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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

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13 March 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Justification for US Military Intervention
in Cuba (TS)

1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have considered the attached Memorandum for the Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, which responds to a request of that office for brief but precise description of pretexts which would provide justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the proposed memorandum be forwarded as a preliminary submission suitable for planning purposes. It is assumed that there will be similar submissions from other agencies and that these inputs will be used as a basis for developing a time-phased plan. Individual projects can then be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3. Further, it is assumed that a single agency will be given the primary responsibility for developing military and para-military aspects of the basic plan. It is recommended that this responsibility for both overt and covert military operations be assigned the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

SYSTEMATICALLY REVIEWED
BY JCS ON 21 May 84
CLASSIFICATION CONTINUED

L. L. Lemnitzer
L. L. LEMNITZER
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

1 Enclosure

Memo for Chief of Operations, Cuba Project

EXCLUDED FROM GDS

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC
REGRADING; DOD DIR 5200.10
DOES NOT APPLY

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JUSTIFICATION FOR US MILITARY INTERVENTION IN CUBA (TS)

THE PROBLEM

1. As requested* by Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are to indicate brief but precise description of pretexts which they consider would provide justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

2. It is recognized that any action which becomes pretext for US military intervention in Cuba will lead to a political decision which then would lead to military action.

3. Cognizance has been taken of a suggested course of action proposed** by the US Navy relating to generated instances in the Guantanamo area.

4. For additional facts see Enclosure B.

DISCUSSION

5. The suggested courses of action appended to Enclosure A are based on the premise that US military intervention will result from a period of heightened US-Cuban tensions which place the United States in the position of suffering justifiable grievances. World opinion, and the United Nations forum should be favorably affected by developing the international image of the Cuban government as rash and irresponsible, and as an alarming and unpredictable threat to the peace of the Western Hemisphere.

6. While the foregoing premise can be utilized at the present time it will continue to hold good only as long as there can be reasonable certainty that US military intervention in Cuba would not directly involve the Soviet Union. There is

* Memorandum for General Craig from Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, subject: "Operation MONGOOSE", dated 5 March 1962, on file in General Craig's office.

** Memorandum for the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, from Chief of Naval Operations, subject: "Instances to Provoke Military Actions in Cuba (TS)", dated 8 March 1962, on file in General Craig's office.

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as yet no bilateral mutual support agreement binding the USSR to the defense of Cuba, Cuba has not yet become a member of the Warsaw Pact, nor have the Soviets established Soviet bases in Cuba in the pattern of US bases in Western Europe. Therefore, since time appears to be an important factor in resolution of the Cuba problem, all projects are suggested within the time frame of the next few months.

CONCLUSION

7. The suggested courses of action appended to Enclosure A satisfactorily respond to the statement of the problem. However, these suggestions should be forwarded as a preliminary submission suitable for planning purposes, and together with similar inputs from other agencies, provide a basis for development of a single, integrated, time-phased plan to focus all efforts on the objective of justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. It is recommended that:

- a. Enclosure A together with its attachments should be forwarded to the Secretary of Defense for approval and transmittal to the Chief of Operations, Cuba Project.
- b. This paper NOT be forwarded to commanders of unified or specified commands.
- c. This paper NOT be forwarded to US officers assigned to NATO activities.
- d. This paper NOT be forwarded to the Chairman, US Delegation, United Nations Military Staff Committee.

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have considered the attached Memorandum for the Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, which responds to a request* of that office for brief but precise description of pretexts which would provide justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the proposed memorandum be forwarded as a preliminary submission suitable for planning purposes. It is assumed that there will be similar submissions from other agencies and that these inputs will be used as a basis for developing a time-phased plan. Individual projects can then be considered on a case-by-case basis. . . . D

3. Further, it is assumed that a single agency will be given the primary responsibility for developing military and para-military aspects of the basic plan. It is recommended that this responsibility for both overt and covert military operations be assigned the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

* Memorandum for Gen Craig from Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, subject, "Operation MONGOOSE", dated 5 March 1962, on file in Gen Craig's office

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APPENDIX TO ENCLOSURE A

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MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, CUBA PROJECT

Subject: Justification for US Military Intervention
in Cuba (TS)

1. Reference is made to memorandum from Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, for General Craig, subject: "Operation MONGOOSE", dated 5 March 1962, which requested brief but precise description of pretexts which the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider would provide justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

2. The projects listed in the enclosure hereto are forwarded as a preliminary submission suitable for planning purposes. It is assumed that there will be similar submissions from other agencies and that these inputs will be used as a basis for developing a time-phased plan. The individual projects can then be considered on a case-by-case basis. X 112

3. This plan, incorporating projects selected from the attached suggestions, or from other sources, should be developed to focus all efforts on a specific ultimate objective which would provide adequate justification for US military intervention. Such a plan would enable a logical build-up of incidents to be combined with other seemingly unrelated events to camouflage the ultimate objective and create the necessary impression of Cuban rashness and irresponsibility on a large scale, directed at other countries as well as the United States. The plan would also properly integrate and time phase the courses of action to be pursued. The desired resultant from the execution of this plan would be to place the United States in the apparent position of suffering defensible grievances from a rash and irresponsible government of Cuba and to develop an international image of a Cuban threat to peace in the Western Hemisphere.

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Appendix to
Enclosure A

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4. Time is an important factor in resolution of the Cuban problem. Therefore, the plan should be so time-phased that projects would be operable within the next few months.

5. Inasmuch as the ultimate objective is overt military intervention, it is recommended that primary responsibility for developing military and para-military aspects of the plan for both overt and covert military operations be assigned the Joint Chiefs of Staff. X

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(Note: The courses of action which follow are a preliminary submission suitable only for planning purposes. They are arranged neither chronologically nor in ascending order. Together with similar inputs from other agencies, they are intended to provide a point of departure for the development of a single, integrated, time-phased plan. Such a plan would permit the evaluation of individual projects within the context of cumulative, correlated actions designed to lead inexorably to the objective of adequate justification for US military intervention in Cuba).

1. Since it would seem desirable to use legitimate provocation as the basis for US military intervention in Cuba a cover and deception plan, to include requisite preliminary actions such as has been developed in response to Task 33 c, could be executed as an initial effort to provoke Cuban reactions. Harassment plus deceptive actions to convince the Cubans of imminent invasion would be emphasized. Our military posture throughout execution of the plan will allow a rapid change from exercise to intervention if Cuban response justifies.

2. A series of well coordinated incidents will be planned to take place in and around Guantanamo to give genuine appearance of being done by hostile Cuban forces.

a. Incidents to establish a credible attack (not in chronological order):

- (1) Start rumors (many). Use clandestine radio.
- (2) Land friendly Cubans in uniform "over-the-fence" to stage attack on base.
- (3) Capture Cuban (friendly) saboteurs inside the base.
- (4) Start riots near the base main gate (friendly Cubans).

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RETURN

- (5) Blow up ammunition inside the base; start fires.
- (6) Burn aircraft on air base (sabotage).
- (7) Lob mortar shells from outside of base into base.

Some damage to installations.

- (8) Capture assault teams approaching from the sea or vicinity of Guantanamo City.
- (9) Capture militia group which storms the base.
- (10) Sabotage ship in harbor; large fires -- naphthalene.
- (11) Sink ship near harbor entrance. Conduct funerals for mock-victims (may be lieu of (10)).

b. United States would respond by executing offensive operations to secure water and power supplies, destroying artillery and mortar emplacements which threaten the base.

c. Commence large scale United States military operations.

3. A "Remember the Maine" incident could be arranged in several forms:

a. We could blow up a US ship in Guantanamo Bay and blame Cuba.

b. We could blow up a drone (unmanned) vessel anywhere in the Cuban waters. We could arrange to cause such incident in the vicinity of Havana or Santiago as a spectacular result of Cuban attack from the air or sea, or both. The presence of Cuban planes or ships merely investigating the intent of the vessel could be fairly compelling evidence that the ship was taken under attack. The nearness to Havana or Santiago would add credibility especially to those people that might have heard the blast or have seen the fire. The US could follow up with an air/sea rescue operation covered by US fighters to "evacuate" remaining members of the non-existent crew. Casualty lists in US newspapers would cause a helpful wave of national indignation.

4. We could develop a Communist Cuban terror campaign in the Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington.

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The terror campaign could be pointed at Cuban refugees seeking haven in the United States. We could sink a boatload of Cubans enroute to Florida (real or simulated). We could foster attempts on lives of Cuban refugees in the United States even to the extent of wounding in instances to be widely publicized. Exploding a few plastic bombs in carefully chosen spots, the arrest of Cuban agents and the release of prepared documents substantiating Cuban involvement also would be helpful in projecting the idea of an irresponsible government.

5. A "Cuban-based, Castro-supported" filibuster could be simulated against a neighboring Caribbean nation (in the vein of the 14th of June invasion of the Dominican Republic). We know that Castro is backing subversive efforts clandestinely against Haiti, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Nicaragua at present and possible others. These efforts can be magnified and additional ones contrived for exposure. For example, advantage can be taken of the sensitivity of the Dominican Air Force to intrusions within their national air space. "Cuban" B-26 or C-46 type aircraft could make cane-burning raids at night. Soviet Bloc incendiaries could be found. This could be coupled with "Cuban" messages to the Communist underground in the Dominican Republic and "Cuban" shipments of arms which would be found, or intercepted, on the beach.

6. Use of MIG type aircraft by US pilots could provide additional provocation. Harassment of civil air, attacks on surface shipping and destruction of US military drone aircraft by MIG type planes would be useful as complementary actions. An F-86 properly painted would convince air passengers that they saw a Cuban MIG, especially if the pilot of the transport were to announce such fact. The primary drawback to this suggestion appears to be the security risk inherent in obtaining or modifying an aircraft. However, reasonable copies of the MIG could be produced from US resources in about three months.

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7. Hijacking attempts against civil air and surface craft should appear to continue as harassing measures condoned by the government of Cuba. Concurrently, genuine defections of Cuban civil and military air and surface craft should be encouraged.

8. It is possible to create an incident which will demonstrate convincingly that a Cuban aircraft has attacked and shot down a chartered civil airliner enroute from the United States to Jamaica, Guatemala, Panama or Venezuela. The destination would be chosen only to cause the flight plan route to cross Cuba. The passengers could be a group of college students off on a holiday or any grouping of persons with a common interest to support chartering a non-scheduled flight.

a. An aircraft at Eglin AFB would be painted and numbered as an exact duplicate for a civil registered aircraft belonging to a CIA proprietary organization in the Miami area. At a designated time the duplicate would be substituted for the actual civil aircraft and would be loaded with the selected passengers, all board carefully prepared aliases. The actual registered aircraft would be converted to a drone.

b. Take off times of the drone aircraft and the actual aircraft will be scheduled to allow a rendezvous south of Florida. From the rendezvous point the passenger-carrying aircraft will descend to minimum altitude and go directly into an auxiliary field at Eglin AFB where arrangements will have been made to evacuate the passengers and return the aircraft to its original status. The drone aircraft meanwhile will continue to fly the filed flight plan. When over Cuba the drone will be transmitting on the international distress frequency a "MAY DAY" message stating he is under attack by Cuban MIG aircraft. The transmission will be interrupted by destruction of the aircraft which will be triggered by radio signal. This will allow IOAO radio

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stations in the Western Hemisphere to tell the US what has happened to the aircraft instead of the US trying to "sell" the incident.

