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Was America Attacked by Muslims on 9/11?

By David Ray Griffin

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09/09/08 "ICH" --

However, as Rowland Morgan and Ian Henshall have pointed out,

a normal security video has time and date burned into the integral video image by proprietary equipment according to an authenticated pattern, along with camera identification and the location that the camera covered. The video released in 2004 contained no such data.⁷⁴

The Associated Press notwithstanding, therefore, this video contains no evidence that it was taken at Dulles on September 11.

Another problem with this so-called Dulles video is that, although one of the men on it was identified by the 9/11 Commission as Hani Hanjour,⁷⁵ he "does not remotely resemble Hanjour." Whereas Hanjour was thin and had a receding hairline (as shown by a photo taken six days before 9/11), the man in the video had a somewhat muscular build and a full head of hair, with no receding hairline.⁷⁶

In sum: Video proof that the named hijackers checked into airports on 9/11 is nonexistent. Besides the fact that the videos purportedly showing hijackers for Flights 11 and 77 reek of inauthenticity, there are no videos even purportedly showing the hijackers for the other two flights. If these 19 men had really checked into the Boston and Dulles airports that day, there should be authentic security videos to prove this.

8. Were the Names of the "Hijackers" on the Passenger Manifests?

What about the passenger manifests, which list all the passengers on the flights? If the alleged hijackers purchased tickets and boarded the flights, their names would have been on the manifests for these flights. And we were told that they were. According to counterterrorism coordinator Richard Clarke, the FBI told him at about 10:00 that morning that it recognized the names of some al-Qaeda operatives on passenger manifests it had received from the airlines.⁷⁷ As to how the FBI itself acquired its list, Robert Bonner, the head of Customs and Border Protection, said to the 9/11 Commission in 2004:

On the morning of 9/11, through an evaluation of data related to the passenger manifest for the four terrorist hijacked aircraft, Customs Office of Intelligence was able to identify the likely terrorist hijackers. Within 45 minutes of the attacks, Customs forwarded the passenger lists with the names of the victims and 19 probable hijackers to the FBI and the intelligence community.⁷⁸

Under questioning, Bonner added:

We were able to pull from the airlines the passenger manifest for each of the four flights. We ran the manifest through [our lookout] system. . . . [B]y 11:00 AM, I'd seen a sheet that essentially identified the 19 probable hijackers. And in fact, they turned out to be, based upon further follow-up in detailed investigation, to be the 19.⁷⁹

Bonner's statement, however, is doubly problematic. In the first place, the initial FBI list, as reported by CNN on September 13 and 14, contained only 18 names.⁸⁰ Why would that be if 19 men had already been identified on 9/11?

Second, several of the names on the FBI's first list, having quickly become problematic, were replaced by other names. For example, the previously discussed men named Bukhari, thought to be brothers, were replaced on American 11's list of hijackers by brothers named Waleed and Wail al-Shehri. Two other replacements for this flight were Satam al-Suqami, whose passport was allegedly found at Ground Zero, and Abdul al-Omari, who allegedly went to Portland with Atta the day before 9/11. Also, the initial list for American 77 did not include the name of Hani Hanjour, who would later be called the pilot of this flight. Rather, it contained a name that, after being read aloud by a CNN correspondent, was transcribed "Mosear Caned."⁸¹ All in all, the final list of 19 hijackers contained six names that were not on the original list of 18---a fact that contradicts Bonner's claim that by 11:00 AM on 9/11 his agency had identified 19 probable hijackers who, in fact, "turned out to be. . . the 19."

These replacements to the initial list also undermine the claim that Amy Sweeney, by giving the seat numbers of three of the hijackers to Michael Woodward of American Airlines, allowed him to identify Atta and two others. This second claim is impossible because the two others were Abdul al-Omari and Satam al-Suqami,⁸² and they were replacements for two men on the original list---who, like Adnan Bukhari, turned up alive after 9/11.⁸³ Woodward could not possibly have identified men who were not added to the list until several days later.⁸⁴

For all these reasons, the claim that the names of the 19 alleged hijackers were on the airlines' passenger manifests must be considered false.

