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## The 11th Anniversary of 9/11

By Paul Craig Roberts

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The article below was written for the *Journal of 9/11 Studies* for the eleventh anniversary of September 11, 2001, the day that terminated accountable government and American liberty. It is posted here with the agreement of the editors.

In order to understand the improbability of the government's explanation of 9/11, it is not necessary to know anything about what force or forces brought down the three World Trade Center buildings, what hit the Pentagon or caused the explosion, the flying skills or lack thereof of the alleged hijackers, whether the airliner crashed in Pennsylvania or was shot down, whether cell phone calls made at the altitudes could be received, or any other debated aspect of the controversy.

You only have to know two things.

One is that according to the official story, a handful of Arabs, mainly Saudi Arabians, operating independently of any government and competent intelligence service, men without James Bond and V for Vendetta capabilities, outwitted not only the CIA, FBI, and National Security Agency, but all 16 US intelligence agencies, along with all security agencies of America's NATO allies and Israel's Mossad. Not only did the entire intelligence forces of the Western world fail, but on the morning of the attack the entire apparatus of the National Security State simultaneously failed. Airport security failed four times in one hour. NORAD failed. Air Traffic Control failed. The US Air Force failed.

The National Security Council failed. Dick Cheney failed. Absolutely nothing worked. The world's only superpower was helpless at the humiliating mercy of a few undistinguished Arabs.

It is hard to image a more far-fetched story--except for the second thing you need to know: The humiliating failure of US National Security did not result in immediate demands from the President of the United States, from Congress, from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and from the media for an investigation of how such improbable total failure could have occurred. Instead, the White House dragged its feet for a year resisting any investigation until the persistent demands from 9/11 families for accountability forced President George W. Bush to appoint a political commission, devoid of any experts, to hold a pretend investigation.

### **On 9/11 Doubts Were Immediate**

On September 11, 2001, a neighbor telephoned and said, "turn on the TV." I assumed that a hurricane, possibly a bad one from the sound of the neighbor's voice, was headed our way, and turned on the TV to determine whether we needed to shutter the house and leave.

What I saw was black smoke from upper floors of one of the World Trade Center towers. It didn't seem to be much of a fire, and the reports were that the fire was under control. While I was trying to figure out why every TV network had its main news anchor covering an office fire, TV cameras showed an airplane hitting the other tower. It was then that I learned that both towers had been hit by airliners.

Cameras showed people standing at the hole in the side of the tower looking out. This didn't surprise me. The airliner was minute compared to the massive building. But what was going on? Two accidents, one on top of the other?

The towers--the three-fourths or four-fifths of the buildings beneath the plane strikes--were standing, apparently largely undamaged. There were no signs of fire except in the vicinity of where the airliners had hit. Suddenly, one of the towers blew up, disintegrated, and disappeared in fine dust. Before one could make any sense of this, the same thing happened to the second tower, and it too disappeared into fine dust.

The TV news anchors compared the disintegration of the towers to controlled demolition. There were numerous reports of explosions throughout the towers from the base or sub-basements to the top. (Once the government put out the story of terrorist attack, references to controlled demolition and explosions disappeared from the print and TV media.) This made sense to me. Someone had blown up the buildings. It was completely obvious that the towers had not fallen down from asymmetrical structural damage. They had blown up.

The images of the airliners hitting the towers and the towers blowing up were replayed time and again. Airliners hit the top portions of the towers, and not long afterward the towers blew up. I turned off the TV wondering how it was that cameras had been ready to catch such an unusual phenomenon as an airplane flying into a skyscraper.

I don't remember the time line, but it wasn't long before the story was in place that Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda gang had attacked the US. A passport had been found in the rubble. Another airliner had flown into the Pentagon, and a fourth airliner had crashed or been shot down. Four airliners had been hijacked, meaning airport security had failed four times on the same morning. Terrorists had successfully assaulted America.

When I heard these reports, I wondered. How could a tiny undamaged passport be found in the rubble of two skyscrapers, each more than 100 stories tall, when bodies, office furniture and computers could not be found? How could airport security fail so totally that four airliners could be hijacked within the same hour? How could authorities know so conclusively and almost immediately the names of the perpetrators who pulled off such a successful attack on the world's only superpower, when the authorities had no idea that such an attack was planned or even possible?

These questions disturbed me, because as a former member of the congressional staff and as a presidential appointee to high office, I had high level security clearances. In addition to my duties as Assistant Secretary of the US Treasury, I had FEMA responsibilities in the event of nuclear attack. There was a mountain hideaway to which I was supposed to report in the event of a nuclear attack and from which I was supposed to take over the US government in the event no higher official survived the attack.

