

9/11: Looking for Truth in Credentials: The Peculiar WTC “Experts”

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Theme: [Terrorism](#)

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When Matthew Rothschild, editor of the online magazine The Progressive, wrote an article called “Enough of the 9/11 Conspiracies, Already”, we all knew he was not talking about the conspiracy theory that the US government sells us to justify the expanding 9/11 Wars.[1] To the contrary, in writing that article Mr. Rothschild was selling that same theory himself. What he actually meant was that people should not question the US government’s story of terror because credentialed experts have been found to support it. But the fact is that the experts found to support the official conspiracy theory of 9/11 are predominantly those who profit from doing so. That’s not to say that all of these people were “part of the conspiracy”. But they are, whether consciously or not, a part of the cover-up. And that, of course, is the greater crime.

The Bush Administration employed a number of such credentialed experts to give us multiple explanations for the unprecedented destruction of three tall steel-framed buildings at the World Trade Center (WTC). Unfortunately, all of those explanations have proven to be false, and this fact reminds us that academic credentials don’t necessarily make a person more capable, or more likely, to tell the truth.

Exactly how they could find so many experts on the fire-induced collapse of tall buildings is not immediately clear, considering such an event had never happened before. But it did help that the questions were quickly framed as being solely matters of structural engineering, a sub-field of civil engineering, because structural engineers cannot find work without continual government approvals. A Chemistry laboratory manager like myself can work without permits or licenses, but people can’t just go out and build a bridge or a tall building on their own. The extensive paperwork necessary to complete civil engineering projects is obtained by working closely with, and staying on good terms with, local and national authorities. That fact may not be enough to ensure vocal support for the official story of “global collapse”, but it has been enough to keep most structural engineers from publicly opposing the intransigent government stance on the WTC events.

From where, then, has the vocal support come within the engineering community? Matthew Rothschild points to some interesting characters when he says that “I made a few calls myself”, including to Gene Corley and to Mete Sozen. Additionally, Rothschild says that he consulted “some of the top building design and engineering firms”, like Skidmore Owings & Merrill, and Greenhorne & O’Mara. To emphasize just how solid the government’s story is, he adds that he “also contacted engineering professors at MIT and other leading universities in the country, and none of them puts any stock in the 9/11 conspiracy theories.”

What Mr. Rothschild failed to tell us is that Gene Corley and Mete Sozen not only created the

reports that he is defending, but have also, for many years, worked for the US Department of Defense (DOD) through the Blast Mitigation for Structures Program (BMSP). Since 1997, this program has provided the DOD with expertise in explosives, and has been funded at \$10 million annually.[2] After 9/11, astronomical increases in DOD funding were likely to have benefited all DOD partners and programs, like DOD's Nunn-Perry award winner, Greenhorne & O'Mara, and those involved with the BMSP. Of course, the DOD was probably already awash in black-budget funds prior to 9/11, as indicated by the missing trillions reported by the DOD on 9/10/01.[3]

Rothschild also failed to let us know that Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM), one of his independent engineering firms, is responsible for the architectural design of the new Freedom Tower. SOM gained that contract at the personal insistence of Larry Silverstein, the original owner of WTC 7 and the WTC towers' leaseholder. Mr. Rothschild may also not be aware that William Baker, a top executive at SOM, was involved in several of the official WTC investigations and reports that have been generated. In any case it is clear that the "Freedom Tower" would not be the publicity-rich project it is today if an alternative explanation forced us to rename it the "There Goes Our Freedom Tower".

Getting back to those experts at BMSP, we see that DOD employs a number of consulting firms to help out Corley and Sozen, in what is called the Blast Mitigation Action Group (BMAG), including ARUP, ARA, SAIC, SGH, Thornton-Tomasetti and Weidlinger Associates.[4] It should be noted that most of these firms were major contributors to the various official explanations for collapse of the WTC buildings, as well as being government contractors in fields related to terrorism. Strangely, despite their overwhelming expertise in the use of explosives, none of their explanations for the WTC events had anything to do with explosives.

That's not to say that these characters never deal with explosives, however, as Corley and Sozen were two of the four members of the Oklahoma City (OKC) engineering investigation, along with Paul Mlakar and Charles Thornton. The work they did followed the damage estimates found within the Federal Emergency Management Administration's (FEMA) OKC report, written by Greenhorne & O'Mara. Although none of these credentialed experts even toured the site at OKC, Corley and Sozen were able to produce an engineering report that was a highly questionable extrapolation of minimal evidence, primarily the size of a bomb crater, provided to them by the FBI.[5] Their report was created in support of the "One Guy, One Truck Bomb" political story that directly contradicted testimony given by several leading experts, including USAF General Benton Partin.