9. It is possible to create an incident which will make it appear that Communist Cuban MIGs have destroyed a USAF aircraft over international waters in an unprovoked attack.

a. Approximately 4 or 5 F-101 aircraft will be dispatched in trail from Homestead AFB, Florida, to the vicinity of Cuba. Their mission will be to reverse course and simulate fakir aircraft for an air defense exercise in southern Florida. These aircraft would conduct variations of these flights at frequent intervals. Crews would be briefed to remain at least 12 miles off the Cuban coast; however, they would be required to carry live ammunition in the event that hostile actions were taken by the Cuban MIGs.

b. On one such flight, a pre-briefed pilot would fly tail-and-charley at considerable interval between aircraft. While near the Cuban Island this pilot would broadcast that he had been jumped by MIGs and was going down. No other calls would be made. The pilot would then fly directly west at extremely low altitude and land at a secure base, an Eglin auxiliary. The aircraft would be met by the proper people, quickly stored and given a new tail number. The pilot who had performed the mission under an alias, would resume his proper identity and return to his normal place of business. The pilot and aircraft would then have disappeared.

c. At precisely the same time that the aircraft was presumably shot down a submarine or small surface craft would disburse F-101 parts, parachute, etc., at approximately 15 to 20 miles off the Cuban coast and depart. The pilots returning to Homestead would have a true story as far as they knew. Search ships and aircraft could be dispatched and parts of aircraft found.

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ENCLOSURE B

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FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have previously stated* that US unilateral military intervention in Cuba can be undertaken in the event that the Cuban regime commits hostile acts against US forces or property which would serve as an incident upon which to base overt intervention.

2. The need for positive action in the event that current covert efforts to foster an internal Cuban rebellion are unsuccessful was indicated** by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 7 March 1962, as follows:

" - - - determination that a credible internal revolt is impossible of attainment during the next 9-10 months will require a decision by the United States to develop a Cuban "provocation" as justification for positive US military action."

3. It is understood that the Department of State also is preparing suggested courses of action to develop justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

* JCS 1969/303
** JCS 1969/313

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The Times of India

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Wednesday, October 10, 2001

India helped FBI trace ISI-terrorist links

Manoj Joshi

NEW DELHI: While the Pakistani Inter Services Public Relations claimed that former ISI director-general Lt-Gen Mahmud Ahmad sought retirement after being superseded on Monday, the truth is more shocking.

Top sources confirmed here on Tuesday, that the general lost his job because of the "evidence" India produced to show his links to one of the suicide bombers that wrecked the World Trade Centre. The US authorities sought his removal after confirming the fact that \$100,000 were wired to WTC hijacker Mohammed Atta from Pakistan by Ahmad Umar Sheikh at the instance of Gen Mahmud.

Senior government sources have confirmed that India contributed significantly to establishing the link between the money transfer and the role played by the dismissed ISI chief. While they did not provide details, they said that Indian inputs, including Sheikh's mobile phone number, helped the FBI in tracing and establishing the link.

A direct link between the ISI and the WTC attack could have enormous repercussions. The US cannot but suspect whether or not there were other senior Pakistani Army commanders who were in the know of things. Evidence of a larger conspiracy could shake US confidence in Pakistan's ability to participate in the anti-terrorism coalition.

Indian officials say they are vitally interested in the unravelling of the case since it could link the ISI directly to the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Kathmandu-Delhi flight to Kandahar last December. Ahmad Umar Sayeed Sheikh is a British national and a London School of Economics graduate who was arrested by the police in Delhi following a bungled 1994 kidnapping of four westerners, including an American citizen.

---- INDEX REFERENCES ----

The Wall Street Journal
Monday, September 17, 2001
**Aftermath: Investigation and Mobilization: To Track Down Bin Laden, U.S. Counts
on Pakistani Spy Agency**
By Neil King Jr. and David Rogers

Pakistan's powerful Inter-Services Intelligence is the military spy bureau with the deepest knowledge of the region and its terrorist roots. "If you want to do anything in the region, you have to have the ISI on your side," said one former Central Intelligence agency official who worked in the area. "These guys speak the languages, wear the clothes and walk the streets. No one knows Afghanistan like the ISI."

Cooperating with the U.S. is a highly sensitive subject in Pakistan, and the CIA has had a rocky relationship with the military-led ISI over the last decade. But there are signs that their cooperation was picking up even before Tuesday's terrorist attacks.

At the very moment terrorists were ramming airliners into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the head of the ISI, Gen. Mahmoud Ahmad, was meeting in the fourth floor of the U.S. Capitol with House Intelligence Committee Chairman Porter Goss (R., Fla.). Mr. Ahmad was in Washington for four days of talks with U.S. intelligence officials, according to Pakistani diplomats, and also met Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage. Mr. Ahmad's predecessor at the helm of the ISI also visited Washington to talk about enhanced cooperation in 1999, the diplomats said.

As chairman of the intelligence committee, Mr. Goss has pushed to strengthen the CIA with a special focus on human intelligence as opposed to the high-tech spy satellites of the Cold War. At the same time, he also has promoted better ties with Pakistani intelligence. He traveled to Islamabad in August with Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Bob Graham, a Florida Democrat, to meet with government officials, including Gen. Ahmad.

Rep. Goss said the visit to Pakistan has proven to be an "extremely useful trip at a very timely moment."

Despite talk in Washington of a sustained military campaign to wipe out terrorism, several former U.S. counterterrorism officials say that the only effective method would be an intense effort to identify and then assassinate individual terrorists around the world. Former President Clinton authorized long-term covert operations against Mr. bin Laden and his network after the 1998 East Africa embassy bombings. One knowledgeable person described it as a "lethal finding," meaning the White House had approved the killing of individuals in some circumstances.

Government-sponsored assassinations were banned during the Ford administration, but pressure is now building in Congress and within the administration to reverse that presidential directive.

In addition, Congress is moving to make it easier for the CIA to hire foreign individuals -- even with a criminal past -- in operations against terrorism. The Senate approved a spending bill amendment last Thursday night that would relax restrictions adopted in the mid-1990s after reports of human-rights abuses by CIA assets in Central America.

The CIA now is intent to rekindle ties with the ISI. "The Pakistanis will help," said retired Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni, former commander of U.S. military operations in the Middle East and Southwest Asia who has extensive experience with Pakistan. "They will help with logistics and intelligence. But you can't leave them hanging out to dry."

Indeed, building a tight alliance with the ISI won't be easy. The Pakistani government and the military-led ISI are vital to the survival of Afghanistan's ruling Taliban, providing access to fuel and other necessities and assisting in the Taliban's fight against the rebel Northern Alliance. The ISI has also lent assistance to training camps in Afghanistan near the Pakistani border that have trained fighters for the fight against India in Kashmir, U.S. officials say. Some U.S. officials in the past have accused the ISI of aiding known terrorist groups based in Pakistan.

Note: this page is cropped from a larger article

DAWN/The News International, KARACHI

http://www.karachipage.com/news/Sep_01/091001.html 10 September 2001,

Ahmed Shah Masood hurt in blast

DUSHANBE: Afghan Opposition Commander Ahmad Shah Masood was wounded here on Sunday in northern Afghanistan when a bomb concealed in a video camera went off while he was being interviewed by a group of journalists, a source at the Afghan embassy in Dushanbe said.

The incident, which happened at his heavily-guarded residence in Khwaja Bahauddin, killed an official from Masood's opposition forces and wounded Masood in the leg, the source said.

An aide to Masood reached by telephone in Afghanistan told AFP late on Sunday that the opposition commander was "in good health." "This is no small issue. I cannot say anything more. He is in good health," said General Fahim, former head of information services when Masood controlled Kabul. Fahim, who did not deny there had been an attempt on Masood's life, usually accompanies the opposition commander wherever he goes.

Afghan opposition commander Ahmad Shah Masood is recovering in hospital today after an assassination attempt by Arab suicide bombers posing as journalists, a spokesman said. He has sustained minor injuries all over his body but the wounds in his foot are serious. The two Arabs were killed along with Masood's interpreter and personal assistant Assem Suhil.

ISI chief's parleys continue in US

WASHINGTON: ISI Chief Lt-Gen Mahmood's week-long presence in Washington has triggered speculation about the agenda of his mysterious meetings at the Pentagon and National Security Council. Officially, State Department sources say he is on a routine visit in return to CIA Director George Tenet's earlier visit to Islamabad. Official sources confirm that he met Tenet this week.

He also held long parleys with unspecified officials at the White House and the Pentagon. But the most important meeting was with Mark Grossman, US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. US sources would not furnish any details beyond saying that the two discussed 'matters of mutual interests.'

What those matters could be is a matter of pure conjecture. One can safely guess that the discussions must have centred around Afghanistan, relations with India and China, disarmament of civilian outfits, country's nuclear and missiles programme and, of course, Osama Bin Laden.

What added interest to his visit is the history of such visits. Last time Ziauddin Butt, Mahmood's predecessor, was here during Nawaz Sharif's government the domestic politics turned topsy-turvy within days. That this is not the first visit by Mahmood in the last three months shows the urgency of the ongoing parleys.

(Publication page references are not available for this document.)

The Miami Herald

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Saturday, September 29, 2001

Front

SUSPECTED TERRORIST LEADER AGAIN DENIES ROLE

BY JUAN O. TAMAYO, jtamayo@herald.com

THE MIAMI HERALD AFTER THE ATTACK

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- In his first newspaper interview since the terrorist onslaught in New York and Washington, suspected terrorist leader Osama bin Laden again denied responsibility for the attacks, but he added that while Islam forbids killing innocent people, "the case with the Americans is different."

In an almost boastful tone he added that "fear is the most lethal weapon" and said the U.S. media, not the bombers, had "injected a feeling of psychological helplessness . . . permanently into the American psyche."

The verbal attack was published as a Pakistani delegation returned empty-handed Friday from a mission to persuade Afghanistan's Taliban rulers to avert a military confrontation with Washington over bin Laden.

"We did not speak directly about Osama, but they made it clear they would do nothing to help," said an aide to Mufti Nazmein Shamzeai, Pakistan's most respected Islamic scholar and one-time teacher of Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar.

But, apparently beginning to feel the strain of international isolation, the Taliban leaders Friday called for a special meeting of the world's Muslim nations to help resolve its standoff with the United States.

The Taliban asked for a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which includes 57 Muslim countries, to discuss the Sept. 11 terrorism attacks on the United States and "help in getting the culprits," according to a Taliban spokesman in Islamabad. Pakistani officials said the meeting would probably be held Oct. 9 in Doha, Qatar.

