limited information that we know, that they say that they fingered people like Mohammed Atta because of connections to The Blind Sheikh. How could that be?

Well, one thing about Able Danger is that one of the claims, I remember reading about it, was they said that they somehow got access to sort of attendance rolls at various mosques around the world and around the United States. Because when—sometimes when people go visit a mosque, they record their name. I'm not Islamic, I don't know the tradition, but apparently there's something like that where it kind of ends up leaving a good record of who is what where.

So, it looks like both Mohammed Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi was attending the mosque in Florida that was run by this Adnan Shukrijumah's father. And, so, you could make a connection between them right there and The Blind Sheikh crowd. And, so, but there'd always been sort of this well, you know, witnesses had seen them with some of the hijackers with this Adnan Shukrijumah. But they—witnesses can be unreliable. We're not 100 percent sure.

So, it's very interesting that when this al-Hijji story came out, that we definitely know that he—because of the phone calls and the license plates—that he was there, visiting that family, and where Mohammed Atta and other hijackers were. So, again, we can see that this suggests not only that the Florida hijackers had a support network, but if you look at this Adnan Shukrijumah guy, he is sort of like connected to all kinds of people. He was

involved in different plots. And, so, if they knew him, they certainly knew a lot of other people and it really, just from that alone, you could guess that there would have been a dozen or more people who we later find out, you know, are connected to Al-Qaeda who would have been in contact at least to this guy.

So, you have a whole, basically, ready-to-go network in Florida. In fact, there was a cell in Florida that Shukrijumah was a part of, apparently, that went all the way back to the early 1990s and that the FBI had tried to penetrate for years.

So, this notion that the hijackers were just—kind of like just dropped from the sky into Florida, or into San Diego, or into these different places, and never had help from anybody, is an insulting lie. Because the evidence is so overwhelming otherwise. And, yet, it seems like anybody who is legitimately tied to 9/11, would just be let go. And then the people who were not, were arrested. They arrested 1,200 people and, you can look at the 28 Pages and there are a number of suspicious people in Phoenix and in San Diego, all these different people. Not a single one of them was ever—one of these over a thousand people who were arrested and held for being a material witness. Right? Every single one, except for Nabil al-Marabh, which was arrested in weird circumstances, they were just completely innocent. They had nothing to do with anything and every single one of them was let go. None of them were ever charged for anything.

Meanwhile, you had Guantanamo Bay, right. Very early on in 2002, they put over 600 people in there, and almost every single one of them ended up having no ties to Al-Qaeda or the Taliban. They had this thing in Afghanistan where they basically had a bounty system. The U.S. dropped fliers and said: "Hey, anybody out there who thinks that anybody is a potential Al-Qaeda or Taliban, just turn them in." And, so, all these people who had local grudges would just grab up innocent people and the U.S. Government would just kind of no-questions-asked, just hop them on a plane and send them to Guantanamo.

You know, it's known that some of the people there now, still, are considered innocent and have been there for like over ten years and, eventually, over time they did put a small number of actual people like, you know, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, but in the beginning, it was nearly all innocent people. So, it's this weird, weird thing where there were all these real terrorists out there who were, seemingly, given a pass, especially

anybody connected to Pakistan or—the Saudis, and then all these innocent people were put in jail. And this is something else that just seems to have gone over the heads of the mainstream media and the public at large. And, if I were, you know, a victim, a relative of one of the victims, I would just be so livid that this is just—it's a continuing miscarriage of justice that continues to this day.

JON We have many things to be livid about.

All right, my last question for you—if you're done, because that was very fascinating.

PAUL [Laughs] Sorry, for going off.

JON No, I saw that you were working on a Hillary Clinton email scandal timeline. Is that what you're working on now?

PAUL Yeah, let me go a little bit into, you know, my personal life (Sure), because I worked a lot on the timeline. But then, at some point, I just got burned out of it, and I got frustrated because it seemed like I was doing all this work and, yet, all these cover-ups and injustices with no real investigation, the mainstream media missing the story over and over again, just kept on happening. Like I kept trying to feed information to the media. Journalists would just never listen. It just got really frustrating after a while.

