

Al Qaeda: A History; 9/11; and Today
ISO6C07L / Version 1
28 Jan 2004

SECTION I. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

All Courses Including This Lesson

<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Version</u>	<u>Course Title</u>

Task(s) Taught(*) or Supported

<u>Task Number</u>	<u>Task Title</u>

Reinforced Task(s)

<u>Task Number</u>	<u>Task Title</u>

Academic Hours

The academic hours required to teach this lesson are as follows:

	<u>Resident Hours/Methods</u>
	5 mins / Conference / Discussion
	2 hrs 45 mins / Lecture
Test	0 hrs
Test Review	0 hrs
Total Hours: 3 hrs	

Test Lesson Number

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Lesson No.</u>
Testing (to include test review)	_____	N/A _____

Prerequisite Lesson(s)

<u>Lesson Number</u>	<u>Lesson Title</u>
None	

Clearance Access

Security Level: Unclassified
 Requirements: Unclassified.

Foreign Disclosure Restrictions

FD6. This product/publication has been reviewed by the product developers in coordination with the Fort Huachuca foreign disclosure authority. This product is releasable to students from foreign countries on a case-by-case basis.

References

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>

Student Study Assignments

none

Instructor Requirements

One instructor per 25 students is required for the conference portions of this block of instruction. All instructors must be instructor certified IAW TR 350-70 and local policy.

Additional Support Personnel Requirements

<u>Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Man Hours</u>
None			

Equipment Required for Instruction

<u>Id Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Exp</u>
6730-01-T08-4239 Projector LitePro	25:1	1:25	No	1	No

* Before Id indicates a TADSS

Materials Required

Instructor Materials:
Course Introduction Lesson Plan and slideshow.

Student Materials:
Notebook and pen.

Classroom, Training Area, and Range Requirements

CLASSROOM, GEN INSTRUCTION, 1000 SQ FT, 30 PN

Ammunition Requirements

<u>Id</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Exp</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt Qty</u>
None					

Instructional Guidance

NOTE: Before presenting this lesson, instructors must thoroughly prepare by studying this lesson and identified reference material.

NOTE: Before presenting this lesson, instructors must thoroughly prepare by studying this lesson and identified reference material.

Proponent Lesson Plan Approvals

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>
-------------	-------------	-----------------	-------------

SECTION II. INTRODUCTION

Method of Instruction: <u>Lecture</u>
Instructor to Student Ratio is: <u>1:25</u>
Time of Instruction: <u>5 mins</u>
Media: <u>Large Group Instruction</u>

Motivator

This overview of the history of al Qaeda is designed to give you, the student, the necessary foundation in basic understanding of the environment you will be assigned. The skills obtained here will be used by you at your new duty station and will be used as groundwork on which other new skills will be added. Topics to be covered include:

- 1) The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan
- 2) Makhtab al Khadimat
- 3) Usama bin laden
- 4) Origins of al Qaeda
- 5) al Qaeda in the United States
- 6) Sudan
- 7) 1993 World Trade Center Attack
- 8) Meir Kahane's Murder
- 9) Omar Sheikh Saeed
- 10) Restore Hope in Somalia
- 11) Expansion
- 12) Airplanes and Buildings
- 13) Bosnia
- 14) Taliban
- 15) Bojinka
- 16) Oklahoma City Attack
- 17) Move to Afghanistan
- 18) Khobar Towers
- 19) Chechnya
- 20) Khalid Sheikh Mohammed
- 21) International Islamic Front for Jihad
- 22) African Embassy Bombings
- 23) Millennium Plots
- 24) The USS Cole
- 25) Ahmed Massoud Assassination
- 26) 11 September 2001 Attacks
- 27) Indian Parliament Attack
- 28) Richard Reid
- 29) Daniel Pearl
- 30) Islamabad Church
- 31) Tunisia Synagogue
- 32) French Naval Project
- 33) Dirty Bombs
- 34) US Consulate, Karachi
- 35) Murree Christian School
- 36) Limberg Tanker
- 37) Bali
- 38) Lawrence Foley Assassination
- 39) Kenya Attacks
- 40) Operation Enduring Freedom
- 41) Current Status of Leadership

Terminal Learning Objective

NOTE: Inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective requirements.

At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:

Action:	Identify the origins and history of al Qaeda.
Conditions:	Given notes and handouts.
Standards:	Identify 95% of al Qaeda's origin and history

Safety Requirements

None.

Risk Assessment Level

Low - Low IV, E.

Environmental Considerations

NOTE: It is the responsibility of all soldiers and DA civilians to protect the environment from damage.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of all soldiers and DA civilians to protect the environment from damage.

None.

Evaluation

student checks

Instructional Lead-In

The unfolding of events since 11 September 2001 make it clear that it is now more important than ever for American soldiers to understand the nature of the individuals who pose the greatest threat to the national security of the United States: the Terrorist. A basic understanding of al Qaeda's origins and history will greatly benefit you, the MI soldier, in your mission there.

SECTION III. PRESENTATION

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Al Qaeda's Origins and History

Method of Instruction: Lecture
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:25
Time of Instruction: 2 hrs 40 mins
Media: Large Group Instruction

Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

December 27 1979

Soviets take over in Afghanistan In an attempt to stabilize the turbulent political situation in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union sends 75,000 troops to enforce the installation of Babrak Karmal as the new leader of the nation. The new government and the imposing Soviet presence, however, had little success in putting down antigovernment rebels. Thus began nearly 10 years of an agonizing, destructive, and ultimately fruitless Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan.

Ironically, Karmal overthrew and murdered another Afghan communist, Hafizullah Amin, to take power. Amin's government became unpopular and unstable after it attempted to install a harsh communist regime, declared one-party rule and abolished the Afghan constitution. Muslims in the nation rejected his rule and formed a rebel force, the Mujahideen. When it became apparent that Amin could not control the rebellion, Soviet troops intervened and put a puppet ruler, Karmal, into power. For the Soviets, political turbulence in this bordering nation, which was viewed by some officials as a potentially useful ally pursuing its interests in the Middle East, was unacceptable. The Soviet intervention cost Russia dearly. The seemingly endless civil war in Afghanistan resulted in thousands of Soviet dead and untold monetary costs. It also brought an abrupt end to the era of détente between the United States and the Soviet Union that began during the Nixon years. In response to the Soviet intervention, President Jimmy Carter withdrew the SALT II agreement from consideration by Congress. The treaty, which had been signed in June 1979, was designed to establish parity in nuclear delivery vehicles between the United States and the Soviet Union. Carter also halted grain shipments to the Soviet Union and ordered a U.S. boycott of the 1980 Olympics that were to be held in Moscow.