It was the latest in a series of delays by the Taliban aimed at averting a U.S. military strike. Earlier in the week, Taliban officials said they could not find bin Laden to deliver a recommendation from hundreds of Afghanistan's religious scholars that he leave the country voluntarily.

But Thursday, the Taliban's ambassador to Pakistan said the movement knows bin Laden's whereabouts and that the message had been delivered.

The authenticity of the bin Laden interview could not be immediately confirmed, but the newspaper in which it appeared, the Urdu-language Ummat Daily, is a strongly Islamic Karachi newspaper sympathetic to the Taliban. One of its best-known writers is an authorized biographer of bin Laden.

In the interview, bin Laden adopted an ironic, mocking tone.

It was his first interview since the Sept. 11 attacks, although he has issued at least one statement denying a role in the assault.

"I am not responsible for what happened in the United States Sept. 11, 2001. Being a Muslim, it is my duty not to lie," he said in what the newspaper said were written responses to questions posed to him through Taliban leaders.

"I had no information on this killing of innocent women, children and innocent human beings. Islam bans its followers from taking the lives of innocent women, children and people even in times of war," bin Laden said.

But, he added, "the case with the Americans is different because they support all kinds of activities that are troubling other religions, especially Islam, Islamic women and children."

"American and Israeli efforts to make trouble were enough for Allah to bring his wrath against them," bin Laden said, according to an unofficial translation of the Urdu original.

As to who was behind the attacks, he mentioned Israel, Russia, Serbia, India, U.S. right-wing militias, perhaps a U.S. intelligence community looking to find a new archenemy and protect its budget in the post-Soviet era.

"And do not forget the Jewish-American people, who have still not come to terms with President Bush for the Florida state results in the presidential election and want revenge for that," he added.

Condemning Western news outlets for alleging that he and his al Qaeda network of terrorist organizations were involved in the attacks, bin Laden said they had only managed to paralyze Americans with fear.

"What the enemies of the Americans were not able to do, their media did," he said. "We all know the performance of nations that become helpless and afraid in times of war."

His rambling and often flowery replies became more direct when asked whether U.S. efforts to freeze the assets of his financial supporters would impair al Qaeda's operations.

"Al Qaeda has more than three financial systems which are separate and completely independent," he said. "The al Qaeda organization is composed of educated young people who know the loopholes of the Western financial systems like the lifelines of their hands."

Asked about the support that some Muslim nations have pledged to America's newly declared war on terrorism, bin Laden displayed a pragmatic side that contrasted sharply with his previous threats in the past.

"Some [Muslim] countries have been forced to support the American military campaign, and some of them need this," he said, apparently referring to poor Muslim nations hoping to win U.S. economic aid.

As for al Qaeda, he added, "we will do as directed by the Amir Ul Momineen and the ulema of Islam," he said, referring to Taliban leader Omar's title as "commander of the Muslim faithful" and the community of Islamic clergy.

Bin Laden's comments were published as senior Pakistani Islamic scholars and intelligence officers failed to persuade the Taliban to turn over bin Laden or make some gesture that would avert retaliatory U.S. strikes.

The four Islamic scholars and the head of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, Lt. Gen. Mahmood Ahmed, returned to Islamabad's international airport following their one-day trip.

Ahmed, whose agency has long and actively supported the Taliban, was along on the trip "because he's fully conversant with the position of the [Pakistani] government," said Foreign Office spokesman Riaz Mohammed Khan.

Despite the failure, four Pakistani Islamic political parties announced plans to send another delegation to Afghanistan next week to urge the Taliban to give ground in their confrontation with Washington.

2001 WL 28554839

(Publication page references are not available for this document.)

Separately, the Taliban rejected a request that they free eight foreign aid workers, including two Americans, two Australians and four Germans, jailed on charges of trying to win converts to Christianity, the aide to the Islamic scholars said.

The workers' trial, suspended following the Sept. 11 attacks, is due to resume today.

TABULAR OR GRAPHIC MATERIAL SET FORTH IN THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT DISPLAYABLE

photo: Afghan taliban fighters standing on a tank (a) SAID AZAM/AFP READY TO FIGHT: Afghan Taliban fighters show off their tank near Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday. Fighting between the Taliban and the opposition Northern Alliance has intensified.

(Publication page references are not available for this document.)

The Kansas City Star
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Saturday, October 6, 2001

OPINION

A compelling case against bin Laden
Kansas City Star, The (MO)

With the release of a detail-filled dossier this week, British Prime Minister Tony Blair laid out a compelling case that the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States were "planned and carried out" by the terrorist organization led by Osama bin Laden.

Blair's material was put together with the assistance of U.S. officials. Authorities in both countries have worked with dizzying speed to compile information about the attacks and bin Laden through exhaustive intelligence efforts over the last three weeks.

The United States also has been sharing information about the attacks and **evidence** against **bin Laden** with several other governments, including Pakistan and our NATO allies. These governments have found this evidence persuasive.

By pinning the blame for the attacks directly on bin Laden's organization, the United States and Britain have bolstered the case that the Taliban rulers of Afghanistan have a responsibility to turn him over or face dire consequences.

Blair's 16-page document says that three of the 19 hijackers involved in last month's attacks were associates of bin Laden's terrorist group; that before Sept. 11, bin Laden had said he was preparing a major attack on America; and that one of bin Laden's closest associates played a key role in planning the hijackings.

America's 18 NATO allies have accepted this evidence. Subsequently, NATO approved a plan to provide the United States with additional military equipment and intelligence, plus access to seaports and airfields that could be used to support operations against bin Laden's Afghan protectors.

Pakistan's leaders, too, said late this week that the **evidence** they had been shown by U.S. Ambassador Wendy Chamberlin would be enough to indict **bin Laden** in a court of law.

This conclusion by the government of Pakistan, the country with the

(Publication page references are not available for this document.)

second-largest Muslim population in the world, was reassuring news for American officials. They understand that Pakistan and other countries in the Middle East and Asia are under tremendous pressure from militant groups not to participate in attacks against Afghanistan, Iraq or other nations with large Muslim populations.

Neither the British prime minister nor U.S. officials have released the most sensitive information that has been gathered since the destruction of the World Trade Center towers and part of the Pentagon.

Publicly disclosing such information at this point could compromise sources and jeopardize intelligence operations. It should be possible for the U.S. government to provide more detailed information to the American public and the world later.

There are hazards with sharing some of this intelligence information with other governments as well. But the United States needed to convince those governments that it was under attack from the terrorist organization being sheltered in Afghanistan.

Washington appears to have made its case with its most critical allies, clearing the way for the United States to take the necessary steps to defend itself.



Transcript of Osama bin Laden videotape

CNN, December 13, 2001

The following transcript of a videotape of Osama bin Laden talking with others, translated from Arabic into English, was issued by the U.S. Department of Defense. CNN spells the al Qaeda leader's name Osama bin Laden, but the Defense Department spelling -- Usama bin Laden -- is retained. He is identified as UBL in the transcript.

(Transcript and annotations independently prepared by George Michael, translator, Diplomatic Language Services; and Dr. Kassem M. Wahba, Arabic language program coordinator, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. They collaborated on their translation and compared it with translations done by the U.S. government for consistency. There were no inconsistencies in the translations.)

In mid-November, Usama Bin Laden spoke to a room of supporters, possibly in Qandahar, Afghanistan. These comments were videotaped with the knowledge of bin Laden and all present.

Note: The tape is approximately one hour long and contains three different segments: an original taping of a visit by some people to the site of the downed U.S. helicopter in Ghazni province (approximately 12 minutes long); and two segments documenting a courtesy visit by bin Laden and his lieutenants to an unidentified Shaykh, who appears crippled from the waist down. The visit apparently takes place at a guesthouse in Qandahar. The sequence of the events is reversed on the tape -- the end of his visit is in the beginning of the tape with the helicopter site visit in the middle and the start of the Usama bin Laden visit beginning approximately 39 minutes into the tape. The tape is transcribed below according to the proper sequence of events.

Due to the quality of the original tape, it is NOT a verbatim transcript of every word spoken during the meeting, but does convey the messages and information flow.

EDITOR'S NOTE: 39 minutes into tape, first segment of the bin Laden meeting, begins after footage of helicopter site visit

Shaykh: (...inaudible...) You have given us weapons, you have given us hope and we thank Allah for you. We don't want to take much of your time, but this is the arrangement of the brothers. People now are supporting us more, even those ones who did not support us in the past, support us more now. I did not want to take that much of your time. We praise Allah, we praise Allah. We came from Kabul. We were very pleased to visit. May Allah bless you both at home and the camp. We asked the driver to take us, it was a night with a full moon, thanks be to Allah. Believe me it is not in the country side. The elderly...everybody praises what you did, the great action you did, which was first and foremost by the grace of Allah. This is the guidance of Allah and the blessed fruit of jihad.

UBL: Thanks to Allah. What is the stand of the Mosques there (in Saudi Arabia)?

Shaykh: Honestly, they are very positive. Shaykh Al-Bahrani (phonetic) gave a good sermon in his class after the sunset prayers. It was videotaped and I was supposed to carry it with me, but unfortunately, I had to leave immediately.

UBL: The day of the events?

Shaykh: At the exact time of the attack on America, precisely at the time. He (Bahrani) gave a very impressive sermon. Thanks be to Allah for his blessings. He (Bahrani) was the first one to write at war time. I visited him twice in Al-Qasim.

UBL: Thanks be to Allah.

Shaykh: This is what I asked from Allah. He (Bahrani) told the youth: "You are asking for martyrdom and wonder where you should go (for martyrdom)?" Allah was inciting them to go. I asked Allah to grant me to witness the truth in front of the unjust ruler. We ask Allah to protect him and give him the martyrdom, after he issued the first fatwa. He was detained for interrogation, as you know. When he was called in and asked to sign, he told them, "don't waste my time, I have another fatwa. If you want me, I can sign both at the same time."

UBL: Thanks be to Allah.

Shaykh: His position is really very encouraging. When I paid him the first visit about a year and half ago, he asked me, "How is Shaykh Bin-Ladin?" He sends you his special regards. As far as Shaykh Sulayman 'Ulwan is concerned, he gave a beautiful fatwa, may Allah bless him. Miraculously, I heard it on the Quran radio station. It was strange because he ('Ulwan) sacrificed his position, which is equivalent to a director. It was transcribed word-by-word. The brothers listened to it in detail. I briefly heard it before the noon prayers. He ('Ulwan) said this was jihad and those people were not innocent people (World Trade Center and Pentagon victims). He swore to Allah. This was transmitted to Shaykh Sulayman Al ('Umar)) Allah bless him.

UBL: What about Shaykh Al-((Rayan))?

Shaykh: Honestly, I did not meet with him. My movements were truly limited.

UBL: Allah bless you. You are welcome.

Shaykh: (Describing the trip to the meeting) They smuggled us and then I thought that we would be in different caves inside the mountains so I was surprised at the guest house and that it is very clean and comfortable. Thanks be to Allah, we also learned that this location is safe, by Allah's blessings. The place is clean and we are very comfortable.