And, so, I just had to stop. I had to go cold turkey. And I thought that I was done, because in terms of not just 9/11, but doing any of this type of political work, because I had never gone into this wanting to do this. I had this other career doing environmental work that I was happy with and I just felt like—like I said, I wasn't even that interested in these topics, but I just felt like I had to do this, because there was this crying need for this information to all get put together and put into an understandable compilation that I was not seeing anywhere. And, so, I felt like, you know, I could make an impact doing this.

JON You made a HUGE impact.

PAUL Well, thanks. I hope I made some kind of impact.

JON Some of the people, I mean, who are aware of HistoryCommons, you've made a HUGE impact. And I know the families, like Lorie Van Auken,

wanted me to say hello to you, to send her regards. A lot of people appreciated what you did, especially me.

PAUL Well, that's good to hear. But, you know, but in a larger sense though, you know, you could basically say that the cover up worked. And, most people now—receives the history, they know and understand less and less and they generally believe the whole 9/11 Commission story, and think that's the end of it. Right? And it just seems like we're never going to get a real investigation. And I've just been very, very frustrated by that. And then all these killers are still wandering free and all these people in the Government are still wandering free when they should be in jail. And it's a real bipartisan thing.

This is what I realized, you know, a long time after I got started that I was hoping that there would be some people in power who would step up and lead this in the same way. You know, for instance, you look at Watergate. There were people who created commissions and stepped up and really took that Watergate story, which had been done by Woodward and Bernstein, and took it to the next level. Right? But what happened with 9/11 was—what I realized was that this was a bipartisan failure, that the Democrats and the Republicans were both so to blame. They had—both had—you could argue which one is more to blame. I think the Bush administration is more to blame. But these problems had been going on way back and it was only nine months earlier that the Democrats had been in power. So, they didn't—they were not in any big hurry to see all of this come out, because it made them look bad too. Right.

Whereas, if you look at a case like say Benghazi, you know, that 2012 incident where the ambassador got killed. Now, that is just a purely—the Democrats are to blame. So, the Republicans picked up on that and they have made that like beating a dead horse for years and years and, really, that is such small potatoes. I mean, four people got killed compared to almost 3,000 people got killed. But, the difference is that in one, there was obvious partisan advantage to be had and the other there wasn't. And that's not going to change.

And, so, there's this bipartisan sort of—agreements—not out loud, but kind of unspoken agreement—that just, all the powers that be would just be better served to let 9/11 go away. And that's the continuing problem that people like you and me have to face moving forward. I mean, I think that—history overtime, these cover-ups tend to be exposed and you tend to find

out what really happened. But, the question is how much time is going to pass and how many people are going to die who should have been punished before we finally get to the truth?

JON Oh, believe me, I've been burned out for at least 10 years now. But I continue doing what I do. I've tried to stop before and I get depressed because people are still being killed, family members still have no justice and they deserve it. We all deserve and require justice and accountability for what happened that day. So, for some reason, I can't stop doing it because it's still, I mean, look—the military operations that we're taking part in today, the legality used for that is the authorization for use of military force that was written after 9/11, specifically for 9/11, and that AUMF is still being used to this day for the legal justification for what's going on in Syria; I think it was used for Libya; and if we weren't told the truth about that day, then obviously, the people of the world need to know that, so, this insanity could end.

PAUL Yeah, well, it does still go on. I was just thinking the other day when I was preparing to do this interview, and I knew you were going to ask me about the ISI. And, so, one thing I was thinking about was that if you look at Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and some of his cohorts, like he had a brother named Zahid, if you go way back to the early 1990s, there's evidence that's been reported in mainstream newspapers that he was so closely tied to the Pakistani Government at that time that he was even photographed with the Prime Minister. (Right) And the reason I mention that now is because who was the prime minister back then? A guy named Sharif. And guess who's the prime minister of Pakistan now? The exact same Sharif. He's the same guy. He's been in and out of Government. I think he's been the prime minister for the third time now since 2013.

So, you know, some of these guys, these same dynamics—that he was using —Nawaz Sharif is his full name—it seems like using Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi Yousef, who was his nephew who is one of the most notorious terrorists ever, to kill—they had an assassination attempt on Benazir Bhutto back then. So, you know, just like the U.S. does, there's this temptation that these terrorists can be used by you, the supposed clever politician, if you want to go outside the box and do extra legal things, kill people, start insurrections, do all these things, they're sort of the easy way to do it. And that policy, like I said, not just the U.S., other countries around the world do it—false-flag operations still happen to this day where terrorists are manipulated and used by different Governments. And, at some

point you'd think my god, we've got to get wise to this, and we have to stop this destructive pattern of behavior. And, yet, it just keeps going on and on.