Afghanistan War

Afghanistan War, 1978-92, conflict between anti-Communist Muslim Afghan guerrillas (mujahidin) and Afghan government and Soviet forces. The conflict had its origins in the 1978 coup that overthrew Afghan president Muhammad Daud Khan, who had come to power by ousting the king in 1973. The president was assassinated and a pro-Soviet Communist government under Nur Mohammad Taraki was established. In 1979 another coup, which brought Hafizullah Amin to power, provoked an invasion (Dec., 1979) by Soviet forces and the installation of Babrak Karmal as president. The Soviet invasion, which sparked Afghan resistance, initially involved an estimated 30,000 troops, a force that ultimately grew to 100,000. The mujahidin were supported by aid from the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia, channeled through Pakistan, and from Iran. Although the USSR had superior weapons and complete air control, the rebels successfully eluded them. The conflict largely settled into a stalemate, with Soviet and government forces controlling the urban areas, and the Afghan guerrillas operating fairly freely in mountainous rural regions. As the war progressed, the rebels improved their organization and tactics and began using imported and captured weapons, including U.S. antiaircraft missiles, to neutralize the technological advantages of the USSR.

Brief History of the Events that Preceded the Soviet/Afghan War

Afghanistan made its start as a constitutional monarchy in 1953 when Prince Mohammud Daoud, the cousin of King Zahir, became Prime Minister. Daoud wanted to modernize his army and requested to purchase military equipment from the U.S.. The U.S. rejected Afghanistan's request and Daoud turned to the Soviet Union for military aid. Khrushchev agreed to assist and commenced close ties between Afghanistan and the USSR. Daoud's overly ambitious and controversial social policies, and the increase of tensions with Pakistan (due to his alleged support for the creation of a Pashtun state in the Pakistan-Afghan border area) caused King Zahir to demand Daoud's resignation. In March 1963, Dr. Mohammad Yusuf became Prime Minister.

King Zahir initiated the 1964 liberal constitution that permitted multi-party elections. A group of intellectuals, that included Babrak Karmal, established The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in January 1965. At the first nationwide elections under the new constitution, Babrak Karmal was elected to the Parliament. In the second national elections in 1969 Babrak Karmal and another PDPA member, Hafizullah Amin, both of whom would play important roles in the future Soviet intervention, were elected to the parliament.

Daoud returned to power in a military coup on July 17, 1973. He displaced the vacationing King Zahir, dissolved the monarchy, and established a Republic with himself as President and Prime Minister.

Daoud failed to carry out acceptable economic and social reforms, and his February 1977 constitution did not alleviate the chronic political instability that afflicted Afghanistan. His attempts to oust suspected opponents from his government aroused resentment. When he tried to eliminate the PDPA in Spring 1978 by arresting its leaders, a bloody coup occurred and Daoud was killed. PDPA leader Nur Mohammad Taraki declared the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and announced himself as President, with Babrak Karmal as deputy Prime Minister. Hafizullah Amin also had a major role in the new government.

Soon after seizing power, Taraki promoted the establishment of full women's rights and the implementation of land reform. The reforms threatened Afghan cultural traditions, and widespread resistance to them began in the summer of 1978. On 28 March 1979, with Taraki retaining some of his party posts, Hafizullah Amin became Prime Minister. Anarchy spread through the country and Amin asked for, and received, additional Soviet aid.

Conditions continued to deteriorate, and on September 14, 1979, Taraki was killed in a confrontation with Amin's supporters.

Amin was killed three days later. Babrak Karmal returned from the Soviet Union and became the new Prime Minister, President of the Revolutionary Council and Secretary General of the PDPA. Widespread Mujahedeen resistance against Babrak's regime brought Soviet support to the embattled leader and initiated the Soviet-Afghan war

Services Office

Al-Qaeda grew out of the Services Office, a clearinghouse for the international Muslim brigade opposed to the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In the 1980s, the Services Office—run by bin Laden and the Palestinian religious scholar Abdullah Azzam—recruited, trained, and financed thousands of foreign *mujahedeen*, or holy warriors, from more than 50 countries. Bin Laden wanted these fighters to continue the “holy war” beyond Afghanistan. The group maintained offices throughout the world, particularly in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States, especially the al Kifah Refugee Center in Brooklyn, Tucson, Arizona and multiple locations in Texas.

Usama bin Laden

Bin Laden, Osama or Usama, 1957?- , Saudi-born leader of Al Qaeda [Arab.,=the base], a terrorist organization devoted to uniting all Muslims and establishing a

transnational, strict-fundamentalist Islamic state. The youngest son of a wealthy Yemeni-born businessman, bin Laden was trained as a civil engineer (grad. 1979, King Abdul Aziz Univ., Jidda), but following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan he went to Pakistan where he helped to finance the mujahidin and to found Makhtab al Khadimat [services office] (MAK), which recruited and trained non-Afghani Muslims to fight in the war.

His father Mohammed Awad bin Laden came to the kingdom from Hadramout (South Yemen) sometime around 1930. The father started his life as a very poor laborer (porter in Jeddah port), to end up as owner of the biggest construction company in the kingdom. During the reign of King Saud, bin Laden the father became very close to the royal family when he took the risk of building King Saud's palaces much cheaper than the cheapest bid. He impressed King Saud with his performance but he also built good relations with other members of the royal family, especially Faisal. During the Saud-Faisal conflict in the early sixties, bin Laden the father had a big role in convincing King Saud to step down in favor of Faisal. After Saud's departure the treasury was empty and bin Laden was so supportive to King Faisal that he literally paid the civil servants' wages of the whole kingdom for six months. King Faisal then issued a decree that all construction projects should go to bin Laden. Indeed, he was appointed for a period as the minister of public works.

In 1969 the father took the task of rebuilding Al-Aqsa mosque after the fire incident. Interestingly the bin Laden family say that they have the credit of building all the three mosques, because later on their company took over the task of major extension in Mecca and Medina mosques.

The father was fairly devoted Moslem, very humble and generous. He was so proud of the bag he used when he was a porter that he kept it as a trophy in the main reception room in his palace. The father used to insist on his sons to go and manage some projects themselves.

The father had very dominating personality. He insisted to keep all his children in one premises. He had a tough discipline and observed all the children with strict religious and social code. He maintained a special daily program and obliged his children to follow. At the same time the father was entertaining with trips to the sea and desert. He dealt with his children as big men and demanded them to show confidence at young age. He was very keen not to show any difference in the treatment of his children.

Osama was exposed very early on his age to this experience but he lost his father when he was 13. He married at the age of 17 to a Syrian girl who was a relative. He grew up as religiously committed boy and the early marriage was another factor of protecting him from corruption.