UBL: (...Inaudible...) when people see a strong horse and a weak horse, by nature, they will like the strong horse. This is only one goal; those who want people to worship the lord of the people, without following that doctrine, will be following the doctrine of Muhammad, peace be upon him. (UBL quotes several short and incomplete Hadith verses, as follows): "I was ordered to fight the people until they say there is no god but Allah, and his prophet Muhammad." "Some people may ask: why do you want to fight us?" "There is an association between those who say: I believe in one god and Muhammad is his prophet, and those who don't (...inaudible...) "Those who do not follow the true fiqh. The fiqh of Muhammad, the real fiqh. They are just accepting what is being said at face value."

UBL: Those youth who conducted the operations did not accept any fiqh in the popular terms, but they accepted the fiqh that the prophet Muhammad brought. Those young men (...inaudible...) said in deeds, in New York and Washington, speeches that overshadowed all other speeches made everywhere else in the world. The speeches are understood by both Arabs and non-Arabs-even by Chinese. It is above all the media said. Some of them said that in Holland, at one of the centers,

the number of people who accepted Islam during the days that followed the operations were more than the people who accepted Islam in the last eleven years. I heard someone on Islamic radio who owns a school in America say: "We don't have time to keep up with the demands of those who are asking about Islamic books to learn about Islam." This event made people think (about true Islam) which benefited Islam greatly.

Shaykh: Hundreds of people used to doubt you and few only would follow you until this huge event happened. Now hundreds of people are coming out to join you. I remember a vision by Shaykh Salih Al-((Shuaybi)). He said: "There will be a great hit and people will go out by hundreds to Afghanistan." I asked him (Salih): "To Afghanistan?" He replied, "Yes." According to him, the only ones who stay behind will be the mentally impotent and the liars (hypocrites). I remembered his saying that hundreds of people will go out to Afghanistan. He had this vision a year ago. This event discriminated between the different types of followers.

UBL: (...Inaudible...) we calculated in advance the number of casualties from the enemy, who would be killed based on the position of the tower. We calculated that the floors that would be hit would be three or four floors. I was the most optimistic of them all. (...Inaudible...) 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 and collapse the area where the plane hit and all the floors above it only. This is all that we had hoped for.

Shaykh: Allah be praised.

UBL: We were at (...inaudible...) when the event took place. We had notification since the previous Thursday that the event would take place that day. We had finished our work that day and had the radio on. It was 5:30 p.m. our time. I was sitting with Dr. Ahmad Abu-al-((Khair)). Immediately, we heard the news that a plane had hit the World Trade Center. We turned the radio station to the news from Washington. The news continued and no mention of the attack until the end. At the end of the newscast, they reported that a plane just hit the World Trade Center.

Shaykh: Allah be praised.

UBL: After a little while, they announced that another plane had hit the World Trade Center. The brothers who heard the news were overjoyed by it.

Shaykh: I listened to the news and I was sitting. We didn't...we were not thinking about anything, and all of a sudden, Allah willing, we were talking about how come we didn't have anything, and all of a sudden the news came and everyone was overjoyed and everyone until the next day, in the morning, was talking about what was happening and we stayed until four o'clock, listening to the news every time a little bit different, everyone was very joyous and saying "Allah is great," "Allah is great," "We are thankful to Allah," "Praise Allah." And I was happy for the happiness of my brothers. That day the congratulations were coming on the phone non-stop. The mother was receiving phone calls continuously. Thank Allah. Allah is great, praise be to Allah. (Quoting the verse from the Quran)

Shaykh: "Fight them, Allah will torture them, with your hands, he will torture them. He will deceive them and he will give you victory. Allah will forgive the believers, he is knowledgeable about everything."

Shaykh: No doubt it is a clear victory. Allah has bestowed on us...honor on us...and he will give us blessing and more victory during this holy month of Ramadan. And this is what everyone is hoping for. Thank Allah America came out of its caves. We hit her the first hit and the next one will hit her with the hands of the believers, the good believers, the strong believers. By Allah it is a great work. Allah prepares for you a great reward for this work. I'm sorry to speak in your presence, but it is just thoughts, just thoughts. By Allah, who there is no god but him. I live in happiness, happiness...I have not experienced, or felt, in a long time. I remember, the words of Al-Rabbani, he said they made a coalition against us in the winter with the infidels like the Turks, and others, and some other Arabs. And they surrounded us like the days...in the days of the prophet Muhammad. Exactly like what's happening right now. But he comforted his followers and said, "This is going to turn and hit them back." And it is a mercy for us. And a blessing to us. And it will bring people back. Look how wise he was. And Allah will give him blessing. And the day will come when the symbols of Islam will rise up and it will be similar to the early days of Al-Mujahideen and Al-Ansar (similar to the early years of Islam). And victory to those who follow Allah. Finally said, if it is the same, like the old days, such as Abu Bakr and Othman and Ali and others. In these days, in our times, that it will be the greatest jihad in the history of Islam and the resistance of the wicked people.

Shaykh: By Allah my Shaykh. We congratulate you for the great work. Thank Allah.

Tape ends here

Second segment of Bin Laden's visit, shows up at the front of the tape

UBL: Abdallah Azzam, Allah bless his soul, told me not to record anything (...inaudible...) so I thought that was a good omen, and Allah will bless us (...inaudible...). Abu-Al-Hasan Al-((Masri)), who appeared on Al-Jazeera TV a couple of days ago and addressed the Americans saying: "If you are true men, come down here and face us." (...inaudible...) He told me a year ago: "I saw in a dream, we were playing a soccer game against the Americans. When our team showed up in the field, they were all pilots!" He said: "So I wondered if that was a soccer game or a pilot game? Our players were pilots." He (Abu-Al-Hasan) didn't know anything about the operation until he heard it on the radio. He said the game went on and we defeated them. That was a good omen for us.

Shaykh: May Allah be blessed.

Unidentified Man Off Camera: Abd Al Rahman Al-(Ghamri) said he saw a vision, before the operation, a plane crashed into a tall building. He knew nothing about it.

Shaykh: May Allah be blessed!

Sulayman ((Abu Guaith)): I was sitting with the Shaykh in a room, then I left to go to another room where there was a TV set. The TV broadcasted the big event. The scene was showing an Egyptian family sitting in their living room, they exploded with joy. Do you know when there is a soccer game and your team wins, it was the same expression of joy. There was a subtitle that read: "In revenge for the children of Al Aqsa, Usama Bin Ladin executes an operation against America." So I went back to the Shaykh (meaning UBL) who was sitting in a room with 50 to 60 people. I tried to tell him about what I saw, but he made gesture with his hands, meaning: "I know, I know..."

UBL: He did not know about the operation. Not everybody knew (...inaudible...). Muhammad ((Atta)) from the Egyptian family (meaning the Al Qa'ida Egyptian group), was in charge of the group.

Shaykh: A plane crashing into a tall building was out of anyone's imagination. This was a great job. He was one of the pious men in the organization. He became a martyr. Allah bless his soul.

Shaykh (Referring to dreams and visions): The plane that he saw crashing into the building was seen before by more than one person. One of the good religious people has left everything and come here. He told me, "I saw a vision, I was in a huge plane, long and wide. I was carrying it on my shoulders and I walked from the road to the desert for half a kilometer. I was dragging the plane." I listened to him and I prayed to Allah to help him. Another person told me that last year he saw, but I didn't understand and I told him I don't understand. He said, "I saw people who left for jihad...and they found themselves in New York...in Washington and New York." I said, "What is this?" He told me the plane hit the building. That was last year. We haven't thought much about it. But, when the incidents happened he came to me and said, "Did you see...this is strange." I have another man...my god...he said and swore by Allah that his wife had seen the incident a week earlier. She saw the plane crashing into a building...that was unbelievable, my god.

UBL: The brothers, who conducted the operation, all they knew was that they have a martyrdom operation and we asked each of them to go to America but they didn't know anything about the operation, not even one letter. But they were trained and we did not reveal the operation to them until they are there and just before they boarded the planes.

UBL: (...inaudible...) then he said: Those who were trained to fly didn't know the others. One group of people did not know the other group. (...inaudible...) (Someone in the crowd asks UBL to tell the Shaykh about the dream of ((Abu-Da'ud)).

UBL: We were at a camp of one of the brother's guards in Qandahar. This brother belonged to the majority of the group. He came close and told me that he saw, in a dream, a tall building in America, and in the same dream he saw Mukhtar teaching them how to play karate. At that point, I was worried that maybe the secret would be revealed if everyone starts seeing it in their dream. So I closed the subject. I told him if he sees another dream, not to tell anybody, because people will be upset with him. (Another person's voice can be heard recounting his dream about two planes hitting a big building).

UBL: They were overjoyed when the first plane hit the building, so I said to them: be patient.

UBL: The difference between the first and the second plane hitting the towers was twenty minutes. And the difference between the first plane and the plane that hit the Pentagon was one hour.

Shaykh: They (the Americans) were terrified thinking there was a coup. [Note: Ayman Al-Zawahri says first he commended UBL's awareness of what the media is saying. Then he says it was the first time for them (Americans) to feel danger coming at them.] UBL (reciting a poem): I witness that against the sharp blade They always faced difficulties and stood together... When the darkness comes upon us and we are bit by a Sharp tooth, I say... "Our homes are flooded with blood and the tyrant Is freely wandering in our homes"... And from the battlefield vanished The brightness of swords and the horses... And over weeping sounds now We hear the beats of drums

and rhythm... They are storming his forts And shouting: "We will not stop our raids Until you free our lands"...

(Publication page references are not available for this document.)

International Herald Tribune
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Friday, September 5, 2003

NEWS

White House agreed to whisk Saudis away Senator criticizes airlift after Sept.

11

Eric Lichtblau
The New York Times

WASHINGTON: Top White House officials personally approved the evacuation of dozens of influential Saudis, including relatives of Osama **bin Laden**, from the United States in the days after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks when most flights were still grounded, according to a former White House adviser.

Richard Clarke, who ran the White House crisis team after the attacks but has since left the Bush administration, said he agreed to the extraordinary plan because the Federal Bureau of Investigation assured him that the departing Saudis were not linked to terrorism. The White House feared that the Saudis could face retribution for the hijackings, Clarke said.

The fact that relatives of **bin Laden** and other Saudis had been rushed out of the country became public soon after the Sept. 11 attacks. But questions have lingered about the circumstances of their departure, and Clarke's statements provided the first acknowledgment that the White House had any direct involvement in the plan and that senior administration officials had personally signed off on it. Clarke made his remarks in an article in Vanity Fair magazine published Thursday, and amplified them Wednesday in an interview and congressional testimony. The White House had no comment on his statements.

The disclosure came just weeks after the classified portion of a congressional report on the Sept. 11 attacks suggested that Saudi Arabia had financial links to the hijackers. Clarke's comments are likely to fuel accusations that the United States has gone soft on the Saudis because of diplomatic concerns.

