

Iran Accused of Being Behind the 9/11 Attacks.

U.S. Court Judgment, December 2011 (Havlish v. Iran)

By [Julie Lévesque](#)

Global Research, September 10, 2012

11 May 2012

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Terrorism](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

Global Research Editor's Note

We bring to the attention of our readers a carefully documented study by Global Research's Julie Levesque published in May 2012 pertaining to a high profile Manhattan lawsuit launched in 2004 against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Havlish v. Iran lawsuit accuses Iran of having supported the 9/11 hijackers.

At this historical juncture, with Iran being the object of numerous threats both by Tel Aviv and Washington, The Havlish v. Iran judgment could be used as a justification for a waging a preemptive attack on Iran.

In the context of the commemoration of 9/11, the issue of Iran's alleged role as a "state sponsor" of terrorism is likely to surface in media coverage as well as in the commemoration speeches off both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney.

The investigation into Tehran's alleged role in the 9/11 attacks was launched by the Havlish lawyers in 2004, pursuant to a recommendation of the 9/11 Commission "regarding an apparent link between Iran, Hezbollah, and the 9/11 hijackers". The 9/11 Commission's recommendation was that this "apparent link" required "further investigation by the U.S. government." (9/11 Commission Report , p. 241). (See [Iran 911 Case](#)).

The Havlish lawyers built their case against Iran using the testimonies of "expert witnesses" as well as "evidence", which was in large part fabricated. In the December 2011 [court judgment](#) (Havlish v. Iran) "U.S. District Judge George B. Daniels ruled that Iran and Hezbollah materially and directly supported al Qaeda in the September 11, 2001 attacks and are legally responsible for damages to hundreds of family members of 9/11 victims who are plaintiffs in the case".

According to the plaintiffs attorneys "Iran, Hezbollah, and al Qaeda formed a terror alliance in the early 1990s. Citing their national security and intelligence experts, the attorneys explained "how the pragmatic terror leaders overcame the Sunni-Shi'a divide in order to confront the U.S. (the "Great Satan") and Israel (the "Lesser Satan")". Iran and Hezbollah allegedly provided "training to members of al Qaeda in, among other things, the use of explosives to destroy large buildings." (See [Iran 911 Case](#)).

Michel Chossudovsky, Global Research, September 10, 2012

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by Julie Levesque

May 11, 2012

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The Havlish v. Iran 2004 lawsuit pertained to the alleged role of Iran in the 9/11 attacks.

This judicial procedure is nothing more than another vicious weapon in the fabricated “War on Terror” to be used against another Muslim country, with a view to destabilizing Iran as well as justifying ongoing military threats. It also says a lot more about the people behind the lawsuit than about the accused.

The expert witnesses who testified against Iran are very active in warmongering neocon circles. They belong to a web of architects of the 21st century Middle-Eastern wars, ranging from high profile propagandists to intelligence and military officers, including former U.S. officials.

But what makes this case absurd is that in September 2011, a few months before the judgment, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has questioned the official 9/11 narrative, was accused by Al-Qaeda leaders of [“spreading conspiracy theories about the 9/11 attacks”](#). The semi-official media outlet of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, insisted that al-Qaeda “had been behind the attacks and criticised the Iranian president for discrediting the terrorist group.”

The [U.S. court judgment issued in December 2011](#) (Havlish v. Iran) which blames the Iran government for the 9/11 attacks is part of the propaganda ploy, which consists in demonizing the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is part and parcel of America’s ongoing war against Iran since the overthrow of its U.S.-backed monarchy in 1979.

Like many similar lawsuits in America, this legal procedure’s ultimate goal is to [draw off important sums of money](#) from the Iranian government leading to the possible confiscation of assets, thereby further strangling the country’s economy, already targeted by U.S. sanctions, while simultaneously reinforcing Iran’s image of a “state sponsor of terrorism”.