After spending 25 years dealing with explosive weaponry, General Partin independently studied the damage done to the Murrah building in the month before the evidence was destroyed, and made several strong statements to members of the US Congress. In July of 1995, General Partin wrote to Senator Trent Lott, stating, "The attached report contains conclusive proof that the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building...was not caused solely by the truck bomb. Evidence shows that the massive destruction was primarily the result of four demolition charges placed at critical structural points at the third floor level." He added "No government law enforcement agency should be permitted to demolish, smash and bury evidence of a...terrorist attack without a thorough examination by an independent, technically competent agency." [6]

When speaking about the unprecedented destruction of evidence, General Partin was referring to the demolition of the Murrah Building by Mark Loizeaux's company, just five

days after Partin made his strong statements directly to the US Congress. But Partin might as well have been talking about the WTC six years later, where much of the steel evidence was destroyed in the month before engineering investigators began inspecting the scene. It was noted by the House Committee on Science, as they reviewed early shortcomings of the WTC investigation, that, "Some of the critical pieces of steel...were gone before the first BPAT team member ever reached the site." [7] At the time of this destruction of evidence, Gene Corley was in charge of the investigation and his OKC partner Charles Thornton's company was in charge of the site at Ground Zero.

In any case, it is clear that Rothschild's primary experts have a long history of involvement in US government interests, and in highly questionable engineering reports. But surely the "engineering professors at MIT and other leading universities in the country" could not all be so tied to US government interests. There must be some objective members within the group of scientists supporting the Bush Administration's theories, and some agreement among scientists around the world.

The truth is that interpretation of the events at the WTC does include some agreement from all parties. We all agree that no tall steel-framed building in history has ever collapsed uniformly at nearly free-fall speed into a pile of rubble for any reason whatsoever, outside of demolition. And we're in agreement that the first three occasions of such an event supposedly occurred all on the same day, all in the same place. To round out a quick agreement, we can all safely say that these improbable events were the emotional basis for the passing of legislation that had already been written (e.g. the Patriot Act), and for the invasion of several strategically-important countries, the plans for which were already in the works.

From there, however, the views of the government's credentialed experts diverge from those who are more interested in objectively seeking the truth. The initial facts of agreement should lead any objective person to seek a detailed investigation that leaves no hypothesis un-examined. But for the government's credentialed experts, only one hypothesis was worthy of consideration, a fire-based failure of all three buildings that jibed with the overall official version of the events of that day.

In support of that fire-based triple play, the experts gave us a progression of false stories. The media gave us the first false story, with help from PhD engineers, some of whom were contributors to the official reports. Eduardo Kausel, an "engineering professor at MIT" and contributor to the WTC report generated by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), suggested to us in Scientific American that this catastrophe was probably due to the jet fuel fires melting the steel in the buildings. [8] He was joined in this early theory by a handful of other PhD engineers and professors around the country, and by the US government's top suspect - Osama Bin Laden. The US State Department still promotes the melting steel theory by promoting the alleged confession video of the alleged Bin Laden, which Matthew Rothschild finds convincing as well. In this confession video, the credentialed expert Bin Laden said — "Due to my experience in this field, I was thinking that the fire from the gas in the plane would melt the iron structure of the building..." [9] Apparently Bin Laden's plan was a complete failure after all, because even the experts now agree that jet fuel-accelerated office fires cannot melt steel (or Iron for that matter).

Another structural engineer who made early claims of melting steel, in the infamous 2002 Nova video "Why the Towers Fell", was Matthys Levy. Mr. Levy was a principal at the BMAG

consulting firm Weidlinger Associates that, later, with the help of many other PhD engineers, produced a report on the WTC disaster as part of an insurance claim by Larry Silverstein.[10] This Silverstein-Weidlinger investigation was based on extensive computer modeling and involved many of the same contractors that contributed to the government studies. Their final report told us that floor failure had nothing to do with the WTC disasters, but “that the failure of columns alone, independent of the floors, explains the collapses.”[11] At the time, Levy told us “There is no doubt left about the sequence of failure.”[12]

Unfortunately, the credentialed experts were wrong again. Until NIST’s final report came out in 2005, the “Pancake Theory” had replaced the column failure theory as the most widely accepted explanation for collapse. FEMA, along with a professor of Engineering from Northwestern, Zdenek Bazant, championed this theory of pancaking floors as the major explanation for the collapse of both towers, directly contradicting the Silverstein-Weidlinger report. This was strange, considering many of the same experts were involved in both the FEMA and Weidlinger investigations, including Gene Corley.