Senator **Charles Schumer**, a New York Democrat, seized on Clarke's comments to call on the White House to conduct an investigation into the hasty departures of about 140 Saudis in the days after the attacks. Schumer said in an interview that he suspected some of the Saudis who were allowed to leave, particularly two relatives of **bin Laden** who he said had links to terrorist groups themselves, could have shed light on the events of Sept. 11.

This is just another example of our country coddling the Saudis, Schumer said. It's almost as if we didn't want to find out what links existed.

(Publication page references are not available for this document.)

While FBI officials would not discuss details of the case, they said that in the days immediately after the Sept. 11 attacks bureau agents interviewed the adult relatives of **bin Laden**, members of a rich Saudi **family**, before the White House cleared them to leave. **Bin Laden** is said to be estranged from his **family**.

We did everything that needed to be done, said John Iannarelli, a bureau spokesman. There's nothing to indicate that any of these people had any information that could have assisted us, and no one was accorded any additional courtesies that wouldn't have been accorded anyone else.

But Vanity Fair quotes Dale Watson, the former head of counterterrorism at the FBI, as saying that the departing Saudis were not subject to serious interviews or interrogations. Watson could not be reached for comment.

The article depicts an elaborate but hurried evacuation, with **private** planes picking up Saudis from 10 U.S. cities. Some aviation and bureau officials said they had been upset by the operation because the government had not yet lifted flight restrictions for the general public, but said they had not had the power to stop it, the article says.

Clarke, who left the White House in February, said in an interview that he was driven by concern for the safety of the Saudis after the hijackings.

We were concerned, just as the Saudis were concerned, that the Saudis and other Middle Easterners would be targeted for retribution, he said. He called the current criticism of the evacuation a tempest in a teapot, adding that he had told the bureau to hold anyone it had suspicions about, and that the FBI had said it had not held anyone.

Schumer said in a letter to the White House Wednesday that the Saudis appeared to have had a free pass despite possible knowledge about the attacks.

I find it hard to believe that two days after 9/11, the FBI would even know what questions to ask and who to ask it of, Schumer said in an interview.

Los Angeles Times
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Tuesday, April 30, 2002

Main News; National Desk

THE NATION Details of Sept. 11 Plot Elude U.S. Investigators Terrorism: The hijackers concealed their scheme expertly, which raises concerns about how to thwart an attack.

ERIC LICHTBLAU and JOSH MEYER
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

WASHINGTON -- **For more than seven months**, U.S. authorities **probing** the Sept. 11 attacks have scoured everything from caves to credit cards in the expectation that they would ultimately discover how the 19 hijackers plotted their brazen scheme.

But the global search has produced virtually nothing in the way of hard evidence about the terrorists' planning, and authorities said Monday that they face the growing realization that they may never know many key details.

That sobering conclusion underscores the skill and sophistication of the Al Qaeda terrorist network in its ability to conceal its activities--and the equally daunting difficulties that authorities face in heading off another attack, officials said.

The hijackers "left no paper trail," FBI Director Robert Mueller said in the text of a speech that the FBI released Monday. "In our investigation, we have not uncovered a single piece of paper--either here in the United States or in the treasure trove of information that has turned up in Afghanistan and elsewhere--that mentioned any aspect of the Sept. 11 plot."

His remarks offer the FBI's most comprehensive and detailed assessment to date of its investigation, remarkable as much for what investigators have not found as for what they have.

Mueller revealed that investigators believe the Sept. 11 plan may have been in the works for as long as five years, and that the hijackers used "meticulous planning, extraordinary secrecy and extensive knowledge of how America works" to conceal their scheme after entering the United States legally from the Middle East.

Investigators have found no computers, laptops, hard drives or other storage media that may have been used by the hijackers, who hid their communications by using hundreds of pay phones and cell phones, coupled with hard-to-trace prepaid calling cards.

In executing wire transfers to fund the attacks, they were also careful to send money in small amounts, avoiding large cash transactions that would have triggered a government report, Mueller said, adding: "The hijackers did all they could to stay below our radar."

The FBI and other U.S. intelligence agencies have come under intense scrutiny since Sept. 11, and some analysts suggested that Mueller's comments, made in a speech to the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco on April 19, may reflect an attempt to rationalize the intelligence community's failure to pick up on any signs that an attack was imminent.

In hindsight, several episodes conceivably could have alerted authorities to a possible plot, including indicted Al Qaeda member Zacarias Moussaoui's suspicious activities at a Minnesota flight school and the entry of two of the hijackers into the country even though they were on a CIA terrorist "watch list."

But even now, law enforcement officials say that while they have been able to reconstruct the movements of the hijackers in the months before the attacks-- all legal except for a few speeding tickets--they have found no evidence of their plotting.

"We've been able to glean quite a bit in tracking their movements, but as far as being able to identify a blueprint, some type of master plan that was shared with a number of people outlining just how they were going to pull this off, that's something we've not been able to uncover," said an FBI official who asked not to be identified.

Indeed, the White House is deeply concerned about the lack of any evidence that could have foreshadowed the events of Sept. 11. That is one reason why U.S. counter-terrorism authorities intend to keep the nation on an indefinite state of heightened alert, according to a Bush administration official who also asked not to be identified.

The paucity of information "confirms what we have thought for a long time. If there was any doubt about the professionalism of the hijackers, the [FBI] director's quotes should dispel that," the official said. "If it took . . . years to develop the 9/11 plot, then it is very, very possible that we are in a similar period right now, where individuals are practicing the same type of operational security in preparation for another attack."

Even Mueller's assessment that the Sept. 11 attacks were in the works for five years is largely "a supposition" based on somewhat vague intelligence culled from tracking European terrorism suspects, according to a law enforcement official. "There was never even anything saying, 'Something is planned in the United States,' " the official said.

In a slew of attacks in Europe, Africa and the United States during the 1990s that were linked to Al Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, evidence inevitably would turn up after the fact revealing how the plans were laid, said terrorism expert Daniel Benjamin, a National Security Council aide in the Clinton administration.

But Mueller's assessment about the Sept. 11 plot "deepens the sense that these guys [in Al Qaeda] have really taken a quantum leap in their ability to carry out an operation without all the traditional accouterments," he said.

Whether the hijackers never maintained a paper trail or managed to destroy the evidence before the attacks, Benjamin said, "it's incredibly scary. It's premature to declare the record closed, and there may be something else out there that hasn't come out yet, but the fact that nothing has turned up is an indication of just what a skillful operation this was."

William Wechsler, a former National Security Council official who specialized in Al Qaeda financing, agreed that the Sept. 11 hijackers managed to avoid basic missteps that had flawed earlier operations.

"This shows we can't rely on the incompetence of terrorists to protect us"

any more, Wechsler said. "The level of sophistication that they have shown in their ability to hide for so long among us . . . should make every American concerned that they could be doing the very same thing today."

Indeed, Mueller acknowledged the tremendous challenges that U.S. law enforcement faces in heading off another attack. In his remarks, he said the nation has not done enough to stop it.

"Terrorists have shown they are willing to go to great lengths to destroy America," he said. "We must be willing to go to even greater lengths to stop them. Our worldwide network must be more powerful. Our financial commitment must be stronger. Our techniques and training must be more sophisticated. And our sense of urgency and intensity must be greater."

Mueller said the FBI was doubling the number of agents working on terrorism prevention--a commitment that goes beyond his previous pledges. And the bureau is hoping to speed its terrorist information flow by putting in a new computer system next year--replacing a network that he said is "piecemeal and patchwork."

Shutting down the terrorists' money pipelines is another priority, Mueller said. Problems in this area have surfaced in the last few months involving poor coordination among federal agencies and questionable evidence against targeted Islamic groups, but Mueller said the FBI has managed to review 75,000 transactions and help freeze millions of dollars in terrorist money worldwide.

Authorities at the Treasury Department, which is also investigating terrorist money ties, are concerned about the new evidence regarding Al Qaeda's ability to hide its financial tracks, department spokesman Rob Nichols said.

"It's clear the Al Qaeda use extremely clever and crafty ways to move around, access and hide their money," Nichols said. "This fact underscores the importance of choking off funds that enable terrorist organizations to thrive and to identify on an ongoing basis suspected financial intermediaries of global terror."
TABULAR OR GRAPHIC MATERIAL SET FORTH IN THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT DISPLAYABLE

PHOTO: The "treasure trove" of documents uncovered at Al Qaeda compounds in Afghanistan provided no details of the planning for the Sept. 11 terrorist hijackings, FBI Director Robert Mueller said.; PHOTOGRAPHER: BRIAN WALSKI / Los Angeles Times

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British Broadcasting Company
Sunday, 23 September, 2001, 12:30 GMT 13:30 UK
Hijack 'suspects' alive and well



Waleed Al Shehri left the US a year ago, he says

Another of the men named by the FBI as a hijacker in the suicide attacks on Washington and New York has turned up alive and well.

The identities of four of the 19 suspects accused of having carried out the attacks are now in doubt.

Saudi Arabian pilot Waleed Al Shehri was one of five men that the FBI said had deliberately crashed American Airlines flight 11 into the World Trade Centre on 11 September.

Now he is protesting his innocence from Casablanca, Morocco.

He told journalists there that he had nothing to do with the attacks on New York and Washington, and had been in Morocco when they happened. He has contacted both the Saudi and American authorities, according to Saudi press reports.

He acknowledges that he attended flight training school at Dayton Beach in the United States, and is indeed the same Waleed Al Shehri to whom the FBI has been referring.

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.

Mistaken identity

Abdulaziz Al Omari, another of the Flight 11 hijack suspects, has also been quoted in Arab news reports.

He says he is an engineer with Saudi Telecoms, and that he lost his passport while studying in Denver.

Another man with exactly the same name surfaced on the pages of the English-language Arab News.

The second Abdulaziz Al Omari is a pilot for Saudi Arabian Airlines, the report says.

Meanwhile, Asharq Al Awsat newspaper, a London-based Arabic daily, says it has interviewed Saeed Alghamdi.

He was listed by the FBI as a hijacker in the United flight that crashed in Pennsylvania.

And there are suggestions that another suspect, Khalid Al Midhar, may also be alive.