Osama had his primary, secondary and even university education in Jeddah. He had a degree in public administration 1981 from King Abdul-Aziz university in Jeddah. Countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Sudan are the only countries he has been to. All stories of trips to Switzerland, Philippines, and London are all unfounded.

In addition to the general Islamic commitment he started forming an Islamic responsibility at early age. His father used to host hundreds of pilgrims during Hajj season from all over the world. Some of those were senior Islamic scholars or leaders of Muslim movements. This habit went on even after his father's death through his elder brothers. He used to make good contacts and relations through those gatherings.

At secondary school and university he adopted the main trend of many educated Muslims at that time, Muslim Brotherhood. There was a collection of Muslim scholars in Jeddah and Mecca at that period. There was nothing extraordinary in his

personality and that trend was rather very non-confrontational. Interestingly, the 1980 raid in the Grand Mosque in Mecca was not appealing to him, neither the theology or that group. He had two distinguished teachers in Islamic studies, which was a compulsory subject in the university. First was Abdullah Azzam who became later as one of the big names in Afghanistan and the second was Mohammed Quttub, a famous Islamic writer and philosopher.

The first encounter with Afghanistan was as early as the first two weeks of Soviet invasion. He went to Pakistan and was taken by his hosts Jamaat Islami from Karachi to Peshawar to see the refugees and meet some leaders. Some of those leaders like Rabbani and Sayyaf were common faces to him because he met them during Hajj gatherings. That trip which was [a] secret trip lasted for almost a month and was an exploratory rather than action trip. He went back to the kingdom and started lobbying with his brothers, relatives and friends at the school to support the mujahedeen. He succeeded in collecting huge amount of money and material as donations to jihad. He made another trip to take this material. He took with him few Pakistanis and Afghanis who were working in bin Laden company for more than ten years. Again, he did not stay more than a month. The trip was to Pakistan and the border only and was not to Afghanistan. He went on collecting money and going in short trips once or twice a year until 1982.

In 1982 he decided to go inside Afghanistan. He brought with him plenty of the construction machinery and put them at the disposal of the mujahedeen. He started spending more and more time in Afghanistan occasionally joining actual battles but not in an organized manner. His presence was encouraging to more Saudis to come but the numbers were still small at that period.

In 1984 he had one further step in strengthening his presence in Afghanistan by establishing the guesthouse in Peshawar (Baitul'ansar). That house was supposed to be the first station of Arab mujahedeen when they come to Afghanistan before going to the front or start training. At that period Osama did not have his own command or training camps. He used to send the newcomers to one of the Afghan factions.

The guesthouse establishment was coinciding with the formation of Jihad Service Bureau by Abdullah Azzam in Peshawar. The Bureau was very active in terms of media, publications and charity work. The Bureau publications were important in attracting more Saudis and Arabs to Afghanistan.

In 1986 Osama decided to have his own camps inside Afghanistan and within two years he built more than six camps. Some were mobilized more than once. He decided to have his own front and to run his own battles with his own command. Among the Arab fighters he had, there were senior Arab ex-military men from Syria and Egypt with good military experience. The story of the guesthouse and the camps was very attractive for more Arab mujahedeen to come and there was a significant surge in their numbers at that period.

In addition to many exchanges of fire and small operations, the first major battle he had face to face with the Soviet army with pure Arab personnel was the battle of Jaji in the province of Baktia 200 kilometers away from Khost. From then until 1989 he had more than five major battles with hundreds of small operations and exchanges of fire. During the period 1984-1989 he was staying more in Afghanistan than Saudi Arabia. He would spend a total of eight months a year or more in Afghanistan.

Birth of al Qaeda

In 1987 he split with MAK to begin a jihad [holy war] against Israel and Western influence in Islamic countries; he founded Al Qaeda the next year. Following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, he returned to his family's construction business

in Saudi Arabia. When U.S. troops were stationed (1990) on Saudi soil during the Persian Gulf War he became violently opposed to the Saudi monarchy and the United States. After he was caught smuggling arms in 1991, he went to Sudan, where he began financing terrorist training camps while investing in businesses and increasing his fortune. His Saudi citizenship was revoked in 1994.

Wadih el Hage

Al-Qaida's first known connection to Arizona took root in 1985, when a veteran of the Afghan resistance named Wadih El-Hage moved here to wed an American Muslim named April Ray in an arranged marriage.

He worked a series of low-wage jobs, including a stint as a janitor. Records show that the couple lived in an apartment at 2002 Fort Lowell Road in Tucson in 1989, where residents today have no memories of them.

Federal authorities say El-Hage, nicknamed "The Manager" within al-Qaida, may have helped facilitate the unsolved 1990 murder of Tucson imam Rashad Khalifa, who preached a version of the Koran contrary to traditional Islamic doctrine.

On a cold, rainy day in February, 1999 in New York City, Wadih El Hage was led into Manhattan Federal Court for a pre-trial hearing. Surrounded by several large security officers, El Hage appeared slight in his prison jumpsuit. A bearded man with intense, dark eyes, he whispered quietly to his lawyer throughout the hearing. In the sterile courtroom setting, it was hard to imagine this man was involved in the horrific bombings in East Africa in August 1998 which left 224 people dead and thousands injured. A month after the bombings, El Hage was arrested after testifying before a grand jury. Originally charged with eleven counts of perjury, or lying to the grand jury, the charges were later expanded to include conspiracy to kill United States nationals. Prosecutors claim that El Hage, one of two American citizens who have been charged, was useful to bin Laden because of his ability to travel freely around the world with an American passport.

El Hage's lawyer requested the February hearing to discuss the restrictive conditions of El Hage's jailing and to ask the judge for a decision on bail. After several hearings, Judge Leonard B. Sand denied bail and El Hage was taken to solitary confinement at the Metropolitan Correctional Center to await trial.

El Hage was born in 1960 into a Catholic family in Sidon, Lebanon. He grew up in highly Islamic Kuwait, where his father worked for an oil company. According to El Hage's mother-in-law, he converted to Islam as a teenager after reading the Koran. His family disapproved of El Hage's conversion and shunned him. But he was taken in by a Muslim Sheik in Kuwait who paid for his education in the States, and he became a deeply religious young man.

In 1978, El Hage moved to Lafayette, Louisiana, to attend the University of Southwestern Louisiana (USL). He studied urban planning and got a job at a donut shop where many young Arab men worked. His advisor at USL remembers El Hage as an average student who showed no signs of strong political views.