And, so, there's that frustration. But to get back to your—

JON Oh, believe me, I understand it.

PAUL But to get back to your question though, so, I thought that I had, you know, I've got other things in my life, but I've never profited off of this 9/11 stuff, so I've always had to juggle you know, making money with real-world jobs. So, I thought I'd just go back to doing these other things. And then, just a few months ago I got spun up again about this whole Hillary Clinton email scandal. I thought like a lot of people that was kind of like the Benghazi scandal and just a lot of hot air. But, as I looked more into it, I had this *deja vu* where I felt like, wow, this is clear evidence of criminality on a very high level and they're getting a pass because the general public is not following the story. It's a very complicated story, and people only get a few soundbites here and there and they don't really understand. And I did not want our next President of the United States to be somebody who has engaged in crimes that should definitely put them, no doubt about it, behind bars. And not just in terms of email. There's the aspect of, you know, being very careless with national security, with classified information, but also there's this whole Clinton Foundation element where there's been a *quid pro quo*, you know, I will, if you donate a bunch of money to the foundation, we will do a political favor for you, which is really treason. (Right) You know, that these foreign entities, individuals and Governments, basically, gave payoffs to the Clintons and got the department of state—their policy of the State Department changed. That's supposed to be illegal.

And, so, that scared the heck out of me that this person might become the next President. So, I did, basically, exactly what I did with the 9/11 Timeline. I've created a new timeline about Clinton's emails, which you can find it at the Website ThompsonTimeline.com. And, it's kind of similar in that—people have found it useful and other people have been contributing.

But, it's a weird thing, because there's—at the same time, you know, there's all this politics going on and Donald Trump is the main competitor, and as much as I dislike Hillary Clinton, I dislike Donald Trump even more. I think he would be terrible. I mean, the Clintons should be behind bars, but he should be like in an insane asylum. I really don't like either one of these people. I saw a kind of a funny thing where one of the polling companies

recently asked: "Who do you want for President?" And they gave the choice of Trump or Clinton or a giant meteor hitting earth. (Laughter) And 13 percent of the people chose the giant meteor. [Laughter] And, I think at this point, I would be in the giant meteor crowd (Yeah), because both of these candidates are so bad.

So, you know, at this point, I'm working on that. If it turns out that this is going to be something that could potentially elect Trump, I might stop, because I really think he could, potentially, be even worse.

But, I do think that there's a hope that there's a greater than zero chance that before all is said and done, that Clinton may not be the candidate for President, even with her being nominated in a couple of days. Because we've also seen in the past few days, and this is something that's I've felt was going to happen for a long time. And why—one of the reasons why—I got involved in this, is that WikiLeaks has been coming forth with documents. They just released this big 20,000 emails from the Democratic National Committee and that got the head of the Democratic Party fired. And I've had reason to believe for some time now that there's a lot more that's going to come out. And, I believe, WikiLeaks themselves has said this is a series, they call it the Hillary leaks series and that is part one of six leaks to come out. And, based on what I know from just understanding the email scandal, I believe, what we've seen with her behavior with the Clinton Foundation and so forth, that this should be more than enough evidence to indict her. And Julian Assange just said as much. He said this should be enough to indict her.

So, if this were to come out in the next month or two, it's very possible that Hillary Clinton could be so scandalized that they would have to drop her from the ticket and put in someone else. This actually happened in 1972, with the vice Presidential candidate, a guy named Thomas Eagleton. He'd been picked as the vice President in the Democratic convention and then like two weeks afterwards it came out that he had been seeing a psychiatrist and people back then were very immature with their attitude towards psychiatry. So, they thought that maybe he was crazy. So, they dropped him from the ticket. It's been pointed out—that there's a deadline, eventually, where you have to be putting someone's name on the ballots in the different states.

But, there's still some time. So, I'm hoping that WikiLeaks will get their act in gear and release these other five big releases that they have coming up.