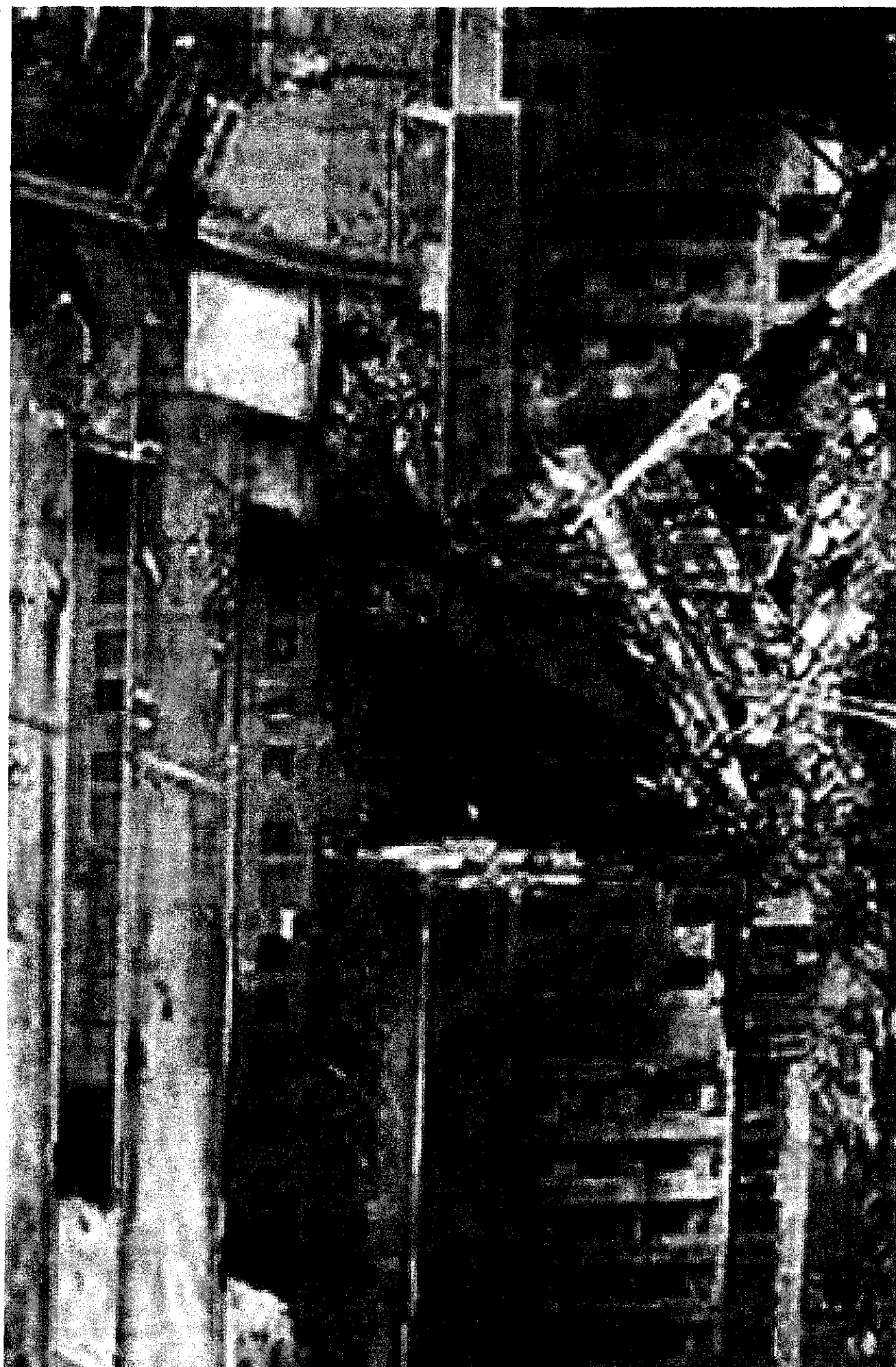
FBI Director Robert Mueller acknowledged on Thursday that the identity of several of the suicide hijackers is in doubt.



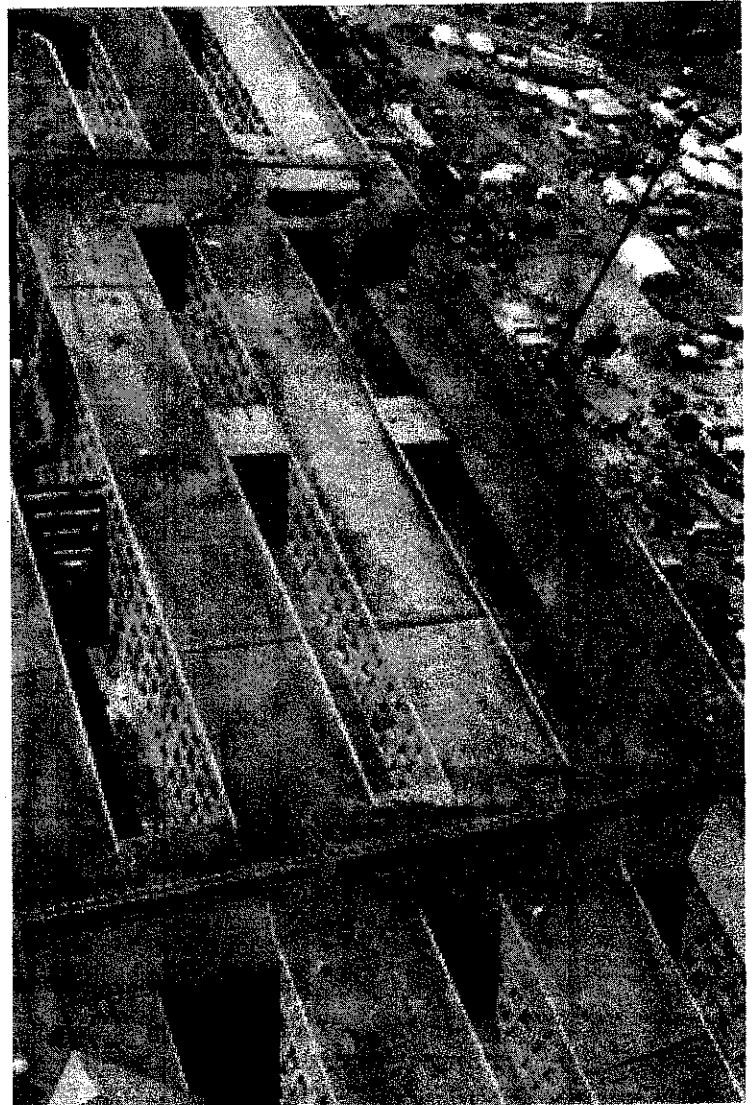
Abdelaziz Al Omari 'lost his passport in Denver'



Khalid Al-Midhar may also be alive



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9/13/01 CBS News: Morning News (Pg. Unavail. Online)
2001 WL 25770552

CBS News: Morning News
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Thursday, September 13, 2001

Newscast: Cleanup continues at the Pentagon

SUSAN MCGINNIS, anchor: Federal officials now say the hijacked plane that struck the Pentagon may have been headed for the White House. The fire caused by the crash was put out last night. David Martin reports.

DAVID MARTIN reporting:

Defense Department officials say there are no more survivors. Anyone not killed by the impact perished in the flames. It now appears between 100 and 200 people died here, but not the 800 one official had estimated.

Secretary DONALD RUMSFELD (Defense Department): And we won't know for some time precise numbers, but from everything that we currently know, the estimate that's been widely reported is considerably high.

MARTIN: Some of the 60 survivors are being treated for severe burns, and their relatives count them lucky to be alive.

Unidentified Man: I walked in and said, 'I love you.' She moved her head a little bit. I said, 'Please wiggle your toes,' her toes wiggled, and that was the extent of our conversation. I was so ecstatic.

MARTIN: When the sun came up, firefighters were still pouring water on the blaze started by the jet fuel.

Chief ED PLAUGHER (Arlington County Fire Department): We are still engaged in a stubborn firefight with parts of the building.

MARTIN: The wife of an Army accountant who worked right where the plane hit could do nothing but keep a hopeless vigil.

Unidentified Woman: Obviously the fire is still pretty much going, but it's still frustrating to see them just kind of looking at it and not going in.

MARTIN: By midafternoon, the smoke had finally cleared. Now it's the FBI's turn, because the wreckage is considered a crime scene, although the force of the crash destroyed much of the evidence.

Chief PLAUGHER: There are some small pieces of aircraft visible, but not large sections. In other words, there's no fuselage sections and that sort of thing.

MARTIN: Parts of the Pentagon are open, although heavily guarded, as are all US military bases. Not knowing for sure if the attacks are over, the Pentagon has ordered fighters to patrol both the East and the West Coasts, and is sending

warships to both New York and Washington. But the most valuable ship may be the hospital ship, Comfort.

The investigation into who caused all this continues to point toward Osama bin Laden, and there's no doubt the US will retaliate against whoever is responsible, as the secretary of Defense made clear in an address to the troops.

Sec. RUMSFELD: The task of vanquishing these terrible enemies, and in protecting the American people and the cause of human freedom, will fall to you, the men and women in the Department of Defense.

MARTIN: The aircraft carrier Enterprise has been turned around and sent back to the Persian Gulf, giving the US two carrier battle groups in the region. It's clear the Bush administration is planning for an all-out military campaign against terrorism.

Sec. RUMSFELD: I think anyone who thinks it's easy is wrong. I think that it-- it will require a sustained and broadly based effort.

MARTIN: The European allies invoked the clause of the NATO treaty which states that an attack against one is an attack against all. The more allies the US gathers up, the more military options it has.

Secretary COLIN POWELL (State Department): We're building a strong coalition to go after these perpetrators, but more broadly, to go after terrorism wherever we find it in the world.

MARTIN: Osama bin Laden is believed to be hiding out in Afghanistan, which is why US officials have already begun talks with Pakistan, which shares a long border with Afghanistan. David Martin, CBS News, the Pentagon.

Air Traffic Controllers Recall Sept. 11

abc NEWS

http://www.abcnews.go.com/sections/2020/2020/2020_011024_atc_feature.html

Oct. 24 — It has taken six weeks, but air traffic controller Danielle O'Brien is now ready to talk about Sept. 11.

"The speed, the maneuverability, the way that he turned, we all thought in the radar room, all of us experienced air traffic controllers, that that was a military plane," says O'Brien. "You don't fly a 757 in that manner. It's unsafe."

9/17/01 Fox News: Edge With Paula Zahn (Pg. Unavail. Online)
2001 WL 5895787

Fox News Edge

Monday, September 17, 2001

News; Domestic

America United: The Rescue Effort

Laurie Dhue, Rick Leventhal, Todd Connor, Rita Cosby

One of the hijackers who crashed the plane into the Pentagon flew over Washington with an instructor three times in the month before the attacks while trying to rent a private plane from this Maryland airport, which is located about 25 miles outside the nation's capital.

Instructors here say Hani Hanjour flew in a small private Cessna plane like this one but was too poor of a pilot to qualify for flying solo. The instructor said there was nothing very distinguishable about him. They described him as skinny, medium build, but disappointed when he was turned down by instructors.

And at least three of the hijackers may have participated in a U.S. Navy program for foreign military trainees, since their driver's licenses had the address of the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Florida.

9/14/01 NWKWEBEXCL (No FOR EDUCATIONAL USE ONLY
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9/14/01 Newsweek Web Exclusive (Pg. Unavail. Online)
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Friday, September 14, 2001

National Affairs

'There Is No Book for an Incident Like This'; The former director of New York's
Office of Emergency Management on what's being done at 'Ground Zero'

By David France

Following the 1993 terrorist attack at the World Trade Center, Jerome M. Hauer was named the first-ever director and commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) for the City of New York. The office was designated as the center that would coordinate all agencies in times of crisis, and create its systems and protocols.