At the beginning of the Afghan war against the Soviet Union, El Hage left Louisiana and traveled to Pakistan to enroll in mujahedeen war training programs. Thousands of young Arab men from around the world flocked to Pakistan to help the Afghans expel the Soviets. Sources told FRONTLINE that El Hage was a follower of Sheik Abdullah Azzam, one of the most important spiritual leaders of the Arab mujahedeen forces. Azzam preached that the war in Afghanistan was a jihad, or holy war, and that those who participated would have a special place in heaven.

During the Afghan war, Sheik Azzam became aligned with Osama bin Laden, who was at that time becoming active in fundraising and organizing mujahedeen fighters. Some reports have speculated that this may have been the initial connection between El Hage and Osama bin Laden.

By January 1985, El Hage returned to the United States and to USL. Later that year, he traveled to Arizona to marry an 18-year-old American Muslim named April. April's mother told FRONTLINE the two were introduced through an arranged marriage. In May 1986, El Hage graduated from USL and moved permanently to Arizona to start a family.

El Hage and his wife returned to Pakistan several times over the next few years, and for about a year, his mother-in-law and her husband accompanied them. "I was the Matron surgical nurse at an Afghan Surgical Hospital," she told FRONTLINE. "Wadih did not actually fight, but acted as an educator. My husband went with Wadih to deliver textbooks and Korans to the young people. It was a Jihad, a fight for Islam." When they returned to Arizona, El Hage worked at several minimum wage jobs, including city custodian. In 1989, he was granted U.S. citizenship.

Dr. Rashad Khalifa was an imam in Tucson, Arizona who some felt was unorthodox. He used numerology to try to prove that the Koran was written by God. The imam also let men and women pray together and wear non-traditional dress.

New York prosecutors say that in the first days of 1990, El Hage was called up by a "tall man" from New York who suddenly arrived in Arizona and said he was there to check Rashad Khalifa. El Hage entertained him at his house and drove him to the mosque, prosecutors say.

Several weeks later, Khalifa was found murdered in the kitchen of the Mosque. Several members of the radical Islamic sect, Al Fuqra, were convicted for conspiring to commit the murder, but no shooter has ever been convicted. Prosecutors have repeatedly implied El Hage knows who committed the murder and may have been involved.

El Hage's family calls the claim ridiculous, saying El Hage was out of the country at the time of the murder. Prosecutors have repeatedly said El Hage at least should have contacted the authorities with what he knew after he found out that the man was murdered.

Soon after, El Hage moved his growing family to the suburban community of Arlington, Texas.

In December 1989, according to prosecutors, El Hage met Mahmud Abouhalima at an Islamic conference in Oklahoma City. According to a confession Abouhalima later gave U.S. Attorneys, Abouhalima contacted El Hage in 1990 to purchase assault weapons to be used against radical Jewish Rabbi Meir Kahane. Kahane was murdered in November 1990 in New York City.

El Hage's family told FRONTLINE that he did buy some weapons for Abouhalima, but they were never picked up. Family members also say El Hage was told the guns were for self-defense against the Kahane group.

In early 1991, according to El Hage's grand jury testimony, he was called to New York to help direct the Alkifah Refugee Center, a Brooklyn-based group that raised money to support veterans of the Afghan war. According to documents from the World Trade Center case, Alkifah had a Tucson office and contacts with the main mosque in Arlington, Texas, and family members confirmed that El Hage had been in contact with the group.

On the same day that El Hage arrived in Brooklyn, on March 1, 1991, the leader of the Alkifah Center, Mustafa Shalabi, disappeared. A week later his mutilated body was found in the apartment he and Mahmud Abouhalima shared in Brooklyn. The murder case has never been solved, but prosecutors believe the murder was the result of a dispute over allocation of the group's resources.

The family maintains that El Hage was called in as a mediator on this and other occasions when his friends from Afghanistan developed disputes. "I know he was good friends with Shalabi," says El Hage's mother-in-law. "He [Shalabi] was running the organization to help Afghan veterans and Wadih wanted to help him. Wadih cried

on the phone about Shalabi's death. Shalabi must have called him to go to New York to help when the trouble started."

Other friends of the family from Arlington, Texas, also described El Hage as a mediator and a person whose religious purity and strong faith were trusted by others "He was calm and devout, not violent or rash," said a close family member. "I would get more upset over politics than he would."

Whether El Hage was a mediator or collaborator, evidence shows he was friends with many people who were later convicted in the World Trade Center and New York City Landmark bombing cases. On March 8, 1991, El Hage signed in to visit El Sayyid Nosair at the Riker's Island. Nosair was serving a sentence for gun charges stemming from the Meir Kahane murder case. Both El Sayyid Nosair and Mahmud Abouhalima were central figures in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and both have been convicted in that crime.

There are other unusual connections between the men. In January of 1992, El Hage was arrested in Arlington, Texas, for writing several bad checks. He was riding in the car with a companion named Marwan Salama. According to phone records from the World Trade Center case, Salama had extensive phone contacts with the World Trade center bombers in the two months before the actual bombing.

In early 1992, El Hage moved his family to the Sudan and he began working as a secretary for Osama bin Laden. Family members say El Hage worked only in bin Laden's legitimate businesses in the Sudan. FRONTLINE research shows that bin Laden had quite a few businesses there, including a tannery, several farms, a road construction firm, a transport company and two investment companies.

"He [bin Laden] was a busy person and had hundreds of people working for him," said one El Hage family member. "You didn't get to see him unless he invited you." El Hage's mother-in-law received letters from El Hage that contained seed samples from the Sudanese farms. El Hage frequently took international trips to Europe and elsewhere on business for bin Laden, family members say.

Prosecutors, however, believe that El Hage was becoming a key aide to bin Laden, who in turn was becoming an international terrorist leader. "The intelligence that was being created pointed increasingly to him as someone who had to be dealt with," said Larry Johnson, a former CIA officer and Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of Counter Terrorism from 1989 to 1993. "There were other intelligence indicators that were starting to surface in the '94 time frame that pointed out that Usama was a problem."

Little evidence has emerged that proves what El Hage was doing in Sudan. His family admits freely that he worked for bin Laden, but cannot provide details as to everything he did. Prosecutors have alleged in court papers that El Hage "is being investigated for his efforts to try to obtain chemical weapons for Osama bin Laden's organization." But no evidence has been provided to back up this claim.

Finally, it was April El Hage who convinced her husband to leave the Sudan and bin Laden's company. According to family members, bin Laden had been encouraging Wadih to take a second wife and had even started to arrange someone for him. "April would have none of that," said April's mother. "She is Muslim, but she is also American, and she wouldn't stand for it."