This conclusion is supported by the fact that the passenger manifests that were released to the public included no names of any of the 19 alleged hijackers and, in fact, no Middle Eastern names whatsoever.⁸⁵ These manifests, therefore, support the suspicion that there were no al-Qaeda hijackers on the planes.

It might appear that this conclusion is contradicted by the fact that passenger manifests with the names of the alleged hijackers have appeared. A photocopy of a portion of an apparent passenger manifest for American Flight 11, with the names of three of the alleged hijackers, was published in a 2005 book by Terry McDermott, *Perfect Soldiers: The 9/11*

Hijackers.⁸⁶ McDermott reportedly said that he received these manifests from the FBI.⁸⁷ But the idea that these were the original manifests is problematic.

For one thing, they were not included in the evidence presented by the FBI to the Moussaoui trial in 2006.⁸⁸ If even the FBI will not cite them as evidence, why should anyone think they are genuine?

Another problem with these purported manifests, copies of which can be viewed on the Internet,⁸⁹ is that they show signs of being late creations. One such sign is that Ziad Jarrah's last name is spelled correctly, whereas in the early days after 9/11, the FBI was referring to him as "Jarrahi," as news reports from the time show.⁹⁰ A second sign is that the manifest for American Flight 77 contains Hani Hanjour's name, even though its absence from the original list of hijackers had led the Washington Post to wonder why Hanjour's "name was not on the American Airlines manifest for the flight."⁹¹ A third sign is that the purported manifest for American Flight 11 contains the names of Wail al-Shehri, Waleed al-Shehri, Satam al-Suqami, and Abdul al-Omari, all of whom were added some days after 9/11.

In sum, no credible evidence that al-Qaeda operatives were on the flights is provided by the passenger manifests.

9. Did DNA Tests Identify Five Hijackers among the Victims at the Pentagon?

Another type of evidence that the alleged hijackers were really on the planes could have been provided by autopsies. But no such evidence has been forthcoming. In its book defending the official account of 9/11, to be sure, Popular Mechanics claims that, according to a report on the victims of the Pentagon attack by the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology: "The five hijackers were positively identified."⁹² But this claim is false.

According to a summary of this pathology report by Andrew Baker, M.D., the remains of 183 victims were subjected to DNA analysis, which resulted in "178 positive identifications." Although Baker says that "[s]ome remains for each of the terrorists were recovered," this was merely an inference from the fact that there were "five unique postmortem profiles that did not match any antemortem material provided by victims' families."⁹³

A Washington Post story made even clearer the fact that this conclusion---that the unmatched remains were those of "the five hijackers"---was merely an inference. It wrote: "The remains of the five hijackers have been identified through a process of exclusion, as they did not match DNA samples contributed by family members of all 183 victims who died at the site" (emphasis added).⁹⁴ All the report said, in other words, was that there were five bodies whose DNA did not match that of any of the known Pentagon victims or any of the regular passengers or crew members on Flight 77.

We have no way of knowing where these five bodies came from. For the claim that they came from the attack site at the Pentagon, we have only the word of the FBI and the military, which insisted on taking charge of the bodies of everyone killed at the Pentagon and transporting them to the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology.⁹⁵

In any case, the alleged hijackers could have been positively identified only if samples had

been obtained from their relatives, and there is no indication that this occurred. Indeed, one can wonder why not. The FBI had lots of information about the men identified as the hijackers. They could easily have located relatives. And these relatives, most of whom reportedly did not believe that their own flesh and blood had been involved in the attacks, would have surely been willing to supply the needed DNA. Indeed, a story about Ziad Jarrah, the alleged pilot of Flight 93, said: "Jarrah's family has indicated they would be willing to provide DNA samples to US researchers, . . . [but] the FBI has shown no interest thus far."⁹⁶

The lack of positive identification of the alleged hijackers is consistent with the autopsy report, which was released to Dr. Thomas Olmsted, who had made a FOIA request for it. Like the flight manifest for Flight 77, he revealed, this report also contains no Arab names.⁹⁷

10. Has the Claim That Some of the "Hijackers" Are Still Alive Been Debunked?

Another problem with the claim that the 19 hijackers were correctly identified on 9/11, or at least a few days later, is that some of the men on the FBI's final list reportedly turned up alive after 9/11. Although Der Spiegel and the BBC claim to have debunked these reports, I will show this is untrue by examining the case of one of the alleged hijackers, Waleed al-Shehri---who, we saw earlier, was a replacement for Adnan Bukhari, who himself had shown up alive after 9/11.