The more the story of 9/11 was presented in the media, the more wondrous it became. It is not credible that not only the CIA and FBI failed to detect the plot, but also all 16 US intelligence agencies, including the National Security Agency, which spies on everyone on the planet, and the Defense Intelligence Agency, Israel's Mossad, and the intelligence agencies of Washington's NATO allies. There are simply too many watchmen and too much infiltration of terrorist groups for such a complex attack to be prepared undetected and carried out undeterred.

Washington's explanation of the attack implied a security failure too massive to be credible. Such a catastrophic failure of national security would mean that the US and Western Europe were never safe for one second during the Cold War, that the Soviet Union could have destroyed the entire West in one undetected fell swoop.

As a person whose colleagues at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington were former secretaries of state, former national security advisors, former CIA directors, former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I was troubled by the story that a collection of individuals unsupported by a competent intelligence service had pulled off the events of 9/11.

As a person with high level government service, I knew that any such successful operation as 9/11 would have resulted in immediate demands from the White House, Congress, and the media for accountability. There would have been an investigation of how every aspect of US security could totally fail simultaneously in one morning. Such a catastrophic and embarrassing failure of the national security state would not be left unexamined.

NORAD failed. The US Air Force could not get jet fighters in the air. Air Traffic Control lost sight of the hijacked airliners. Yet, instead of launching an investigation, the White House

resisted for one year the demands of the 9/11 families for an investigation. Neither the public, the media, nor Congress seemed to think an investigation was necessary. The focus was on revenge, which the Bush neocon regime said meant invading Afghanistan which was alleged to be sheltering the perpetrator, Osama bin Laden.

Normally, terrorists are proud of their success and announce their responsibility. It is a way to build a movement. Often a number of terrorist groups will compete in claiming credit for a successful operation. But Osama bin Laden in the last video that is certified by independent experts said that he had no responsibility for 9/11, that he had nothing against the American people, that his opposition was limited to the US government's colonial policies and control over Muslim governments.

It makes no sense that the "mastermind" of the most humiliating blow in world history ever to have been delivered against a superpower would not claim credit for his accomplishment. By September 11, 2001, Osama bin Laden knew that he was deathly ill. According to news reports he underwent kidney dialysis the following month. The most reliable reports that we have are that he died in December 2001. It is simply not credible that bin Laden denied responsibility because he feared Washington.

But Osama bin Laden was too useful a bogeyman, and Washington and the prostitute media kept him alive for another decade until Obama needed to kill the dead man in order to boost his sinking standings in the polls so that Democrats would not back a challenger for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Numerous bin Laden videos, every one pronounced a fake by experts, were released whenever it was convenient for Washington. No one in the Western media or in the US Congress or European or UK parliaments was sufficiently intelligent to recognize that a bin Laden video always showed up on cue when Washington needed it. "Why would the 'mastermind' be so accommodating for Washington?" was the question that went through my mind every time one of the fake videos was released.

The 9/11 "investigation" that finally took place was a political one run from the White House. One member of the commission resigned, declaring the investigation to be a farce, and both co-chairman and the legal counsel of the 9/11 Commission distanced themselves from their report with statements that the 9/11 Commission was "set up to fail," that resources were withheld from the commission, that representatives of the US military lied to the commission and that the commission considered referring the false testimony for criminal prosecution.

One would think that these revelations would cause a sensation, but the news media, Congress, the White House, and the public were silent.

All of this bothered me a great deal. The US had invaded two Muslim countries based on unsubstantiated allegations linking the two countries to 9/11, which itself remained uninvestigated. The neoconservatives who staffed the George W. Bush regime were advocating more invasions of more Muslim countries. Paul O'Neill, President Bush's first Treasury Secretary, stated publicly that the [Bush regime was planning to invade Iraq prior to 9/11](#). O'Neill

said that no one at a National Security Council meeting even asked the question, why invade Iraq? "It was all about finding a way to do it."

The leaked top secret Downing Street Memo written by the head of British intelligence (MI6) confirms Paul O'Neill's testimony. The memo, known as the "smoking gun memo" whose authenticity has been confirmed, states that "President George W. Bush wants to remove Saddam Hussein, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy." In other words, the US invasion of Iraq was based on nothing but a made up lie.

As an engineering student I had witnessed a controlled demolition. When films of the collapse of WTC building 7 emerged, it was obvious that building 7 had been brought down by controlled demolition. When physics instructor David Chandler measured the descent of the building and established that it took place at free fall acceleration, the case was closed. Buildings cannot enter free fall unless controlled demolition has removed all resistance to the collapsing floors.

If airliners brought down two skyscrapers, why was controlled demolition used to bring down a third building?

I assumed that structural architects, structural engineers, and physicists would blow the whistle on the obviously false story. If I could see that something was amiss, certainly more highly trained people would.

The first physicist to make an effective and compelling argument was Steven Jones at BYU. Jones said that explosives brought down the twin towers. He made a good case. For his efforts, he was pressured to resign his tenured position. I wondered whether the federal government had threatened BYU's research grants or whether patriotic trustees and alumni were the driving force behind Jones' expulsion. Regardless, the message was clear to other university based experts: "Shut up or we'll get you."