In 1994, El Hage left the Sudan for Kenya and became director of a Muslim charity organization called "Help Africa People." Kenyan government documents say the organization was dedicated to malaria control projects. El Hage also worked in the gem business to make extra income.

During his time in Kenya, El Hage stayed in contact with members of bin Laden's inner circle. In particular, say prosecutors, El Hage associated with Ubaidah al-Banshiri, a key figure within bin Laden's organization who was living in Kenya. U.S. prosecutors believe Al-Banshiri was a key military leader, one of two top-ranking

commanders, of "al Qaeda," bin Laden's organization. In May of 1996, al-Banshiri drowned in a ferry accident on Lake Victoria.

Another bin Laden associate, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, also known as Haroun Fazul, moved into El Hage's house in Nairobi during this period and began to work for El Hage as a secretary. "He had no money and needed a place to stay," says El Hage's mother-in-law. "Wadih was always letting people stay with them. That is the proper Muslim way."

Haroun Fazul, according to prosecutors, was a key player in the Nairobi embassy bombing in August of 1998--accused of renting the house where the bomb was built and driving the lead truck in the bombing.

When told of the charges that Haroun Fazul was a key organizer of the bomb plot, El Hage's family laughed. "April always called him the black Ronald McDonald," said April's mother. "She thought he was kind of goofy. And she finds it very hard to believe that he could have been a terrorist."

Another man charged in the bombing, Mohammed Sadiq Odeh, has admitted during his interrogation that he knew El Hage in Kenya and that El Hage had attended his wedding. Odeh was captured trying to enter Pakistan just after the bombings and provided investigators with the first link that the bombings were conducted by people working for Osama bin Laden.

U.S. officials in Washington D.C. had first started investigating Osama bin Laden in the mid-1990s based on growing evidence that he was funding terrorist activity. The New York Times reported that in 1996, CIA and State Department officials secretly met with a Sudanese agent in Washington and asked for the names of 200 bin Laden associates from the Sudan. In their efforts to get more information on bin Laden, U.S. investigators attempted to locate and interview as many bin Laden associates as possible. That investigation eventually led them to Nairobi, Kenya-- and, in August 1997, to Wadih El Hage. This was a full year before the Nairobi bombing.

"I arrived in Nairobi and not even 12 hours later there was a knock on the outer gate," said El Hage's mother-in-law, who was visiting the family. "They came into the house...it was the police department of Nairobi and American FBI agents." El Hage was away at the time, family members told us, on a gem collecting trip to Afghanistan. FBI officials had a search warrant and collected all the papers in the house. They also took El Hage's personal computer, and told the family that they were searching for stolen property. They also gave April El Hage and her mother a firm warning.

"They spoke to us that night and told us it would probably be best if we got back to the United States right away," said El Hage's mother-in-law. "They said it might not be safe to live here. She [April] got frightened. She's got all these little children, and she's frightened and I'm upset. So she says, no, I'm not leaving without my husband. I'm afraid I don't quite remember the words but the inference was plain, that something might happen to her or the children."

On El Hage's personal computer, the authorities found a letter that has been released as part of the federal case against the Africa bombers. In the letter, which prosecutors now believe was written by El Hage housemate Haroun Fazul, the author describes the presence of an "East African cell" connected to bin Laden.

The letter also states that the cell members had recently become aware that bin Laden had declared war on America by watching the international media. They seem upset because they were not advised of the decision before it happened and are worried about the security of the cell.

"There are many reasons that lead me to believe that the cell members in East Africa are in great danger," says the letter. "...the Hajj [bin Laden] has declared war on America. My recommendation to my brothers in East Africa was to not be complacent regarding security matters and that they should know that now they have become America's primary target... I am 100 percent sure that the phone is tapped."

El Hage's real name is evident in the letter, as is his assumed name from Afghanistan, Abd'al Sabur, which means "servant of the most patient." The letter seems to imply that El Hage is an "engineer" of the cell.

Two days after the raid on El Hage's house, he returned to Nairobi from Afghanistan and was questioned by police. He was also told to leave the country, according to the family. One month later, in September 1997, Wadih El Hage and his wife left the country and returned to America. According to family members, they sold everything they had in order to raise the money to get home.

Intelligence sources have told FRONTLINE that the Nairobi raid was a "counter-terrorism disruption" and that forcing Wadih El Hage to leave the country was part of the strategy to fracture these cells as soon as they are found. They did not, however, deport Haroun Fazul. In hindsight, the authorities clearly did not understand the danger posed by El Hage's associate at that time, and the evidence is unclear whether they were aware of Fazul at the time of the raid.

El Hage moved back to the suburban community of Arlington, Texas and got a job in a local tire store. The family moved into a small apartment near the University of Texas and the children enrolled in a local Muslim school.

According to friends and neighbors contacted by FRONTLINE, the family lived a normal Muslim life, regularly attending Mosque and schooling their children in the Koran. "He was a hard worker, had a good business sense and was very devout," said his co-worker at the Lone Star Tire Store, Mahmoud Mazouni. "He became something of a religious leader, like an imam and sometimes led the prayers."

The Muslim community in Arlington was shocked when El Hage was arrested and insist he is innocent of any charges. Many members of the community offered to try to raise bail for El Hage after he was arrested, to show their support.

Mr. Mazouni said that El Hage showed no special reaction on August 7, 1998, when the East Africa bombings took place. At home, however, he and his family were worried. "When the bombings first happened, we were shocked," said a close family member who asked not to be named. "We said, oh god, Nairobi--don't let it be Muslims who are involved. Then, when we found it was Muslims, we knew trouble was coming."

Two weeks after the bombings, FBI agents interviewed El Hage about his connections to bin Laden and the people in Nairobi. According to prosecutors, El Hage denied knowing Odeh and claimed to not recognize him in a picture during this interview.

On September 15, 1998, El Hage testified before the grand jury investigation into the Africa bombings. Here, prosecutors say, he testified that he never heard that al-Banshiri died and that he didn't know Odeh and other people who knew bin Laden. Several days later, El Hage was arrested and charged with perjury. On October 7, 1998, a new indictment was returned by the grand jury, expanding the charges against El Hage to include conspiracy to kill United States nationals. In May, 2001, he was found guilty by a federal jury of both perjury and conspiracy.