In spite of the fact that al-Shehri was a replacement, the 9/11 Commission revealed no doubts about his presence on Flight 11, speculating that he and his brother Wail---another replacement---stabbed two of the flight attendants.⁹⁸ But the Commission certainly should have had doubts.

On September 22, 2001, the BBC published an article by David Bamford entitled "Hijack '-Suspect' Alive in Morocco." It showed that the Waleed al-Shehri identified by the FBI as one of the hijackers was still alive. Explaining why the problem could not be dismissed as a case of mistaken identity, Bamford wrote:

His photograph was released by the FBI, and has been shown in newspapers and on television around the world. That same Mr Al-Shehri has turned up in Morocco, proving clearly that he was not a member of the suicide attack. He told Saudi journalists in Casablanca that . . . he has now been interviewed by the American authorities, who apologised for the misunderstanding.⁹⁹

The following day, September 23, the BBC published another story, "Hijack '-Suspects' Alive and Well." Discussing several alleged hijackers who had shown up alive, it said of al-Shehri in particular: "He acknowledges that he attended flight training school at Daytona Beach. . . . But, he says, he left the United States in September last year, became a pilot with Saudi Arabian airlines and is currently on a further training course in Morocco."¹⁰⁰

In 2003, an article in Der Spiegel tried to debunk these two BBC stories, characterizing them as "nonsense about surviving terrorists." It claimed that the reported still-alive hijackers were all cases of mistaken identity, involving men with "coincidentally identical names." This claim by Der Spiegel depended on its assertion that, at the time of the reports, the FBI had released only a list of names: "The FBI did not release photographs until four

days after the cited reports, on September 27th."¹⁰¹ But that was not true. Bamford's BBC story of September 22, as we saw, reported that Waleed al-Shehri's photograph had been "released by the FBI" and "shown in newspapers and on television around the world."

In 2006, nevertheless, the BBC used the same claim to withdraw its support for its own stories. Steve Herrmann, the editor of the BBC News website, claimed that confusion had arisen because "these were common Arabic and Islamic names." Accordingly, he said, the BBC had changed its September 23 story in one respect: "Under the FBI picture of Waleed al Shehri we have added the words '-A man called Waleed Al Shehri...'" to make it as clear as possible that there was confusion over the identity."¹⁰² But Bamford's BBC story of September 22, which Herrmann failed to mention, had made it "as clear as possible" that there could not have been any confusion.

These attempts by Der Spiegel and the BBC, in which they tried to discredit the reports that Waleed al-Shehri was still alive after 9/11, have been refuted by Jay Kolar, who shows that FBI photographs had been published by Saudi newspapers as early as September 19. Kolar thereby undermines the only argument against Bamford's assertion, according to which there could have been no possibility of mistaken identity because al-Shehri had seen his published photograph prior to September 22, when Bamford's story appeared.¹⁰³

The fact that al-Shehri, along with several other alleged hijackers,¹⁰⁴ was alive after 9/11 shows unambiguously that at least some of the men on the FBI's final list were not on the planes. It would appear that the FBI, after replacing some of its first-round candidates because of their continued existence, decided not to replace any more, in spite of their exhibition of the same defect.

11. Is There Positive Evidence That No Hijackers Were on the Planes?

At this point, defenders of the official story might argue: The fact that some of the men labeled hijackers were still alive after 9/11 shows only that the FBI list contained some errors; it does not prove that there were no al-Qaeda hijackers on board. And although the previous points do undermine the evidence for such hijackers, absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence.

Evidence of absence, however, is implicit in the prior points in two ways. First, the lack of Arab names on the Pentagon autopsy report and on any of the issued passenger manifests does suggest the absence of al-Qaeda operatives. Second, if al-Qaeda hijackers really were on the flights, why was evidence to prove this fact fabricated?