This ruling allows the families involved to claim damages from the Iranian government as well from a number of Iranian State corporations, the amount of which is still unknown, but could reach billions, like last December’s judgement which found [Iran liable for the 1983 Beirut bombings](#).

This judicial procedure is nothing more than another vicious weapon in the fabricated “War on Terror” to be used against another Muslim country, with a view to destabilizing Iran as well as justifying ongoing military threats. It also says a lot more about the people behind the lawsuit than about the accused. The expert witnesses who testified against Iran are very active in warmongering neocon circles. They belong to a web of architects of the 21st century Middle-Eastern wars, ranging from high profile propagandists to intelligence and military officers, including former U.S. officials.

In addition, all three branches of the U.S. government, under both Republicans and

Democrats, contributed to make this and other legal attacks against Iran possible, while preventing comparable cases against the Saudi monarchy, most notably a case accusing Saudi Arabia for the 9/11 attacks. Although the evidence pertaining to the role of Saudi Arabia in 9/11 remains classified, the available evidence in the public domain indicates more connections between Al Qaeda and the Saudi monarchy than those allegedly pertaining to Iran.

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Part I of this analysis (below) will focus on the evidence on which the judgement is based.

Part II (forthcoming) examines the profile of the expert witnesses and their links to the U.S government, various anti-Iran lobbies and think tanks. Part III centers on the role of various branches of the US government in facilitating judicial procedures against Iran. Part IV explores how the U.S. authorities have been protecting Saudi Arabia from similar legal suits.

Part I

The “War on Terror” Rests on Kangaroo Courts

Osama bin Laden, allegedly responsible for 9/11, was apparently killed over a year ago by a U.S. Special Operations Team in violation of international law.

Khalid Sheik Mohammed (KSM) detained in Guantanamo and four others have recently been accused of orchestrating the 9/11 attacks. Their detention, mistreatment and accusations before a military tribunal also violate international law. According to this court judgement, Iran is also to blame for 9/11.

Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda are accused as well in *Havlish v. Iran*, but we will focus on Hezbollah and the Iranian defendants, including many entities such as the Ministries of Finance and Energy. Since it is a default judgment, the defendants were not present in court and no cross-examination took place.

Considering the fact that bin Laden has never been formally accused of the 9/11 attacks, due to lack of evidence, and that the evidence against KSM and the other accused has been obtained through torture and is classified, it is no surprise that the case against Iran also relies on “shaky evidence”. In fact, it seems that in logic of America’s “Global War on Terror” anybody can be accused of the 9/11 attacks with trumped up charges.

Havlish v. Iran reads like a typical kangaroo court case. Iran’s responsibility for 9/11 is mostly based on previous attacks and foiled attempts in the U.S. and other countries and all the so-called evidence is actually a collection of assumptions which are turned into facts from one sentence to another without any addition of factual evidence to support it. Some claims are inconsistent, purely subjective and what is said to be the strongest evidence is a clumsy distortion of facts, which can be easily refuted by sound factual evidence.

Ironically, this attempt to link Iran to 9/11 demonstrates a notoriously twisted legal

procedure, not to mention a cruel lack of corroborating evidence.

To set the stage, numerous attacks unrelated to 9/11 are presented with alleged financial or material backing from Iran and/or Hezbollah, the Shia Muslim militant group. We can see a pattern and key people emerge: very often the U.S. and Israel accuse Iran of those attacks which have either not been resolved, or have been blamed on other governments and terrorist groups, or other organisations are said to have claimed responsibility for them.

Here are some examples:

- *The Israeli embassy bombing in Buenos Aires in 1992:*



The US and Israel have accused Iran and Hezbollah of those attacks, without providing corroborating evidence. The Department of State blamed a suicide bomber from Hezbollah driving a truck, but according to a report ordered by Argentina's Supreme Court, the bomb was in the building: "The engineers established, with 99 percent certainty, the exact location where the explosives were and the quantity that was used." The case has not been solved. ([March 17, 1992: Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires Is Bombed, Hezbollah and Iran Accused Despite Lack of Evidence.](#))

- *The 1993 WTC bombing:*

Former CIA Director James Woolsey tried to prove Iraq was responsible for the 1993 bombing and hinted at possible links with Iran in an interview from October 2001. ([Gunning for Saddam. Interview R. James Woolsey](#), Frontline, PBS, October 2001.)