And, we'll see. And if I could play some role in getting this obvious criminal removed from the ticket, so we could have someone who's, you know, maybe not great, but at least somewhat decent as our next President, that would be really great.

So, that's kind of what I've been working on. And I don't know how long that's going to last, because—

JON Do you think we'll ever see any new entries on the 9/11 Timeline from you?

PAUL Well, I don't know. You know, part of the problem is—I got it just on a technical level, is that the interface for that Website is very, very clunky and it's very difficult to make one of those timeline entries just the way it was written, programmed, is not ideal.

JON Believe me, I know. It's very—

PAUL [Laughs] So, I've been in contact recently with Derek, who you know was running the whole thing. And he noticed that I have this new timeline Website and I gave it the name Thompson Timeline so that could, potentially, put other projects on it. And we've got a new interface there that's really great. So, if there's some way that we could port the information from the old timeline into a new one that would be very streamlined and easy to do, then I would be tempted. But, the way the interface is, I would think I'm just kind of too burned out to go back to that one again. (Well—) But if you want to get involved or anyone out there listening wants to get involved in terms of the computer programming that would be necessary, basically, you got one data set and you've got this other format and we've got to get things converted from one to the other. You know, that would take some work. But, I think then we could potentially have a big revival, and we could move forward on all sorts of different things.

Because, I think that with this email thing, we're also finding a new crowd of people, a lot of young people these days who are—a lot of them are tied into the Bernie Sanders movement, and I've been a big supporter of Bernie Sanders, who just generally is sick of the status quo in Washington. And it's kind of a bipartisan problem that we really need a lot of change, and there's a lot of energy out there, regardless of who becomes the next President or what happens, if people say, you know, we've got to shake things up. And this could be one means to do it. And people are looking for, you know,

have been energized in this last election and looking for some sort of way to do it.

So, I would like to see—we've got a Facebook group now that has over a thousand people, and people wanting to help out with this email stuff. (That's cool) But, I think—and, you know, obviously, not all thousand, but we've got a core group. What I'm hoping with this email is that if some really damning emails come out through Wikileaks, that there could be a mobilization of people, citizen journalist types to go through them, all these thousands of emails, pick out the really interesting ones and get those publicized. And we see this happening, like that happened with this latest batch. Just people that read it, for instance, also who were doing this. And, so, kind of do that, kind of like a rapid-response team, do that with more emails.

But then if other things come out, we could use that same model, like what if some whistleblower comes out with a big WikiLeaks release related to 9/11? It would be great to have, sort of just take that energy and mobilize it to deal with that. Or other issues that may come out, not just with WikiLeaks, but if there's some interesting new document release that comes out, like you were talking earlier about a judge in Florida who may or may not release some big portion of 80,000 FBI documents related to the hijackers.

I mean, I would love to have a bunch of people helping out and going through that. And it's almost necessary now because of what I said earlier about how journalists just don't have the time or the money to do any serious journalism anymore. I mean, there's a few. You can almost count them on one hand, you know, who are kind of like the relics of the old days. Like Seymour Hersh is still out there. He won a few Pulitzer Prizes. And a few more are like that. But, there's no sort of new group like that coming along because, you know, who would pay their salary? (Yeah) Media, as we know it, is almost on the deathbed.

What was it? Like a year or two ago when *Newsweek* got sold for a single dollar? Because, the debts they had were even more than the amount it was worth. And so many of these are just going out of business. Different newspapers are shutting down because they have to compete with people getting their news for free off the Internet. So, the only time any sort of any real journalism gets done is if actual people are doing it on a kind of a non-paid just out of the goodness of their own hearts, and sometimes they get

that funneled to actual journalists who can then trumpet it to a larger audience.

But, you know, we may eventually, and some people are talking about this, that you know another 10 years that media as we know it, may cease to exist, with a few exceptions. You may have *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, but you know, maybe most towns just won't even have a newspaper anymore, because they can't make any money off of it. And, so, the people will be getting their news almost entirely through social media, through Twitter and Facebook and Reddit and all these new forms that are rising up, and a whole new form of journalism will come up.

So, we'll see. I don't know. I mean, at some point, you've got to figure out like if anyone gets serious, they have to put in enough time, they have to be paid, and who pays these people?