Beyond those two points, moreover, there is a feature of the reported events that contradicts the claim that hijackers broke into the pilots' cabins. This feature can be introduced by reference to Conan Doyle's short story "Silver Blaze," which is about a famous race horse that had disappeared the night before a big race. Although the local Scotland Yard detective believed that Silver Blaze had been stolen by an intruder, Sherlock Holmes brought up "the curious incident of the dog in the night-time." When the inspector pointed out that "[t]he dog did nothing in the night-time," Holmes replied: "That was the curious incident."¹⁰⁵ Had there really been an intruder, in other words, the dog would have barked. This has become known as the case of "the dog that didn't bark."

A similar curious incident occurred on each of the four flights. In the event of a hijacking, pilots are trained to enter the standard hijack code (7500) into their transponders to alert controllers on the ground. Using the transponder to send a code is called "squawking." One of the big puzzles about 9/11 was why none of the pilots squawked the hijack code.

CNN provided a good treatment of this issue, saying with regard to the first flight:

Flight 11 was hijacked apparently by knife-wielding men. Airline pilots are trained to handle such situations by keeping calm, complying with requests, and if possible, dialing in an emergency four digit code on a device called a transponder. . . . The action takes seconds, but it appears no such code was entered.¹⁰⁶

The crucial issue was indicated by the phrase "if possible": Would it have been possible for the pilots of Flight 11 to have performed this action? A positive answer was suggested by CNN's next statement:

[I]n the cabin, a frantic flight attendant managed to use a phone to call American Airlines Command Center in Dallas. She reported the trouble. And according to "The Christian Science Monitor," a pilot apparently keyed the microphone, transmitting a cockpit conversation.¹⁰⁷

If there was time for both of those actions to be taken, there would have been time for one of the pilots to enter the four-digit hijack code.

That would have been all the more true of the pilots on United Flight 93, given the (purported) tapes from this flight. A reporter at the Moussaoui trial, where these tapes had been played, wrote:

In those tapes, the pilots shouted as hijackers broke into the cockpit. "Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!" a pilot screamed in the first tape. In the second tape, 30 seconds later, a pilot shouted: "Mayday! Get out of here! Get out of here!"¹⁰⁸

According to these tapes, therefore, the pilots were still alive and coherent 30 seconds after realizing that hijackers were breaking into the cockpit. And yet in all that time, neither of them did the most important thing they had been trained to do---turn the transponder to 7500.

In addition to the four pilots on Flights 11 and 93, furthermore, the four pilots on Flights 175 and 77 failed to do this as well.

In "Silver Blaze," the absence of an intruder was shown by the dog that didn't bark. On 9/11, the absence of hijackers was shown by the pilots who didn't squawk.

12. Were bin Laden and al-Qaeda Capable of Orchestrating the Attacks?

For prosecutors to prove that defendants committed a crime, they must show that they had the ability (as well as the motive and opportunity) to do so. But several political and military leaders from other countries have stated that bin Laden and al-Qaeda simply could not have carried out the attacks. General Leonid Ivashov, who in 2001 was the chief of staff for

the Russian armed forces, wrote:

Only secret services and their current chiefs---or those retired but still having influence inside the state organizations---have the ability to plan, organize and conduct an operation of such magnitude. . . . Osama bin Laden and "Al Qaeda" cannot be the organizers nor the performers of the September 11 attacks. They do not have the necessary organization, resources or leaders.

Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, the former foreign minister of Egypt, wrote:

Bin Laden does not have the capabilities for an operation of this magnitude. When I hear Bush talking about al-Qaida as if it was Nazi Germany or the communist party of the Soviet Union, I laugh because I know what is there.

Similar statements have been made by Andreas von Bülow, the former state secretary of West Germany's ministry of defense, by General Mirza Aslam Beg, former chief of staff of Pakistan's army, and even General Musharraf, the president of Pakistan until recently.¹⁰⁹

This same point was also made by veteran CIA agent Milt Bearden. Speaking disparagingly of "the myth of Osama bin Laden" on CBS News the day after 9/11, Bearden said: "I was there [in Afghanistan] at the same time bin Laden was there. He was not the great warrior." With regard to the widespread view that bin Laden was behind the attacks, he said: "This was a tremendously sophisticated operation against the United States---more sophisticated than anybody would have ascribed to Osama bin Laden." Pointing out that a group capable of such a sophisticated attack would have had a way to cover their tracks, he added: "This group who was responsible for that, if they didn't have an Osama bin Laden out there, they'd invent one, because he's a terrific diversion."¹¹⁰

13. Could Hani Hanjour Have Flown Flight 77 into the Pentagon?

The inability of al-Qaeda to have carried out the operation can be illustrated in terms of Hani Hanjour, the al-Qaeda operative said to have flown Flight 77 into the Pentagon.