Amazingly enough, just last summer NIST finally admitted that the explanation could not involve pancaking floors either, by saying “NIST’s findings do not support the “pancake theory” of collapse”. [13] NIST’s findings, first reported in their final draft report of October 2004 and built over a period of several years, originally consisted of two considerably different stories for the two towers. But NIST modified this nine months later in their final, final draft report, giving just one story for both towers about “widely-dislodged” fireproofing and sagging floors pulling the external columns inward, with no mention of pancaking. Their final, final collapse initiation sequence, the essence of their report, is now known to be false in every aspect.[14]

Through the years, NIST and the other official investigators ignored the demolition hypothesis completely, as can be seen from their reports and archived presentations. That’s not surprising though, as the scientists working for FEMA and NIST, and therefore for the Bush Administration, would not likely lead their investigation toward a result that would limit or stop the 9/11 Wars. For example John Gross of NIST and Therese McAllister of Greenhorne & O’Mara, who not only co-authored the most important sections of NIST’s report, but were also primary authors of FEMA’s report, continue to act deaf, dumb and blind when it comes to evidence for the demolition hypothesis.[15] And we can imagine that all those “independent” contractors who contributed to the ever-changing story, who were also consulting firms for the DOD’s interesting Blast Mitigation Action Group, would be hard-pressed to offer an explanation that would require a less militarily focused solution.

The only supposedly independent corroboration that the Bush scientists at NIST could produce for their appalling pack of lies was from that old respected scientific institution, Popular Mechanics. This Hearst magazine is not, as most people know, a scientific publication in any way, shape or form. When they talk about Mechanics, they do not mean Quantum Mechanics or Statistical Mechanics, or even Classical Mechanics. Popular Mechanics (PM) is simply a gloss-covered advertisement for numerous consumer items ranging from ATVs to lawn mowers. You know – mechanics.

This hasn’t prevented many who cling to the official story from using PM as their scientific champion. For example, in his poorly researched hit piece against “conspiracy theorists”, British essayist George Monbiot foists Popular Mechanics upon us, saying they “polled 300 experts” to support their findings.[16] But science is not about popularity, and PM’s “poll” of

“structural engineering/building collapse experts” actually consisted of only about 33 people, some of them listed as photographers, media-relations staff and spokespersons. Of those that were engineering-related, most were in some way related to OKC, FEMA, NIST or DOD, and many were responsible for the Weidlinger report, the Pancake Theory, or the NIST report.[17] It turns out that, when it comes to scientific explanations for terrorist acts, it’s a small world after all.

It’s in PM’s book, “Debunking 9/11 Myths”, that we find this survey. Here they include other figures like Forman Williams, although they fail to tell you that Dr. Williams was also a member of NIST’s top advisory committee, and therefore was defending his own work. Williams is presented by PM as a disinterested academic expert, but one must wonder how disinterested Williams was when the University of California San Diego received \$393 million in federal grants in 2005, the same year the NIST WTC report came out, with his own Engineering department receiving \$44 million of that sum.[18] Another of PM’s disinterested experts was Engineering professor Richard Fruehan of Carnegie Mellon University, an institute that received \$100 million in federal grants that same year, with Engineering and research grants accounting for approximately half of the total.

In the case of Popular Mechanics, we see people being quite openly deceptive in their strong support of the Bush Administration’s terror story. In their book they promote false claims that the government no longer supports, including the Pancake Theory. They also promote other, more ridiculous ideas including the claim that massive damage was done to the basement levels of a WTC tower by a bolus of jet fuel that meandered its way through several elevator shafts in the jogged elevator system, moving carefully around the elevators themselves and waiting all the while to explode in the sub-basements over 90 stories below. Additionally, PM repeats the false and ludicrous claim that the buildings were designed for airliner impacts, but not for jet fuel fires. In fact, John Skilling, the actual chief engineer of the WTC, made it clear in 1993 that jet fuel fires were considered in the structural design.[19]

In the forward to PM’s book, Republican Senator John McCain describes how he feels the truth behind September 11th is more mundane than “conspiracy mongers” would have us believe. Strangely, he refers us to the “banality of Nazi evil” to show that 9/11 was probably not an elaborate conspiracy. That is, according to McCain, 9/11 was probably NOT part of a simple plan by corporate-funded politicians to maintain and expand their power, but was instead the work of a small group of powerless fanatics whose plans to bring about worldwide totalitarian rule were held back only by our own cherished freedoms. That’s a tough bit to swallow, to be sure, but the idea that a Hearst publication would resort to the “banality of Nazi evil” is absolutely astounding. That’s because in writing this forward, Senator McCain joined an infamous group of Hearst publication authors, including Adolf Hitler and Hermann Goering, who wrote for Hearst, the latter until 1938.[20]

Those of us fighting for the truth about 9/11 owe it to the victims of the expanding 9/11 Wars, and to ourselves, to reveal these ongoing lies from corporate criminals and their credentialed “experts”. It is becoming increasingly obvious that those giving us one false story after another, while simultaneously ignoring much of the evidence of 9/11, might have more than just a cozy relationship with this government, and more than a benign past. It seems quite possible that some among those providing these explanations are knowingly complicit in the greater crime of a 9/11 cover-up.