The OEM directs the city's overall emergency-response planning, as well as specialized planning for response to chemical, biological and nuclear-related incidents. Hauer also directed the design and implementation of New York City's state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center situated on the 23rd floor of 7 World Trade Center, a bunker that went unused in the Tuesday's explosions because of its proximity to the disaster (WTC 7 collapsed later that day).

NEWSWEEK's David France spoke with Hauer over his cell phone from inside the New York City Medical Examiner's office, which he was visiting with Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson.

NEWSWEEK: How different was this tragedy from what the city had been preparing to handle?

Jerome M. Hauer: When we looked at the previous assault and began planning for the future, we looked at chemical and biological attacks, and at bombings. We basically had a collapse, which is the same impact as if somebody had blown the trade centers up. And we talked about how we would deal with massive, major numbers of injuries. That led us to put in place mutual-aid agreements with surrounding communities, with surrounding counties and states, for medical, fire, police, hazardous-materials capabilities, et cetera.

So the influx of volunteer departments from outside the city was anticipated?

Some of it was anticipated. The magnitude was not. We didn't have mutual-aid agreements with Pennsylvania and some of the further-away places [that sent fire trucks, EMS units and police and medical personnel]. But we did with immediate surrounding communities.

When the incredible influx of volunteers came to town, what mechanism was established to coordinate all that, and how is that working now?

Lost Voices of Firefighters, Some on 78th Floor
by The New York Times, August 4, 2002

By JIM DWYER and FORD FESSENDEN

A lost tape of lost voices, ignored until recently by investigators studying the emergency response on Sept. 11, shows that firefighters climbed far higher into the south tower than practically anyone had realized. At least two men reached the crash zone on the 78th floor, where they went to the aid of grievously injured people trapped in a sprawl of destruction.

Until the building's final minutes, one of the two firefighters, Battalion Chief Orio J. Palmer, was organizing the evacuation of people hurt by the plane's impact. He was accompanied by Fire Marshal Ronald P. Bucca. Both men died.

Only now, nearly a year after the attacks, are the efforts of Chief Palmer, Mr. Bucca and others becoming public. City fire officials simply delayed listening to a 78-minute tape that is the only known recording of firefighters inside the towers. The Fire Department has forbidden anyone to discuss the contents publicly on the ground that the tape might be evidence in the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui, the man accused of plotting with the hijackers.

According to four people who have heard it, the tape provides new, sharp and unforgettable images of the last minutes inside the trade center complex.

For months, senior officials believed that firefighters had gone no higher than about the 50th floor in each tower, well below most damage. The transmissions from Chief Palmer and others reveal a startling achievement: firefighters in the south tower actually reached a floor struck by the second hijacked airplane. Once they got there, they had a coherent plan for putting out the fires they could see and helping victims who survived.

About 14 or 15 minutes before the south tower collapsed, a group of people who had survived the plane's impact began their descent from the 78th floor. As they departed, Chief Palmer sent word to Chief Edward Geraghty that a group of 10 people, with a number of injuries, were heading to an elevator on the 41st floor. That elevator was the only one working after the plane hit. On its last trip down, however, the car became stuck in the shaft. Inside the elevator was a firefighter from Ladder 15, who reported that he was trying to break open the walls. It is not clear whether the group of 10 had reached that elevator before it left the 41st floor but those who listened to the tape said it was most unlikely that they had enough time to escape, by the elevator or by stairs.

Only a minute or two of the tape covers transmissions from the north tower; the rest are from the south tower. Senior officials said this suggested that the communications problems that plagued the Fire Department's response to the attack were caused not simply by equipment failures, but possibly also by misunderstandings over how certain radio gear was working.

On the tapes, the commander of operations in the south tower, Donald Burns, is heard repeatedly calling for additional companies, but many firefighters headed for that building became caught in traffic or became confused about which tower they should report to. As events developed, the inability to get more firefighters into the south tower may have spared some lives, officials said.

The tape was recovered months ago by staff members from the Port Authority. . . .

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NEWS

Citing Impact in Collapse / **Fire** expert: Damage by planes at WTC was enough

Graham Rayman. STAFF WRITER

A **fire** expert investigating the collapse of the Twin Towers said the impact of the two hijacked planes was so great that the buildings could have collapsed even without the ensuing **fire**.

"The major insult was the plane knocking out the columns, and destroying the connections to the floors," said Richard Gewain, a member of the federally designated panel of engineers probing the collapses. "Conceivably, the building would have collapsed without the **fire**."

Gewain, a senior engineer at Maryland-based Hughes Associates who has investigated a number of major high-rise **fires**, said the impact was so tremendous that each building's fireproofing was rendered irrelevant.

Gewain's view is in opposition to that of other **fire** experts, who have questioned whether the towers were adequately fireproofed.

The panel, formed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Society of Civil Engineers, is investigating a wide range of theories.

Gewain believes the jet fuel burned off within a few minutes. Much of the fuel, he said, was blown outside the buildings.

From a high of more than 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit in those first minutes, the temperature then dropped, he said, to the level of a normal office **fire** - 1,300 to 1,500 degrees.

"The jet fuel flashed over all of the other combustibles in the space, and then you had a regular office building **fire**," he said, suggesting that flames alone would not have caused collapse. In fact, none of the **fires** he studied before had led to a total collapse.

Gewain said he agrees with other engineers on the panel that the probe would benefit from more access to data about the towers, but he does not believe the investigation has been crippled by lack of access.

"FEMA's effort has been to do a report and get it out as quickly as possible," he said. "On the basis of that report, it may be Congress will appropriate more money."

Bill Manning, editor of the respected 125-year-old journal **Fire Engineering**, said

in an editorial this week that the city's decision to recycle steel from the towers amounts to "destruction of the evidence."

Manning described the federally directed probe as a "half-baked farce commandeered by political forces whose primary interest lies far afield of full disclosure."

Manning and others, including Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D- N.Y.), back a "blue ribbon panel" with greater power to obtain documents and access to the evidence of the collapse.

Gewain said he is waiting to receive specifications on the towers so he can do a series of computer models, but he now believes that a building with a concrete-encased skeleton steel frame would have survived the plane impact.

Despite the unusual circumstances of the attacks, Gewain believes that the probe could affect future skyscrapers.

"It may mean that when it comes to designing tall buildings, that you are limited in terms of construction," he said.

NEW SEISMIC DATA REFUTES OFFICIAL EXPLANATION

Two unexplained "spikes" in the seismic record from Sept. 11 indicate huge bursts of energy shook the ground beneath the World Trade Center's twin towers immediately prior to the collapse.

Exclusive to American Free Press

By Christopher Bollyn

American Free Press has learned of pools of "molten steel" found at the base of the collapsed twin towers weeks after the collapse. Although the energy source for these incredibly hot areas has yet to be explained, New York seismometers recorded huge bursts of energy, which caused unexplained seismic "spikes" at the beginning of each collapse.

These spikes suggest that massive underground explosions may have literally knocked the towers off their foundations, causing them to collapse.

In the basements of the collapsed towers, where the 47 central support columns connected with the bedrock, hot spots of "literally molten steel" were discovered more than a month after the collapse. Such persistent and intense residual heat, 70 feet below the surface, in an oxygen starved environment, could explain how these crucial structural supports failed.

Peter Tully, president of Tully Construction of Flushing, N.Y., told AFP that he saw pools of "literally molten steel" at the World Trade Center.

Tully was contracted after the Sept. 11 tragedy to re move the debris from the site.

Tully called Mark Loizeaux, president of Controlled Demolition, Inc. (CDI) of Phoenix, Md., for consultation about removing the debris. CDI calls itself "the innovator and global leader in the controlled demolition and implosion of structures."

Loizeaux, who cleaned up the bombed Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, arrived at the WTC site two days later and wrote the clean-up plan for the entire operation.

AFP asked Loizeaux about the report of molten steel on the site.

"Yes," he said, "hot spots of molten steel in the basements."

These incredibly hot areas were found "at the bottoms of the elevator shafts of the main towers, down seven [basement] levels," Loizeaux said.

The molten steel was found "three, four, and five weeks later, when the rubble was being removed," Loizeaux said. He said molten steel was also found at 7 WTC, which collapsed mysteriously in the late afternoon.

Construction steel has an extremely high melting point of about 2,800 degrees Fahrenheit.

Asked what could have caused such extreme heat, Tully said, "Think of the jet fuel."

Loizeaux told AFP that the steel-melting fires were fueled by "paper, carpet and other combustibles packed down the elevator shafts by the tower floors as they 'pancaked' into the basement."

However, some independent investigators dispute this claim, saying kerosene-based jet fuel, paper, or the other combustibles normally found in the towers, cannot generate the heat required to melt steel, especially in an oxygen-poor environment like a deep basement.

Eric Hufschmid, author of a book about the WTC collapse, *Painful Questions*,* told AFP that due to the lack of oxygen, paper and other combustibles packed down at the bottom of elevator shafts would probably be "a smoky smoldering pile."

Experts disagree that jet-fuel or paper could generate such heat.

This is impossible, they say, because the maximum temperature that can be reached by hydrocarbons like jet-fuel burning in air is 1,520 degrees F. Because the WTC fires were fuel rich, as evidenced by the thick black smoke, it is argued that they did not reach this upper limit.

The hottest spots at the surface of the rubble, where abundant oxygen was available, were much cooler than the molten steel found in the basements.

Five days after the collapse, on Sept. 16, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) used an Airborne Visible/Infrared Imaging Spectrometer (AVIRIS) to locate and measure the site's hot spots.

Dozens of hot spots were mapped, the hottest being in the east corner of the South Tower where a temperature of 1,377 degrees F was recorded.

This is, however, less than half as hot as the molten steel in the basement.

The foundations of the twin towers were 70 feet deep. At that level, 47 huge box columns, connected to the bedrock, supported the entire gravity load of the structures. The steel walls of these lower box columns were four inches thick.

Videos of the North Tower collapse show its communication mast falling first, indicating that the central support columns must have failed at the very beginning of the collapse. Loizeaux told AFP, "Everything went simultaneously."

"At 10:29 the entire top section of the North Tower had been severed from the base and began falling down," Hufschmid writes. "If the first event was the falling of a floor, how did that progress to the severing of hundreds of columns?"

Asked if the vertical support columns gave way before the connections between the floors and the columns, Ron Hamburger, a structural engineer with the FEMA assessment team said, "That's the \$64,000 question."

Loizeaux said, "If I were to bring the towers down, I would put explosives in the basement to get the weight of the building to help collapse the structure."

SEISMIC 'SPIKES'

Seismographs at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in Palisades, N.Y., 21 miles north of the WTC, recorded strange seismic activity on Sept. 11 that has still not been explained.

While the aircraft crashes caused minimal earth shaking, significant earthquakes with unusual spikes occurred at the beginning of each collapse.

The Palisades seismic data recorded a 2.1 magnitude earthquake during the 10-second collapse of the South Tower at 9:59:04 and a 2.3 quake during the 8-second collapse of the North Tower at 10:28:31.