On September 12, before it was stated that Hanjour had been the pilot of American 77, the final minutes of this plane's trajectory had been described as one requiring great skill. A Washington Post story said:

[J]ust as the plane seemed to be on a suicide mission into the White House, the unidentified pilot executed a pivot so tight that it reminded observers of a fighter jet maneuver. . . . Aviation sources said the plane was flown with extraordinary skill, making it highly likely that a trained pilot was at the helm.¹¹¹

But Hani Hanjour was not that. Indeed, a CBS story reported, an Arizona flight school said that Hanjour's "flying skills were so bad . . . they didn't think he should keep his pilot's license." The manager stated: "I couldn't believe he had a commercial license of any kind with the skills that he had."¹¹² A New York Times story, entitled "A Trainee Noted for Incompetence," quoted one of his instructors as saying that Hanjour "could not fly at all."¹¹³

The 9/11 Commission even admitted that in the summer of 2001, just months before 9/11, a flight instructor in New Jersey, after going up with Hanjour in a small plane, "declined a

second request because of what he considered Hanjour's poor piloting skills."114 The Commission failed to address the question of how Hanjour, incapable of flying a single-engine plane, could have flown a giant 757 through the trajectory reportedly taken by Flight 77: descending 8,000 feet in three minutes and then coming in at ground level to strike Wedge 1 of the Pentagon between the first and second floors, without even scraping the lawn.

Several pilots have said this would have been impossible. Russ Wittenberg, who flew large commercial airliners for 35 years after serving as a fighter pilot in Vietnam, says it would have been "totally impossible for an amateur who couldn't even fly a Cessna" to fly that downward spiral and then "crash into the Pentagon's first floor wall without touching the lawn."115 Ralph Omholt, a former 757 pilot, has bluntly said: "The idea that an unskilled pilot could have flown this trajectory is simply too ridiculous to consider."116 Ralph Kolstad, who was a US Navy "top gun" pilot before becoming a commercial airline pilot for 27 years, has said: "I have 6,000 hours of flight time in Boeing 757's and 767's and I could not have flown it the way the flight path was described. . . . Something stinks to high heaven!"117

The authors of the Popular Mechanics book about 9/11 offered to solve this problem. While acknowledging that Hanjour "may not have been highly skilled," they said that he did not need to be, because all he had to do was, using a GPS unit, put his plane on autopilot.118 "He steered the plane manually for only the final eight minutes of the flight," they state triumphantly119---ignoring the fact that it was precisely during those minutes that Hanjour had allegedly performed the impossible.

14. Would an al-Qaeda Pilot Have Executed that Maneuver?

A further question is: Even if one of the al-Qaeda operatives on that flight could have executed that maneuver, would he have done so? This question arises out of the fact that the plane could easily have crashed into the roof on the side of the Pentagon that housed Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and all the top brass. The difficult maneuver would have been required only by the decision to strike Wedge 1 on the side.

But this was the worst possible place, given the assumed motives of the al-Qaeda operatives: They would have wanted to kill Rumsfeld and the top brass, but Wedge 1 was as far removed from their offices as possible. They would have wanted to cause as much destruction as possible, but Wedge 1---and only it---had been renovated to make it less vulnerable to attack. Al-Qaeda operatives would have wanted to kill as many Pentagon employees as possible, but because the renovation was not quite complete, Wedge 1 was only sparsely occupied. The attack also occurred on the only part of the Pentagon that would have presented physical obstacles to an attacking airplane. All of these facts were public knowledge. So even if an al-Qaeda pilot had been capable of executing the maneuver to strike the ground floor of Wedge 1, he would not have done so.