An internal CIA report concluded however that the CIA was partly responsible for the bombing since "Several of the bombers were trained by the CIA to fight in the Afghan war." ([February 26, 1993: WTC Is Bombed but Does Not Collapse, as Bombers Had Hoped](#), History Commons.)

- *The foiled Eiffel tower attack with a hijacked French airliner:*

The Algerian group GIA (Groupe islamique armé) claimed responsibility for the hijacking. According to the famous U.S. think tank Council on Foreign Relations the origins of the GIA are the same as al-Qaeda:

Like lots of violent Islamic movements around the world, many militants in the GIA appear to trace their radicalization to Afghanistan, where they fought as mujahadeen, or Islamic guerillas, against the Soviet army from 1979 to 1989. (Lauren

Vriens, [Armed Islamic Group \(Algeria, Islamists\)](#), Council on Foreign Relations, May 27, 2009.)

It is worth mentioning the creation of al-Qaeda by the U.S. government is well documented and has been admitted by Robert Gates and Zbigniew Brzezinski:

According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahadeen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise: Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. (Le Nouvel Observateur, January 15-21, 1998, p. 76. Translation taken from Counterpunch [Zbigniew Brzezinski: How Jimmy Carter and I Started the Mujahideen.](#))

- *The 1995 assassination attempt on Mubarak:*

Conducted by the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, a group led by Ayman Al-Zawahiri, and closely affiliated with Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. (Nate Jones, [Document Friday: Mubarak, al-Bashir, al-Zawahiri, and bin Laden. The 1995 Assassination Attempt in Addis Ababa](#), The National Security Archives, February 4, 2011.)

- *The Saudi Arabia Khobar Towers attack in 1996:*

The Saudis blamed Hezbollah for the attacks, “but US investigators still believe bin Laden was involved”.

In June 2001, a US grand jury will indict 13 Saudis for the bombing. According to the indictment, Iran and Hezbollah were also involved in the attack. [US CONGRESS, 7/24/2003] ([June 25, 1996: Khobar Towers Are Bombed; Unclear Who Culprit Is](#), History Commons.)

Former US officials will later claim that even after the bombing, the CIA instructed officials at its Saudi station not to collect information on Islamic extremists in Saudi Arabia. ([After June 25, 1996: CIA Agents Told Not to Track Militants in Saudi Arabia](#), History Commons.)

- *The 2000 attack on the USS Cole in Yemen:*



An American judge found Sudan guilty of those attacks through its support for al-Qaeda.

Four experts on terrorism, including former CIA Director R. James Woolsey, testified in person or by deposition Tuesday to support the families' contention that al-Qaeda needed the African nation's help to carry out the attack. (Associated Press, [Federal judge rules Sudan responsible for USS Cole bombing in 2000](#), NBC News, March 14, 2007.)

Clearly, this series of attacks by no means constitutes “evidence” of Iran’s involvement in 9/11.

In addition to the absence of links between Iran and 9/11, the nature of the assumptions and presumptions in the judgment is striking. The terms “proof” or “evidence” are simply nowhere to be found. Instead, formulations such as “Iran must have”, “would have” “it is likely that Iran”, are numerous. In the end, all these suspicions and beliefs are put together and presented as solid evidence of Iran’s participation in the 9/11 attacks. Yet, even in abundance, assumptions can not become facts. Here are some examples:

(41) “Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance [...] had to have been involved in Iran’s [...] financial support for terrorists [...] al-Qaeda in particular”

(42) “Iranian Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Petroleum must have been aware of weapons shipments bound for terrorist groups.”