Nabil al Marabh/Raed Hijazi

Nabil al-Marabh moves to Boston in 1989 and apparently lives there as a taxi driver and al-Qaeda sleeper agent for the next ten years. [New York Times, 9/18/01, Boston Herald, 9/19/01] In 1992 he learns to use weapons in an Afghan al-Qaeda training camp with a terrorist named Raed Hijazi. [Chicago Sun-Times, 9/5/02] He and Hijazi live together and drive taxis at the same company in Boston for several years. [Los Angeles Times, 9/21/01] A mutual friend at the same taxi company is later killed participating in a 1999 al-Qaeda terrorist attack. [Boston Herald, 9/19/01] Hijazi helps plan the *USS Cole* bombing, and then participates in a failed attempt to bomb a hotel in Jordan. In May 1999, the FBI approaches al-Marabh looking for Hijazi, but al-Marabh lies and says he doesn't know Hijazi. [Washington Post, 9/4/02] Hijazi is arrested in Syria in October 2000 and imprisoned in Jordan for his bomb attempt

there. [Toronto Sun, 10/16/01] He begins to cooperate with investigators and identifies al-Marabh as a US al-Qaeda operative. [New York Times, 9/18/01] Terrorist Ahmed Ressam gives evidence helping to prove that al-Marabh sent money to Hijazi for the Jordan bombing. [Toronto Sun, 11/16/01, ABC 7, 1/31/02] By February 1999, al-Marabh is driving taxis in Tampa, Florida while maintaining a cover of living in Boston. [Toronto Star, 10/26/01, ABC 7, 1/31/02] [New York Times, 9/18/01] He apparently lives in Tampa at least part time until February 2000; investigators later wonder if he is an advance man for the Florida-based hijackers. [New York Times, 9/18/01, ABC 7, 1/31/02] Al-Marabh is living in Detroit by May 2000, though he maintains a Boston address until September 2000. [Boston Herald, 9/19/01] These connections with Hijazi lead to a US Customs investigation into al-Marabh in early 2001 that connects him with two of the 9/11 hijackers. Yet, despite all of these al-Qaeda connections and more, the US later decides there is no evidence that al-Marabh is a terrorist.

Hani Hanjour

Hani Hanjour enters the US, the first of the hijackers to do so. He takes an English course in Tuscon, Arizona. [Time, 9/24/01, Cox News, 10/15/01, New York Times, 6/19/02] However, the FBI claims Hanjour first arrived on October 3, 1991. [Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02]

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

September 29, 2001 Saturday, Final Chaser

Correction Appended

SECTION: FRONT; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 2080 words

HEADLINE: **BIN LADEN TERROR CELL SUSPECTED IN ARIZONA**

BYLINE: By Dennis Wagner and Tom Zoellner, The Arizona Republic; This story contains information from the Associated Press.

BODY:

Arizona appears to have been the home of a "sleeper cell" of Osama bin Laden's worldwide terrorist organization, with a select group of operatives living quietly in bland apartment complexes and obtaining flight training in preparation for the Sept. 11 attack.

The organization's known history in the state goes back nine years, and scholars say the activities of at least three part-time Arizona residents fit the pattern of the al-Qaida terrorist network.

"We can only speculate at this point, but I'm convinced the FBI is operating under the assumption that Arizona was host to an al-Qaida cell," said Jack Williams, a professor of law at Georgia State University in Atlanta, who has studied the network's financing methods.

Among the suspects:

* Lotfi Raissi, a one-time resident of the Wickertree Apartments in north Phoenix, was arrested in England this week. British prosecutors say the Algerian pilot is a mid-level player in the al-Qaida organization who gave flight training to four of the terrorists in Arizona.

He is the first person publicly accused of helping the hijackers prepare for the attacks.

* Hani Hanjour, identified by the FBI as a hijacker who died when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon, lived in Tucson and Phoenix and took flight training courses in Scottsdale. Authorities say they have a videotape of Hanjour with Raissi on a flight from Phoenix to Las Vegas in June.

* Nawaf Alhazmi, a Saudi national who was aboard the same flight, was a Hanjour associate and possibly had flight training in Arizona. FBI agents discovered a cashier's check made out to a Phoenix-area flight school in his

vehicle after the terrorist attack.

* Khalid Almihdhar lived with Hanjour in San Diego and reportedly attended a flight school in Arizona. Investigators told the Washington Post that they are confident that Almihdhar is a member of the al-Qaida network. He also was on the plane that crashed into the Pentagon.

* Wadih El-Hage, a former Tucson resident and bin Laden lieutenant, was imprisoned in connection with the 1998 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania.

Years earlier, he engineered the purchase of a military surplus jet from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and may have had a role in the assassination of the leader of a controversial Islamic sect in Tucson in 1990.

* Unnamed bin Laden "henchmen" who reportedly researched buying a Boeing 727 jetliner in Arizona just six months before the Sept. 11 hijackings. A law enforcement official told the New York Post that the men had "kicked the tires" of some used airplanes in Denver and Tucson but ultimately did not make a purchase.

Confirmation that an al-Qaida cell operated in Arizona has not yet come from federal officials.

On Thursday, Senate Intelligence Committee member John Kyl, an Arizona Republican, acknowledged an FBI failure to root out Arizona-based conspirators but said he could not discuss whether a terrorist network existed, or still exists, in the state.

Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman

Despite being on a terrorist watch list, radical Muslim leader Sheikh Omar Abdul-Rahman enters the US on a "much-disputed" tourist visa issued by an undercover CIA agent. [[Village Voice, 3/30/93](#), [Atlantic Monthly, 5/96](#)] Abdul-Rahman was heavily involved with the CIA and ISI efforts to defeat the Soviets in Afghanistan, and became famous traveling all over the world for five years recruiting new mujaheddin. But he never hid his prime goals, which were to overthrow the governments of the US and Egypt. [[Atlantic Monthly, 5/96](#)] He is "infamous throughout the Arab world for his alleged role in the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat." Abdul-Rahman immediately begins setting up a terrorist network in the US. [[Village Voice, 3/30/93](#)] He is known to have befriended bin Laden while in Afghanistan, and bin Laden secretly pays Abdul-Rahman's US living expenses. [[Atlantic Monthly, 5/96](#), [ABC News, 8/16/02](#)] Abdul-Rahman's ties to the assassination of Rabbi Meir Kahane in later 1990 is ignored). As one FBI agent says in 1993, he is "hands-off.... It was no accident that the sheikh got a visa and that he's still in the country. He's here under the banner of national security, the State Department, the NSA, and the CIA." A very high-ranking Egyptian official says Abdul-Rahman continues to assist the CIA in recruiting new mujaheddin after moving to the US. This official says, "We begged America not to coddle the sheikh." Egyptian intelligence warns the US that Abdul-Rahman is planning new terrorist attacks, and on November 12, 1992, terrorists connected to him machine-gun a busload of Western tourists in Egypt. But still he lives freely in New York City. [[Village Voice, 3/30/93](#)] He is finally arrested in 1993 and convicted for assisting in the 1993 WTC bombing [[Atlantic Monthly, 5/96](#)]