15. Could al-Qaeda Operatives Have Brought Down the World Trade Center Buildings?

Returning to the issue of competence, another question is whether al-Qaeda operatives could have brought down the Twin Towers and WTC 7?

With regard to the Twin Towers, the official theory is that they were brought down by the impact of the airplanes plus the ensuing fires. But this theory cannot explain why the towers, after exploding outwards at the top, came straight down, because this type of collapse would have required all 287 of each building's steel columns---which ran from the basement to the roof---to have failed simultaneously; it cannot explain why the top parts of the buildings came straight down at virtually free-fall speed, because this required that the lower parts of the building, with all of their steel and concrete, offered no resistance; it cannot explain why sections of steel beams, weighing thousands of tons, were blown out horizontally more than 500 feet; it cannot explain why some of the steel had melted, because this melting required temperatures far hotter than the fires in the buildings could possibly have been; and it cannot explain why many firefighters and WTC employees reported massive explosions in the buildings long after all the jet-fuel had burned up. But all of these phenomena are easily explainable by the hypothesis that the buildings were brought down by explosives in the procedure known as controlled demolition.¹²⁰

This conclusion now constitutes the consensus of independent physicists, chemists, architects, engineers, and demolition experts who have studied the facts.¹²¹ For example, Edward Muniak, a mechanical and fire protection engineer who worked in the US departments of energy and defense, says: "The concentric nearly freefall speed exhibited by each building was identical to most controlled demolitions. . . . Collapse [was] not caused by fire effects."¹²² Dwain Deets, the former director of the research engineering division at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center, mentions the "massive structural members being hurled horizontally" as one of the factors leaving him with "no doubt [that] explosives were involved."¹²³

Given the fact that WTC 7 was not even hit by a plane, its vertical collapse at virtually free-fall speed, which also was preceded by explosions and involved the melting of steel, was still more obviously an example of controlled demolition.¹²⁴ For example, Jack Keller, emeritus professor of engineering at Utah State University, who has been given special recognition by Scientific American, said: "Obviously it was the result of controlled demolition."¹²⁵ Likewise, when Danny Jowenko---a controlled demolition expert in the Netherlands who had not known that WTC 7 had collapsed on 9/11---was asked to comment on a video of its collapse, he said: "They simply blew up columns, and the rest caved in afterwards. . . . [I]t's been imploded. . . . A team of experts did this."¹²⁶

If the Twin Towers and WTC 7 were brought down by explosives, the question becomes: Who would have had the ability to place the explosives? This question involves two parts: First, who could have obtained access to the buildings for all the hours it would have taken to plant the explosives? The answer is: Only someone with connections to people in charge of security for the World Trade Center.

The second part of the question is: Who, if they had such access, would have had the expertise to engineer the controlled demolition of these three buildings? As Jowenko's statement indicated, the kind of controlled demolition to which these buildings were subjected was implosion, which makes the building come straight down. According to ImplosionWorld.com, an implosion is "by far the trickiest type of explosive project, and there are only a handful of blasting companies in the world that possess enough experience . . . to perform these true building implosions."¹²⁷

Both parts of the question, therefore, rule out al-Qaeda operatives. The destruction of the

World Trade Center had to have been an inside job.

16. Would al-Qaeda Operatives Have Imploded the Buildings?

Finally, we can also ask whether, even if al-Qaeda operatives had possessed the ability to cause the World Trade Center buildings to implode so as to come straight down, they would have done so? The answer to this question becomes obvious once we reflect upon the purpose of this kind of controlled demolition, which is to avoid damaging near-by buildings. Had the 110-story Twin Towers fallen over sideways, they would have caused massive destruction in lower Manhattan, destroying dozens of other buildings and killing tens of thousands of people. Would al-Qaeda have had the courtesy to make sure that the buildings came straight down?

Conclusion

All the proffered evidence that America was attacked by Muslims on 9/11, when subjected to critical scrutiny, appears to have been fabricated. If that is determined indeed to be the case, the implications would be enormous. Discovering and prosecuting the true perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks would obviously be important. The most immediate consequence, however, should be to reverse those attitudes and policies that have been based on the assumption that America was attacked by Muslims on 9/11.

Continued

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