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Bin Laden Family Members Evacuated from US in Wake of the 9/11 Attacks

Part III

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Osama bin Laden was suspect number one on 9/11, yet the U.S. authorities commit yet another inexplicable act: they release all members of the bin Laden family who were residing at the time in the US.

Let's imagine that a mass murder has been committed in Smalltown, America and the suspect is at large. Where is the first place the investigators will invariably go to search for clues as to either the whereabouts of the killer or his or her motives? Yes, to the immediate families of the suspected killer.

So why did the US authorities let the immediate kin of bin Laden escape on planes out of Dodge?

"Even though American airspace had been shut down," Sky News reported, *"the Bush administration allowed a jet to fly around the US picking up family members from 10 cities, including Los Angeles, Washington DC, Boston and Houston."*

"Two dozen members of Osama bin Laden's family were urgently evacuated from the United States in the first days following the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington," CBS reported.

"Most of bin Laden's relatives were attending high school and college," the article continued. *"Many were terrified, fearing they would be lynched after hearing reports of violence against Muslims and Arab-Americans."*

The skies over America in the days following 9/11 were in lock-down mode yet the entire family of America's number one enemy is released without due question. Furthermore, not only are these individuals duly released, they are released on commercial jets, the very mode of transport that bin Laden allegedly used to wreak havoc on the northeastern United States.

This is truly amazing, and bears repeating: not a single American citizen could fly after 9/11, yet we give permission to the family of the evil mastermind who allegedly used commercial jets to damage four buildings to escape from the United States on commercial jets! This sort of irrational behavior on the part of the authorities almost makes it look as if the Bush administration knew that Osama bin Laden was not responsible for the attacks so releasing the bin Ladens would not mean much. Or maybe we are missing something here?

Let's briefly imagine a reversal of roles: an American, who is believed to be hiding out in enemy territory overseas, is accused of killing thousands of innocent people in Jeddah one Tuesday morning. Meanwhile, dozens of his American relatives are attending university in Jeddah. How would the Saudi government, or any government for that matter, respond to that predicament? I think it would be a safe bet that the Saudi government might, at the very least, ask those Americans, who are probably innocent, of course, not to leave town until further notice. If nothing else, it seems to be normal protocol for any investigation, whatever the size. But the sheer size and brutal surprise of 9/11 allowed us to set aside our common sense and accept any explanation, however asinine.

Street vendors sell Osama Bin Laden 'Wanted' T-shirts in the Midtown area of New York City in commemoration of the World Trade Center attacks, September, 21, 2001 (Photo by Jacques Langevin)

Is there a better way to sabotage an in-depth investigation against the world's premier evil mastermind than to release all of his family members before any in-depth question-and-answer session had taken place? Personally, I cannot imagine it. Think about it. What about possible phone calls to (or from) bin Laden from family members that should have been examined? Or emails? (After all, bin Laden, despite spending most of his time in caves, is an allegedly tech-savvy guy). These take weeks to fully examine. Perhaps there was an incriminating clue somewhere, a hint, a code? There is even the possibility, despite the fact that the bin Ladens have apparently ostracized Osama, that at least one of them was sympathetic to his cause. But it would only have taken one to get mountains of valuable information. Finally, the decision seemed to be politically unattractive. Still, even that did not deter the authorities from giving the bin Ladens yet more frequent flier miles.

Moreover, the United States has proven itself to be somewhat adept at using "intense interrogation" techniques to extract information from co-conspirators. Did any official float the idea of applying a little bit of pressure, you know, in classic good cop, bad cop routines that we've seen a million times in Hollywood films, to one or two bin Laden family members in order to get one of the others to spill the beans? Apparently not.

Instead, former White House counter-terrorism czar Richard Clarke, who was supposedly one of the only individuals on the ball when it came to recognizing the terror threat sitting like a burning pile of manure on America's doorstep, gave his stamp of approval to the White House initiative.