Meir Kahane Murder

An Egyptian American named El Sayyid Nosair assassinates controversial right-wing Zionist leader Rabbi Meir Kahane. Kahane's organization, the Jewish Defense League, was linked to dozens of bombings and was ranked by the FBI as the most lethal domestic terrorist group in the US at the time. Nosair is captured after a police shoot-out. An FBI informant says he saw Nosair meeting with Muslim leader Sheikh Omar Abdul-Rahman a few days before the attack, and possessions indicating a wider plot with additional targets are found. [[Village Voice, 3/30/93](#)] Incredibly, files found in his possession which give details of a terrorist cell, mention al-Qaeda, and

discuss the destruction of tall US buildings, are not translated until years later. [ABC News, 8/16/02] Instead, within 12 hours of the assassination, New York police declare the assassination was the work of a "lone gunman" and they stick with that story. In his trial, prosecutors choose not to introduce his incriminating possessions as evidence, nor is his confession even mentioned, and an apparent "open-and-shut case" ends with his acquittal. However, he is sentenced to 22 years on other lesser charges. [Village Voice, 3/30/93] Bin Laden contributes to Nosair's defense fund. Many of those involved in Kahane's assassination later plan the 1993 WTC bombing. As one FBI agent puts it, "The fact is that in 1990, myself and my detectives, we had in our office in handcuffs, the people who blew up the World Trade Center in '93.... We were told to release them." [ABC News, 8/16/02]

Desert Storm

Most important event in U.S./al Qaeda antagonism. Non-Muslim Forces occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places. Usama's dissatisfaction with the Saudi Government. He felt that Iraq could be defeated with Mujahadeen forces and did not need to rely on U.S. military strength. UBL was exiled from Saudi shortly thereafter.

Life in the Sudan

Military regimes favoring Islamic-oriented governments have dominated national politics since independence from the UK in 1956. Sudan has been embroiled in a civil war for all but 10 years of this period (1972-82). The wars are rooted in northern economic, political, and social domination of non-Muslim, non-Arab southern Sudanese. Since 1983, the war and war- and famine-related effects have led to more than 2 million deaths and over 4 million people displaced. The ruling regime is a mixture of military elite and an Islamist party that came to power in a 1989 coup. Some northern opposition parties have made common cause with the southern rebels and entered the war as a part of an anti-government alliance. Peace talks gained momentum in 2002-03 with the signing of several accords, including a cease-fire agreement.

Did Sudan host Osama bin Laden?

Yes. Bin Laden lived in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, from about 1991 until 1996, when he was expelled under pressure from the United States and Saudi Arabia. While under protection from the Sudanese government (which claims that bin Laden became a terrorist only after he left Sudan), bin Laden set up camps to train al-Qaeda members and opened multimillion-dollar businesses that funded and provided cover for al-Qaeda activities. Before expelling bin Laden in 1996, Sudan offered to arrest him and extradite him to Saudi Arabia. But the Saudis, who stripped bin Laden of his citizenship in 1994, feared having him back in the country, even as a prisoner, so he went to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. What terrorist activities have been linked to Sudan?

A 1995 attempt to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during a visit to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The plot, by members of an Egyptian Islamist group known as Jamaat al-Islamiyya, was devised in Sudan; the state-owned airline carried the attackers' weapons to Ethiopia; and when the plot was foiled, one of the alleged assassins escaped to Khartoum on a Sudan Airways flight. Sudan denied complicity but refused to turn over the would-be assassin and two others believed to be involved in the plot. The U.N. Security Council then placed a series of sanctions on Sudan, which lasted until late September 2001.

The simultaneous 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Al-Qaeda members operating from Sudan, which borders on Kenya, helped carry out these bombings, which killed 224 people, including 12 Americans. In response, the United States launched a missile attack on a Khartoum factory that U.S. intelligence

reports indicated was producing the nerve agent VX. The Sudanese government said that the factory made pharmaceutical products.

In 2001, a Sudanese-born suspect arrested in a foiled plot to bomb the U.S. embassy in New Delhi told Indian investigators that Sudanese diplomats had given him explosives and detonators.

In 1996, U.S. investigators linked two Sudanese diplomats in New York to a terrorist cell planning to bomb the United Nations and assassinate Mubarak in New York.

In 1973, before the current Islamist government came to power, the U.S. ambassador to Sudan and his charge d'affaires were taken hostage and killed in Khartoum by members of Black September, a Palestinian terrorist group. After convicting eight terrorists and sentencing them to life, Sudan commuted their sentences; some Black September members got away.

Yousef and Ajaz Enter the U.S.

Terrorists Ahmad Ajaj and Ramzi Yousef enter the US together. Ajaj is arrested at Kennedy Airport in New York City. Ramzi Yousef is not arrested, and later masterminds the 1993 bombing of the WTC. "The US government was pretty sure Ahmad Ajaj was a terrorist from the moment he stepped foot on US soil," because his "suitcases were stuffed with fake passports, fake IDs and a cheat sheet on how to lie to US immigration inspectors," plus "two handwritten notebooks filled with bomb recipes, six bomb-making manuals, four how-to videotapes concerning weaponry and an advanced guide to surveillance training." However, Ajaj is only charged with passport fraud, and serves a six-month sentence. From prison, Ajaj frequently calls Ramzi Yousef and others in the WTC bombing plot, but no one monitors or translates the calls until long after the bombing. [Los Angeles Times, 10/14/01] Ajaj was not just knowledgeable, but was involved in the planning of the bombing from his prison cell. [Village Voice, 8/3/93] Ajaj is released from prison three days after the WTC bombing, but is later rearrested and sentenced to more than 100 years in prison. [Los Angeles Times, 10/14/01] One of the manuals seized from Ajaj is horribly mistranslated for the trial. For instance, the title page is said to say "The Basic Rule," published in 1982, when in fact the title says "Al-Qaeda" (which means "the base" in English), published in 1989. Investigators later complain that a proper translation could have shown an early connection between al-Qaeda and the WTC bombing. [New York Times, 1/14/01]

The First Attack

In an apparent plot to kill U.S. servicemen headed to Somalia, a bomb explodes at a hotel in Aden, Yemen and kills two Austrian tourists. Two Yemeni Muslims -- who had been trained in Afghanistan -- are injured and later arrested. Intelligence officials believe this is Al Qaeda's first attack.

The Associated Press later reports that two of the Yemenis detained for the 2000 attack on the USS Cole were involved both in this 1992 Aden bombing, and a series of other attacks in 1993.