(252) Lopez and Tefft “state it is their expert opinion to a reasonable degree of professional certainty that the Iranian Regime’s use of terror, and specifically, its material support of al-Qaeda and terrorist attacks, including 9/11, is beyond question.”

(259) Bergman “asserts that the authorities in the Israeli and American intelligence services believe that Hizballah’s Imad Mughniyah conceived, designed, planned commanded and/or carried out terrorist operations [...] in Syria in February 2008.”

(269) “[...] document dated May 14, 2001 from Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri and concludes it appears to be authentic. [...] reveals both high level links between the Iran Supreme leader’s intelligence apparatus and al-Qaeda [...]”

(274) Timmerman “states he was told by the 9/11 commission staff members that the Iranians were fully aware they were helping operatives [...] of an organization preparing attacks against the United States.”

Other “evidence” of Iran’s link to 9/11 includes “Iranians travelling to Afghanistan” and al-Qaeda and Hezbollah operatives being on the same flight to Beirut. Again that proves nothing. Another issue raised to prove Iran was behind the attacks is Iran’s financial support to Hezbollah, which in turn supported and trained al-Qaeda. If such a link is admitted, then the U.S. should be the first to blame for 9/11 since al-Qaeda is a U.S. creation, “an intelligence asset” as acknowledged above by Brzezinski as well as Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton](#).

But the “strongest” evidence brought up in this case against the Islamic republic relates to the stamping of Saudi passports by Iranian immigration. Iran is accused of being a “state sponsor of terrorist travel because it did not stamp the Saudi terrorists’ passports”. That is a half truth. It is true that Iran did not stamp the “Saudi terrorists’ passports”, but not because they were known to be terrorists, but simply because Iran does not stamp ANY Saudi

passport.

If that, according to “expert” testimonies, is the strongest evidence proving Iran’s links to the 9/11 attacks, then the whole case has absolutely no grounds. Moreover, if one follows this logic, the U.S. should be found guilty of the attacks, since the alleged hijackers were delivered U.S. visas and the intelligence agencies were aware of their presence on American soil. Most importantly, they did nothing about it.

Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Shaffer was part of a secret military unit called “Able Danger”, which collaborated with international intelligence agencies and the Defense Intelligence Agency. The unit had identified and tracked terrorists allegedly involved in 9/11, including Mohamed Atta, more than a year before the attacks. ([Pentagon opens doors to 9/11 attacks](#), Brasschecktv.com; [9 11 Prior Knowledge Able Danger Hearing for Lt Col Anthony Shaffer in Congress C SPAN](#), CoreofCorruption.com, September 24, 2009)



Lt Col Anthony Shaffer

Lt Col Shaffer testified at the 9/11 Commission. Navy Captain Scott Phillpott also testified to the 9/11 Commission staff about Able Danger and the identification of Mohammed Atta in January and February of 2000. Not only were their testimonies, as well as any other information relating to Able Danger, completely ignored in the report, but the latter states that “American intelligence agencies were unaware of Mr. Atta until the day of the attacks”. (Philip Shenon, [Navy Officer Affirms Assertions About Pre-9/11 Data on Atta](#), August 22, 2005.)

Needless to say, the 9/11 Commission Report is a collection of “[omissions and distortions](#)”, a very well orchestrated cover-up, a reality to which even the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Commission, Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton adhere, claiming it was “set up to fail”.

The case against Iran is largely based on the 9/11 Commission Report, and three of the “expert witnesses” who testified were part of that commission. Among them is Dietrich Snell, one of the lead investigators and the man Captain Phillpott testified to about Able Danger. (Douglas Jehl and Philip Shenon, [9/11 Commission’s Staff Rejected Report on Early Identification of Chief Hijacker](#), The New York Times, August 11, 2005.)

Part II of this article (forthcoming) will focus on the expert witnesses who testified against Iran in the court case.

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