"Somebody brought to us for approval the decision to let an airplane filled with Saudis, including members of the bin laden family, leave the country," Clarke told Vanity Fair magazine in an interview. *"So I said, 'Fine, let it happen.'"*

Maybe this was simply Clarke's last straw in attempting to focus the Bush administration's attention on what appeared to be a major domestic threat. Clarke soon said his goodbyes to the dirty world of espionage and anti-terrorism to write books dedicated to the blundering Beltway.

So many videos, so little time

Another inexplicable thing about the morning of 9/11 involves yet more missing videotape evidence, this time involving the alleged leaders of the hijackers, Mohamed Atta and

Abdulaziz Al-Omari.

But in order to appreciate the full scenario, we must back up to Sept. 10 when Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Al-Omari depart from sunny Florida in a rental car and drive all the way to distant Portland, Maine. This in itself makes no sense. Why not drive straight to Boston, if you really must drive 1,500 miles, where the hijacking would take place? Once in Portland, investigators tell us that the two men (Islamic fundamentalists, remember, who are about to commit suicide) go wild at a night club, attract attention to themselves with their revelry, and pay with credit cards in their name. In short, they do everything possible to leave behind proof of their presence in Portland.

At 6 a.m. on Sept. 11, the two men fly from Portland to Boston. This is really cutting things close, since the plane they are accused of hijacking departs just 30 minutes after their connecting flight lands.

In the nervous days after 9/11, the public is presented CCTV photos of Atta and al-Omari passing through a security check before boarding the plane. This is the authorities' definitive evidence that the two men were on board ill-fated America Airlines Flight 11, the first plane to strike the WTC. The only problem is that the famous CCTV video shows the two men boarding at Portland, *not Boston*. In fact, there is no physical proof anywhere that Atta and al-Omari ever boarded the doomed planes from Dulles Airport.

"The Dulles airport video is unlike the Portland video in every way," writes Paul Zarembka in his book, The Hidden History of 9-11-2001. *"While the Portland video has sharp, clear resolution, the Dulles video's resolution is poor and grainy. While the Portland video was released soon after 9/11, only heavily edited versions of the Dulles video with segments missing were not made available to the American public until almost three years later, on July 24, 2004, one day before the Commissions Report's release. It took a lawsuit by families of the victims of the 9/11 attacks to pry the video loose from the government's grip…"*

Just like the military exercises involving a hijacked plane that were staged to occur at the same time as the real attacks on 9/11, it could be argued that having these two men fly out of Portland, Maine only served to cloud the picture. Indeed, it strongly suggests that Atta and Al-Omari never boarded Flight 11.

"These missing data," Zarembka says, *"are just one of five major problems identifiable in the Dulles video."* For those interested in reading further on this particular subject, and others, may click here.

Stolen Identities

Perhaps the biggest hole in the fairy tale of the 19 terrorists, who were "armed with nothing more than box cutters," involves the not-insignificant fact that at least 10 of them are still walking the earth today.

"After at least ten named on the FBI's final list of 19 have been verified to be alive," writes Zarembka, *"with proof that least one other, Ziad Jarrah, had his identity doubled and therefore fabricated, the FBI has nevertheless refused to make the necessary corrections to exonerate those falsely accused."*

Of the 11 individuals who had "stolen identities," most of them are pilots or work in some capacity for the airlines.

A “Wanted – Dead or Alive” poster of suspected Saudi terrorist responsible for the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks is posted on a car window in Manhattan, September 18, 2001 (Photo by Jacques Langevin)

For example. On Sept. 17, 2001, The Independent reported that a ‘suicide hijacker’ is really an airline pilot “alive and well in Jeddah.”

“Abdulrahman al-Omari, a pilot with Saudi Airlines,” the British newspaper reported, *“was astonished to find himself accused of hijacking as well as being dead and has visited the US consulate in Jeddah to demand an explanation.”*

Then, five days later, another Saudi Arabian pilot, Waleed Al Shehri, protests his innocence from his home in Casablanca, Morocco.