But, you know, we can see in another way, like what's happened with WikiLeaks. Here's this amazing thing that has emerged and that's been entirely done with no one being paid at all. So, I don't know.

But anyway, so right now, my focus is on this email scandal. But, you know, that could go in so many different directions depending on what happens in this election. I don't know. And then at the end of that, it might just go back to doing what I was doing, my regular life, or I might get drawn in to some other thing. I could see getting drawn back into this 9/11 stuff—again, if there was some team, and some energy, and some better, you know, format to get this done. But—

JON I could listen to you for hours. In fact, I just did. (Laughs)

PAUL How long have we been talking here?

JON About three hours.

PAUL Oh, my goodness.

JON But, I just, I wanted to thank you for your time today, for your insight, for the information that you had to share. Because I know a lot of people out there just aren't aware of it, and I wasn't aware of a lot of it myself. And, I don't know how to thank you for the Complete 9/11 Timeline. I'm sure the

families owe you a debt of gratitude and so do the people of the world for that thing. And I really want to thank you for your time today.

PAUL Well, thanks. It's good to know, because I just had to step away completely from this for a couple of years. And then I've kind of been following the news a little bit more about these issues, but I was just so frustrated for a while. (We understand it, believe me) And I think that right now, as a whole, this issue is suffering from that burnout, because people think America as one, basically, would be glad to never see or hear of Bush or Cheney or their likes again. I mean, even amongst the Republicans, they've become kind of persona non-grata. It's amazing. (Right) I mean, every now and then Cheney sort of pops up to say something controversial, but most everybody in the Bush administration has been very low profile, and they just seemed to be—everyone just kind of wants to forget about them. And it is a very painful chapter in American history where even at the time, that since, they had a poll of historians who said the Bush administration is probably the worst presidency in the history of the United States, for so many different reasons. So, people just want to just forget about it. And, so, part of that is just forgetting about 9/11.

But, I think that these things they tend to come and go in waves. And, like if you look at the JFK assassination, which I think has a lot of eerie parallels—I don't want to open that whole can of worms—but, you know, that story has kind of waxed and waned. There have been times that like—when the JFK movie came out, or there'd be some bunch of documents or some book—it would sort of surge up and then it would quiet down. And, I think as the years go by, we'll kind of see that same thing happen with 9/11. (Right)

But, right now, for the past few years, people have just been in this, you know, just-make-it-go-away/forget-about-it kind of mode. And I was, you know, I was part of that, too. And you know, hopefully, the energy will come around again to finish off what we need to know, because there is more stuff that comes out over time, and it really should be that the public should get a totally different understanding. And maybe as the media and the way people learn information evolves, maybe a new opportunity will arise there. If, you know, if we can use the power of social media to get past the usual gatekeepers who have just so far fallen down in their responsibilities in their job. I mean, we can just see the way this 28 Pages got covered, and how little coverage it got. It's just—it didn't surprise me at all, because that's just how the media is these days.

JON Well, they dropped it right before the RNC, so.

PAUL Well, yeah, I mean, you know, these leaks are timed. You know, it always—for someone like me who follows the news, you always want to pay attention on Friday evening (Yep), because that's when they drop the really interesting stuff, because they figured that's when people are paying the least attention.

Yeah, so, but it's more than just that. It's that they are at such a stage that it's the media if someone just sort of hands them a one-piece of paper press release, they'll just kind of retype it up into a story. But, if there's, you know, you ask some journalists to: "Let's dig in deep and see what's in these 28 pages. What didn't we know before? Let's have a big long essay in *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*." You don't see that kind of thing anymore. They just are kind of struggling to stay afloat.

And plus, as time goes on, they have become more and more captive to the people that they're supposed to be covering. That the politicians and Government departments have become so savvy with their manipulation of the media. For instance, I know a lot now because of, about Hillary Clinton because I've been following this email scandal, but you'll notice she hasn't given a press conference in over six months, which is unheard of in the middle of a Presidential campaign. But, she's given lots and lots of one-on-one interviews. And, as some people in the media have noticed, is what they do is they go to media outlets and they sort of test the waters early in the campaign, and if they get asked softball questions, the type of questions they want to get asked, then they'll give them more interviews down the line. If they get tough questions, then they get dropped off the list. So, they use kind of a carrot-and-stick in order to make sure that they get exactly the media coverage that they want. And, so, their manipulation is like almost, you know, the scientific precision to—like you find newspapers and journalists, they don't want to report certain things, because they will upset their sources. And then their sources will go to someone else in the future. It has become like an art, so that they will—you really only report that which is within the acceptable sphere. Like, you don't want to report something that would make the FBI look too bad, because, two weeks down the line, you might need some sourcing from the FBI. (Yeah)