It is also true that, like Matthew Rothschild, many of us simply want quick and easy answers,

in order to relieve ourselves of any need to think about the facts of 9/11 and the changes in worldview that might be demanded of such an examination. The problem is, the easy answers have all been wrong, while at the same time the experts have ignored one fairly simple hypothesis that is now becoming obvious to many. It should be clear that this is because the credentialed experts we've been dealing with are all quite well invested in maintaining the official version of events.

1. *Enough of the 9/11 Conspiracies, Already*, The Progressive, Matthew Rothschild, September 11, 2006 http://www.progressive.org/mag_wx091106
2. For a short description of DOD's BMSP, see "*Department of Defense Should Broaden Communication Efforts to Protect Federal and Civilian Buildings From Bomb Attacks*", The National Academy of Sciences, November 2001, <http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=10230>
3. *Missing Trillions: Rumsfeld Buries Admission of Missing 2+ Trillion Dollars in 9/10/01 Press Conference*, 911Research.com, <http://911research.wtc7.net/sept11/trillions.html>
4. US Army Corps of Engineers, Blast Mitigation Action Group (BMAG), Consulting Firms, https://bmag.usace.army.mil/consulting_firms.php
5. *Blast Loading and Response of Murrah Building*, Mlakar, Corley, Sozen, Thornton, 1997, <http://www.terrorisminfo.mipt.org/pdf/forensicengineering2.pdf>
6. General Partin's letter to Senator Lott can be found in its entirety in the *Final Report on the Bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, April, 19, 1995*, The Oklahoma Bombing Investigation Committee, Appendix, page 378-380. This letter is also reproduced here - <http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/RANCHO/POLITICS/OK/PARTIN/ok8.htm>
7. See *Context of 'March 6, 2002: House Committee on Science Holds Hearing on WTC Collapses Investigation, Cooperative Research*, <http://www.cooperativeresearch.org/context.jsp?item=a030602collapsehearing>
8. "*When the Twin Towers Fell*", Scientific American, October 9, 2001 <http://www.public-action.com/911/jmcm/sciam/>
9. The US State Department still appears to be promoting this first false theory by promoting Osama (Fatty) Bin Laden's baseless statements. US State Department website: *The Top September 11 Conspiracy Theories*, <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=pubs-english&y=2006&m=August&x=20060828133846esnamfuaK0.2676355>
10. Profile: Weidlinger Associates, Cooperative Research http://www.cooperativeresearch.org/entity.jsp?entity=weidlinger_associates_1
11. "*Report Ties WTC Collapses to Column Failures*", Engineering News-Record, 10/25/02, McGraw Hill Construction, <http://www.construction.com/NewsCenter/Headlines/ENR/20021025b.asp>
12. *Study Absolves Twin Tower Trusses, Fireproofing*, Engineering News-Record, 11/04/02 <http://enr.construction.com/news/buildings/archives/021104.asp>

13. *Answers to Frequently Asked Questions*, August 2006, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster, http://wtc.nist.gov/pubs/factsheets/faqs_8_2006.htm
14. See my essay, *What is 9/11 Truth? – The First Steps*, at the Journal of 911 Studies, <http://www.journalof911studies.com> . Also see the critique of my presentation *Review of 'A New Standard For Deception: The NIST WTC Report' A Presentation by Kevin Ryan*, Jim Hoffman, 911Research.com, 10/15/06 http://911research.wtc7.net/reviews/kevin_ryan/newstandard.html
15. See video of John Gross' presentation at the University of Texas Austin, with testimonies and evidence of molten metal at the WTC. Project for New American Citizens, <http://911blogger.com/node/6104>
16. "A 9/11 Conspiracy Virus is Sweeping the World, But it Has No Basis in Fact", George Monbiot, The Guardian, February 6, 2007, <http://film.guardian.co.uk/features/featurepages/0,,2007519,00.html>
17. *Debunking 9/11 Myths: Why Conspiracy Theories Can't Stand up to the Facts*, Dunbar & Reagan, Hearst Press, 2006. Note: See also Eduardo (melting steel) Kausel's glowing review in the front cover.
18. See Fedspending.org, Grants, <http://www.fedspending.org/>
19. *City in the Sky: The Rise and Fall of the World Trade Center*, James Glanz and Eric Lipton, (New York: Times Books, 2003), 138
20. *Remembering "The Chief"*, PBS's Online NewsHour, 9/07/00, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/media/july-dec00/nasaw_9-7.html

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