Saudi Airlines was reported saying it is considering legal action against the FBI for seriously damaging its reputation.

Yet the incredible revelations of alleged hijackers turning up alive continue unabated.

“Saudi Airlines pilot Saeed Al-Ghamdi and Abdulaziz Al-Omari, an engineer from Riyadh, are furious that the hijackers’ “personal details” – including name, place, date of birth and occupation – matched their own,” the Telegraph reported.

Al-Ghamdi faced further humiliation when CNN, the American television news agency, flashed a photograph of him around the world, calling him a hijack suspect.

But perhaps the wildest pretense of proof to fall from the skies like manna post-9/11 was the miraculous discovery of hijacker Satam Al-Suqami’s passport, lying a few blocks away from the crash site. The World Trace Center fires were fierce enough, we are told, to melt steel and destroy both virtually indestructible black boxes from the airplanes. Yet a flimsy passport from one of the terrorists survives the inferno and lands gently on a side street for all to behold.

As The Guardian put it best: *“The idea that (the) passport had escaped from the inferno unsinged (tests) the credulity of the staunchest supporter of the FBI’s crackdown on terrorism.”*

“We never saw this coming”

Finally, members of the Bush administration passionately defend themselves after 9/11, saying that the attacks had taken them completely by surprise. This is patently false.

“I don’t think anybody could have predicted that they would try to use an airplane as a missile,” national security advisor Condeleezza Rice told reporters.

Yet an attack involving hijacked airplanes is precisely what NORAD, the agency that failed to protect America’s skies on 9/11, was practicing for in 1999.

“In the two years before the Sept. 11 attacks,” reported USA Today (April, 2004), *“the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) conducted exercises simulating what the White House says was unimaginable at the time: hijacked airliners used as weapons to crash*

into targets and cause mass casualties."

"NORAD, in a written statement, confirmed that such hijacking exercises occurred. It said the scenarios outlined were regional drills, not regularly scheduled continent-wide exercises," the daily continued.

But there is no need to go all the way back to 1999 for proof that at least some individuals were preparing for an attack against highly sensitive strategic targets in the United States.

First, there is the already-mentioned presidential brief (*"Bin Laden Determined to strike in US"*) that had landed on George W. Bush's desk on August 6, 2001.

Here is one part from that brief:

> "We have not been able to corroborate some of the more sensational threat reporting, such as that from a (—) service in 1998 saying that Bin Laden wanted to hijack a US aircraft to gain the release of… 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."

In addition to this red-hot potato that even Dan Quayle could have handled, members of the intelligence community had plans to hold a hijacking exercise on the very morning of 9/11, hosted by the National Reconnaissance Office.

"In what the government describes as a bizarre coincidence," reported the Associated Press, *"one U.S. intelligence agency was planning an exercise last Sept. 11 in which an errant aircraft would crash into one of its buildings."*

Ultimately, as discussed elsewhere in this story, that mission was cancelled when news of 9/11 broke. Yet given the fact that the exercise was "coincidentally" held on 9/11 added much unnecessary fuel to a September morning that was already smoking in overload.

Despite public declarations to the opposite, certain individuals were certainly aware about the possibility of a terrorist attack against the United States using commercial jets as weapons, yet claimed nothing could have prepared them for such a thing. We "never could have imagined it!" After all, we are inherently good, the script seemed to scream, and they are inherently bad.

Moreover, despite numerous such exercises, allegedly to thwart a terrorist hijacking, the US Air Force, which US taxpayers spend billions a year sludge-funding, remained landlocked on the second day in American history that will live in infamy, but for far more disturbing reasons those that got us into the last world war.

Although we could easily write a thousand more pages on the "coincidences" and inconsistencies involving the official version of events of 9/11, perhaps we should end this story on that note, before forwarding a question tailor-made for the likes of a modern-day Sherlock Holmes: *"Who did it?"*

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