However, the Palisades seismic record shows that—as the collapses began—a huge seismic "spike" marked the moment the greatest energy went into the ground. The strongest jolts were all registered at the beginning of the collapses, well before the falling debris struck the Earth.

These unexplained "spikes" in the seismic data lend credence to the theory that massive explosions at the base of the towers caused the collapses.

A "sharp spike of short duration" is how seismologist Thorne Lay of University of California at Santa Cruz told AFP an underground nuclear explosion appears on a seismograph.

The two unexplained spikes are more than 20 times the amplitude of the other seismic waves associated with the collapses and occurred in the East-West seismic recording as the buildings began to fall.

Experts cannot explain why the seismic waves peaked before the towers actually hit the ground.

Asked about these spikes, seismologist Arthur Lerner-Lam, director of Columbia University's Center for Hazards and Risk Research told AFP, "This is an element of current research and discussion. It is still being investigated."

Lerner-Lam told AFP that a 10-fold increase in wave amplitude indicates a 100-fold increase in energy released. These "short-period surface waves," reflect "the interaction between the ground and the building foundation," according to a report from Columbia Earth Institute.

"The seismic effects of the collapses are comparable to the explosions at a gasoline tank farm near Newark on Jan. 7, 1983," the Palisades Seismology Group reported on Sept. 14, 2001.

One of the seismologists, Won-Young Kim, told AFP that the Palisades seismographs register daily underground explosions from a quarry 20 miles away.

These blasts are caused by 80,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate and cause local earthquakes between Magnitude 1 and 2. Kim said the 1993 truck-bomb at the WTC did not register on the seismographs because it was "not coupled" to the ground.

"Only a small fraction of the energy from the collapsing towers was converted into ground motion," Lerner-Lam said. "The ground shaking that resulted from the collapse of the towers was extremely small."

Last November, Lerner-Lam said: "During the collapse, most of the energy of the falling debris was absorbed by the towers and the neighboring structures, converting them into rubble and dust or causing other damage—but not causing significant ground shaking."

Evidently, the energy source that shook the ground beneath the towers was many times more powerful than the total potential energy released by the falling mass of the towers. The question is: What was that energy source?

While steel is often tested for evidence of explosions, despite numerous eyewitness reports of explosions in the towers, the engineers involved in the FEMA-sponsored building assessment did no such tests.

Dr. W. Gene Corley, who investigated for the government the cause of the fire at the Branch Davidian compound in Waco and the Oklahoma City bombing, headed the FEMA-sponsored engineering assessment of the WTC collapse.

Corley told AFP that while some tests had been done on the 80 pieces of steel saved from the site, he said he did not know about tests that show if an explosion had affected the steel.

"I am not a metallurgist," Corley said.

Much of the structural steel from the WTC was sold to Alan D. Ratner of Metal Management of Newark, N.J., and the New York-based company Hugo Neu Schnitzer East.

Ratner, who heads the New Jersey branch of the Chicago-based company, sold the WTC steel to overseas companies, reportedly selling more than 50,000 tons of steel to a Shanghai steel company known as Baosteel for \$120 per ton. Ratner paid about \$70 per ton for the steel.

Other shipments of steel from the WTC went to India and other Asian ports.

Ratner came to Metal Management after spending years with a metal trading firm known as SimsMetal based out of Sydney, Australia.

* Painful Questions (Item# 1051, \$20, 160 pages, softcover) Is available from First Amendment Books, 645 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Suite 100, Washington D.C. 20003. Call 1-888-699-6397 to order by Visa or MasterCard.

The White Van

Were Israelis Detained on Sept. 11 Spies?



June 21 — Millions saw the horrific images of the World Trade Center attacks, and those who saw them won't forget them. But a New Jersey homemaker saw something that morning that prompted an investigation into five young Israelis and their possible connection to Israeli intelligence.

Maria, who asked us not to use her last name, had a view of the World Trade Center from her New Jersey apartment building. She remembers a neighbor calling her shortly after the first plane hit the towers.

She grabbed her binoculars and watched the destruction unfolding in lower Manhattan. But as she watched the disaster, something else caught her eye.

Maria says she saw three young men kneeling on the roof of a white van in the parking lot of her apartment building. "They seemed to be taking a movie," Maria said.

The men were taking video or photos of themselves with the World Trade Center burning in the background, she said. What struck Maria were the expressions on the men's faces. "They were like happy, you know ... They didn't look shocked to me. I thought it was very strange," she said.

She found the behavior so suspicious that she wrote down the license plate number of the van and called the police. Before long, the FBI was also on the scene, and a statewide bulletin was issued on the van.

The plate number was traced to a van owned by a company called Urban Moving. Around 4 p.m. on Sept. 11, the van was spotted on a service road off Route 3, near New Jersey's Giants Stadium. A police officer pulled the van over, finding five men, between 22 and 27 years old, in the vehicle. The men were taken out of the van at gunpoint and handcuffed by police.

The arresting officers said they saw a lot that aroused their suspicion about the men. One of the passengers had \$4,700 in cash hidden in his sock. Another was carrying two foreign passports. A box cutter was found in the van. But perhaps the biggest surprise for the officers came when the five men identified themselves as Israeli citizens.

'We Are Not Your Problem'

According to the police report, one of the passengers told the officers they had been on the West Side Highway in Manhattan "during the incident" — referring to the World Trade Center attack. The driver of the van, Sivan Kurzberg, told the officers, "We are Israeli. We are not your problem. Your problems are our problems. The Palestinians are the problem." The other passengers were his brother Paul Kurzberg, Yaron Shmuel, Oded Ellner and Omer Marmari.

When the men were transferred to jail, the case was transferred out of the FBI's Criminal Division, and into the bureau's Foreign Counterintelligence Section, which is responsible for espionage cases, ABCNEWS has learned.

One reason for the shift, sources told ABCNEWS, was that the FBI believed Urban Moving may have been providing cover for an Israeli intelligence operation.

After the five men were arrested, the FBI got a warrant and searched Urban Moving's Weehawken, N.J., offices.

The FBI searched Urban Moving's offices for several hours, removing boxes of documents and a dozen computer hard drives. The FBI also questioned Urban Moving's owner. His attorney insists that his client answered all of the FBI's questions. But when FBI agents tried to interview him again a few days later, he was gone.

Three months later 2020's cameras photographed the inside of Urban Moving, and it looked as if the business had been shut down in a big hurry. Cell phones were lying around; office phones were still connected; and the property of dozens of clients remained in the warehouse.

The owner had also cleared out of his New Jersey home, put it up for sale and returned with his family to Israel.

'A Scary Situation'

Steven Gordon, the attorney for the five Israeli detainees, acknowledged that his clients' actions on Sept. 11 would easily have aroused suspicions. "You got a group of guys that are taking pictures, on top of a roof, of the World Trade Center. They're speaking in a foreign language. They got two passports on 'em. One's got a wad of cash on him, and they got box cutters. Now that's a scary situation."

But Gordon insisted that his clients were just five young men who had come to America for a vacation, ended up working for a moving company, and were taking pictures of the event.

The five Israelis were held at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, ostensibly for overstaying their tourist visas and working in the United States illegally. Two weeks after their arrest, an immigration judge ordered them to be deported. But sources told ABCNEWS that FBI and CIA officials in Washington put a hold on the case.

The five men were held in detention for more than two months. Some of them were placed in solitary confinement for 40 days, and some of them were given as many as seven lie-detector tests.

Plenty of Speculation

Since their arrest, plenty of speculation has swirled about the case, and what the five men were doing that morning. Eventually, *The Forward*, a respected Jewish newspaper in New York, reported the FBI concluded that two of the men were Israeli intelligence operatives.

Vince Cannistraro, a former chief of operations for counterterrorism with the CIA who is now a consultant for ABCNEWS, said federal authorities' interest in the case was heightened when some of the men's names were found in a search of a national intelligence database.

Israeli Intelligence Connection?

According to Cannistraro, many people in the U.S. intelligence community believed that some of the men arrested were working for Israeli intelligence. Cannistraro said there was speculation as to whether Urban Moving had been "set up or exploited for the purpose of launching an intelligence operation against radical Islamists in the area, particularly in the New Jersey-New York area."

Under this scenario, the alleged spying operation was not aimed against the United States, but at penetrating or monitoring radical fund-raising and support networks in Muslim communities like Paterson, N.J., which was one of the places where several of the hijackers lived in the months prior to Sept. 11.

For the FBI, deciphering the truth from the five Israelis proved to be difficult. One of them, Paul Kurzberg, refused to take a lie-detector test for 10 weeks — then failed it, according to his lawyer. Another of his lawyers told us Kurzberg had been reluctant to take the test because he had once worked for Israeli intelligence in another country.

Sources say the Israelis were targeting these fund-raising networks because they were thought to be channeling money to Hamas and Islamic Jihad, groups that are responsible for most of the suicide bombings in Israel. "[The] Israeli government has been very concerned about the activity of radical Islamic groups in the United States that could be a support apparatus to Hamas and Islamic Jihad," Cannistraro said.

The men denied that they had been working for Israeli intelligence out of the New Jersey moving company, and Ram Horvitz, their Israeli attorney, dismissed the allegations as "stupid and ridiculous."

Mark Regev, the spokesman for the Israeli Embassy in Washington, goes even further, asserting the issue was never even discussed with U.S. officials.

"These five men were not involved in any intelligence operation in the United States, and the American intelligence authorities have never raised this issue with us," Regev said. "The story is simply false."

No 'Pre-Knowledge'

Despite the denials, sources tell ABCNEWS there is still debate within the FBI over whether or not the young men were spies. Many U.S. government officials still believe that some of them were on a mission for Israeli intelligence. But the FBI told ABCNEWS, "To date, this investigation has not identified anybody who in this country had pre-knowledge of the events of 9/11."

Sources also said that even if the men were spies, there is no evidence to conclude they had advance knowledge of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11. The investigation, at the end of the day, after all the polygraphs, all of the field work, all the cross-checking, the intelligence work, concluded that they probably did not have advance knowledge of 9/11," Cannistraro noted.

As to what they were doing on the van, they say they read about the attack on the Internet, couldn't see it from their offices and went to the parking lot for a better view. But no one has been able to find a good explanation for why they may have been smiling with the towers of the World Trade Center burning in the background. Both the lawyers for the young men and the Israeli Embassy chalk it up to immature conduct.

According to ABCNEWS sources, Israeli and U.S. government officials worked out a deal — and after 71 days, the five Israelis were taken out of jail, put on a plane, and deported back home.

While the former detainees refused to answer ABCNEWS' questions about their detention and what they were doing on Sept. 11, several of the detainees discussed their experience in America on an Israeli talk show after their return home.

Said one of the men, denying that they were laughing or happy on the morning of Sept. 11, "The fact of the matter is we are coming from a country that experiences terror daily. Our purpose was to document the event." ■

ABCNEWS' Chris Isham, John Miller, Glenn Silber and Chris Vlasto contributed to this report.