So, the whole system is just broken. And, you know, this is why maybe we have some hope from citizen journalists and the like, who don't, it's just a

totally different thing—I'm not going to be beholden to the FBI. You're not going to be. We can just say what we want. And the media can't do that anymore. (Nope) Very few people have the, you know, the courage to do that.

JON Well, I think we're going to end on that. Again, I want to thank you very much for your time today. I can't wait to post this online for people to hear. I will probably get it up sometime tomorrow, and I will send it to you. Again, thank you, Paul, for everything you've done over the years. And, again, you're a hero of mine and you're a major influence to me.

PAUL Well, thanks. Like I said, it's really great to know that some people have appreciated this, because I do get frustrated that I see these narratives that are so blatantly false, and that they get so widely accepted. And, nowadays, anybody who says anything, you know, controversial about 9/11, they get tarred as a conspiracy theorist, which has done more than anything to shut down any reporting or inquiries along these lines. No one wants to be, you know, tarred that way. And, I just feel like the bad guys are winning a lot of the time. But, I also do, you know, what do they say about the arc of history, the arc of justice? You know, it's—.

JON It's a long one.

PAUL It's a long one. But, you know, what's the saying? It's long, but it bends towards justice. And, I think that really is true. I think that's—like you can say look at Iraq and all the lies that happened there. I think as time goes on, for some reason with that issue, it's become more acceptable to say: "Okay, that was a total mistake. There were no weapons of mass destruction. You know, that was a complete fiasco."

And, I think that, eventually, the same will come around with 9/11. We may need a few more, you know, stories that come through with new information that just pokes such big holes in the 9/11 Commission story that that finally gets discredited in a major way. I'm hopeful that things like that will happen.

Because I think also, you know—[laughs] sorry, I know we're supposed to be wrapping up—but, also related to this email thing, I'm encouraged by what's been happening with Wikileaks and the idea that more and more information is getting onto computers within all these Government departments and private corporations. Everything is becoming

computerized. And it's, for these entities, it's kind of a double-edged sword, because it's way more useful, but it only takes one whistleblower to then release a tremendous amount of information that can be extremely damning.

And, I think that we are going to see things down the line—maybe not 9/11 related, I don't know—but, certainly, more Government whistleblowers coming forward with a lot like Edward Snowden or like Chelsea Manning. I think we're going to see more of that as everything gets more computerized. And that will be an important check on corruption, on incompetence, and on all these things when maybe the media is not doing their job. But if we can have leaks come out, and give the public the true story that way, kind of the raw data—I have a lot of hope that things like that can happen.

And we'll see what happens in the next few months with this Clinton story, and if we can maybe set an example there with what's happening with Clinton's emails. So, I still am hopeful. And I still think that in time, if someone is writing the history book 100 years from now, I hope it will look a lot like the 9/11 Timeline and not like the 9/11 Commission report.

JON Yeah, me too. All right, Paul, thank you very much for your time today. And have a great night.

PAUL Okay. Good talking to you.

JON That is the end of Part 4. Please be sure to check out the other three shows in this series. Thank you.

Suggested Further Research (Books, Videos, Websites)

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[9/11 Omission Hearings - Jenna Orkin On Environmental Crimes - 9/9/2004](#)

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[Project Censored Show](#) (Radio Show KPFA)

[Project Censored the Movie](#): Ending the Reign of Junk Food News

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Chapter/Episode 8 – Cindy Sheehan

[Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox Network](#)

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Not One More Mother's Child, a collection of her writing and speeches, *Dear President Bush*; *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey through Heartache to Activism*; *Myth America: 20 Greatest Myths of the Robber Class and the Case for Revolution*; *Revolution, a Love Story*; and *I Left My Marbles in San Francisco: The Scandal of Federal Electoral Politricks, The Obama Files*

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