Steven Jones was vindicated when chemist Niels Harrit of the University of Copenhagen in Denmark reported unequivocally that the scientific team in which he participated found nano-thermite in the residue of the twin towers. This sensational finding was not mentioned in the US print and TV media to my knowledge.

Several years after 9/11 architect Richard Gage formed Architects and Engineers for 9/11 truth, an organization that has grown to include 1,700 experts. The plans of the towers have been studied. They were formidable structures. They were constructed to withstand airliner hits and fires. There is no credible explanation of their failure except intentional demolition.

I also found disturbing the gullibility of the public, media, and Congress in the unquestioning acceptance of the official stories of the shoe-bomber, shampoo and bottled water bomber, and underwear bomber plots to blow up airliners in transit. These schemes are farcical. How can we believe that al Qaeda, capable of pulling off the most fantastic terrorist attack in history and capable of devising improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that kill and maim US troops and destroy US military vehicles would rely on something that had to be lighted with a match? The

shoe and underwear bombers would simply have pushed a button on their cell phones or laptops, and the liquid bomb would not have required extended time in a lavatory to be mixed (all to no effect).

None of this makes any sense. Moreover, experts disputed many of the government's claims, which were never backed by anything but the government's story line. There is no independent evidence that anything was involved other than firecracker powders.

The case of the underwear bomber is especially difficult to accept. According to witnesses, the underwear bomber was not allowed on the airliner, because he had no passport. So an official appears who walks him onto the airliner bound for Detroit on Christmas day. What kind of official has the authority to override established rules, and what did the official think would happen to the passenger when he presented himself to US Customs without a passport? Any official with the power to override standard operating practices would know that it was pointless to send a passenger to a country where his entry would be rejected.

The circumstantial evidence is that these were orchestrated events designed to keep fear alive, to create new intrusive powers for a new over-arching federal policy agency, to accustom US citizens to intrusive searches and a police force to conducting them, and to sell expensive porno-scanners and now more advanced devices to the Transportation Safety Administration. Apparently, this expensive collection of high-tech gadgetry is insufficient to protect us from terrorists, and in August 2012 the Department of Homeland Security put in an order for 750 million rounds of ammunition, enough to shoot every person in the US 2.5 times.

Naive and gullible Americans claim that if some part of the US government had been involved in 9/11, "someone would have talked by now." A comforting thought, perhaps, but nothing more. Consider, for example, the cover-up by the US government of the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty that killed or wounded most of the crew but failed to sink the ship. As the survivors have testified, they were ordered in a threatening way not to speak about the event. It was twelve years later before one of the USS Liberty's officers, James Ennes, told the story of the attack in his book, *Assault on the Liberty*. I continue to wonder how the professionals at the National Institute of Standards and Technology feel about being maneuvered by the federal government into the unscientific position NIST took concerning the destruction of the WTC towers.

What will be the outcome of the doubts about the official story raised by experts? I worry that most Americans are too mentally and emotionally weak to be able to come to grips with the truth. They are far more comfortable with the story that enemies attacked America successfully despite the massive national security state in place. The American public has proved itself to be so cowardly that it willingly, without a peep, sacrificed its civil liberty and the protections of law guaranteed by the Constitution in order to be "safe."

Congress is not about to expose itself for having squandered trillions of dollars on pointless wars based on an orchestrated "new Pearl Harbor." When the neoconservatives said that a "new Pearl Harbor" was a requirement for their wars for American/Israeli hegemony, they set the stage for

the 21st century wars that Washington has launched. If Syria falls, there is only Iran, and then Washington stands in direct confrontation with Russia and China.

Unless Russia and China can be overthrown with "color revolutions," these two nuclear powers are unlikely to submit to Washington's hegemony. The world as we know it might be drawing to a close.

If enough Americans or even other peoples in the world had the intelligence to realize that massive steel structures do not disintegrate into fine dust because a flimsy airliner hits them and limited short-lived fires burn on a few floors, Washington would be faced with the suspicion it deserves.

If 9/11 was actually the result of the failure of the national security state to deter an attack, the government's refusal to conduct a real investigation is an even greater failure. It has fallen to concerned and qualified individuals to perform the investigative role abandoned by government. The presentations at the Toronto Hearings, along with the evaluations of the Panel, are now available, as is the documentary film, "Explosive Evidence--Experts Speak Out," provided by Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth.

The government's agents and apologists try to deflect attention from disturbing facts by redefining factual evidence revealed by experts as the product of "a conspiracy culture." If people despite their brainwashing and lack of scientific education are able to absorb the information made available to them, perhaps both the US Constitution and peace could be restored. Only informed people can restrain Washington and avert the crazed hegemonic US government from destroying the world in war.