1993 World Trade Center Attack

A 1,500 pound Ammonium Nitrate Fuel Oil bomb explodes in the parking garage beneath the World Trade Center in New York City. Six people died and 1,000 were injured by the powerful blast. The buildings themselves, once the world's tallest, were nearly toppled by the bomb; an underground restraining wall came precariously close to breaking and allowing the Hudson River to spill into the World Trade Center's support area.

Hours after the explosion, an informant identified a group of Serbians in New York as the culprits. However, when the FBI conducted surveillance of the gang they found not terrorists but jewel thieves, putting an end to a major diamond-laundering operation.

Fortunately, investigators at the bomb scene found a 300-pound section of a van frame that had been at the center of the blast. The van's vehicle identification number was still visible, leading detectives to the Ryder Rental Agency in Jersey City, New Jersey. Their records indicated that Mohammed Salameh had rented the van and reported it stolen on February 25.

Salameh was already in the FBI's database as a potential terrorist, so agents knew that they had probably found their man. Salameh compounded his mistake by insisting that Ryder return his \$400 deposit. When he returned to collect it, the FBI arrested him. A search of his home and records led to two other suspects.

Meanwhile, the owner of a storage facility in Jersey City came forward to say that he had seen four men loading a Ryder van on February 25. When this storage space was checked, they found enough chemicals, including very unstable nitroglycerin, to make another massive bomb. Investigators also found videotapes with instructions on bomb making that led to the arrest of a fourth suspect.

Other evidence showed that one of the terrorists had bought hydrogen tanks from AGL Welding Supply in New Jersey. In the wreckage under the World Trade Center, three tanks marked "AGL Welding" were found. In addition, the terrorists had sent a letter to the *New York Times* claiming responsibility for the blast. Portions of this letter were found on the hard drive of one of the suspect's computers. Finally, DNA analysis of saliva on the envelope matched that of the suspect.

Investigators discover the suspects have links to a network of Islamic extremists. Several people eventually convicted in the bombing are linked to the Office of Service's Al Kifah Center in Brooklyn; four of these men are connected to Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman. Rahman, a blind Egyptian cleric who was the spiritual leader of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, is later convicted of conspiracy for his involvement in a plot to blow up New York City landmarks. He is sentenced to life in prison.

Investigators charge Ramzi Yousef as the mastermind behind the WTC bombing and begin a worldwide manhunt. They discover immigration officials had already detained Ahmed Ajaj, a Yousef associate, when he entered the U.S. carrying terrorist training manuals.

Osama bin Laden's name surfaces during the 1993 WTC investigation as a financier of the Office of Services. His name is also found on a list of individuals who was called from a safe house used by the conspirators. During the WTC bombing trial, bin Laden's name appears on a list of potential unindicted co-conspirators, but Al Qaeda is never mentioned.

The wealth of evidence resulted in easy convictions, and each of the men was sentenced to 240 years in prison. Despite the fact that the terrorists did not succeed in destroying the World Trade Center, the bombing remains one of the worst acts of foreign terrorism on U.S. soil.

Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, the terrorist convicted of masterminding and helping to carry out the deadly 1993 World Trade Center bombing, was sentenced in New York to 240 years in prison with the highly unusual recommendation from the judge that he be kept in solitary confinement for the rest of his life.

In the bombing on February '93 six people were killed and a thousand injured. Ramzi Yousef, 29 year old Pakistani (?), is considered to be one of the most dangerous terrorists in the world, and in the view of FBI investigators, he was involved in the planning of many terror acts in different countries.

How is al-Qaeda connected to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing?

There are strong links. Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, the militant cleric convicted in the 1993 plot, once led an Egyptian group now affiliated with al-Qaeda; two of his sons are senior al-Qaeda officials. And Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, who was convicted of masterminding the 1993 attack, planned al-Qaeda's foiled attack on American

airliners over the Pacific Ocean. He is also the nephew of the former senior al-Qaeda terrorist Khalid Shaikh Muhammad, who is now in U.S. custody.

Airplane

Bin Laden buys a jet from the US military in Arizona (the Pentagon approved the transaction). This aircraft is later used to transport missiles from Pakistan that kill American special forces in Somalia. He also has some of his followers begin training as pilots in US flight schools. These initial flight trainings come to nothing when details are later revealed in a court case about Operation Bojinka. [[Sunday Herald, 9/16/01](#)]

Wadih El-Hage moved to Sudan, which was then bin Laden's headquarters, and shortly afterward reestablished connections to Tucson in 1992, when he reportedly asked a Texas commercial pilot named Essam Al-Ridi to buy a jet for bin Laden. Al-Ridi traveled to Tucson and found a T-39A Sabreliner at the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. One observer described the craft as "an old crappy puddle-jumper." Al-Ridi paid the U.S. military a reported \$250,000 for the airplane and flew it to Sudan, where he personally handed the keys to bin Laden at a dinner party, according to court testimony. The jet was to be used to transport Stinger missiles to Pakistan. But the plane's brakes failed during a test flight, and it crashed at the end of a runway in Khartoum in 1994.

El-Hage later returned to Arlington, Texas, and got a job managing a tire store. Federal prosecutors accused him of conspiring with bin Laden to blow up the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania in 1998. Al-Ridi then turned on bin Laden and became a government witness. He testified against El-Hage, who last year was convicted of conspiracy and now is in federal prison.

Omar Sheikh Saeed

Saeed Sheikh, a brilliant British student at the London School of Economics, drops out of school and moves to his homeland of Pakistan to become a terrorist. Two months later, he begins training in Afghanistan at camps run by al-Qaeda and the Pakistani army. By mid-1994, he has become a terrorist instructor. In June 1994, he begins kidnapping Western tourists in India. In October 1994, he is captured after kidnapping three Britons and an American, and is put in a maximum-security prison. The ISI pays for a lawyer to defend him. [[Los Angeles Times, 2/9/02](#), [Daily Mail, 7/16/02](#), [Vanity Fair, 8/02](#)] His supervisor for his terror work is an ISI officer named Ijaz Shah [[Times of India, 3/12/02](#), [Guardian, 7/16/02](#)] Al-Qaeda and the ISI later rescue him from prison and he becomes a central figure in the financing of the 9/11 plot.

Planning

Future Bojink Aconspirators Meet

Pakistani Abdul Hakim Murad -- later convicted for his role in the 1995 Bojinka ("Big Bang") plot to blow up twelve airliners -- meets Khalid Shaikh Mohammed at Mohammed's house in Karachi, Pakistan while visiting with Ramzi Yousef. Murad would later tell investigators that Khalid Shaikh Mohammed -- suspected of helping to plan the Sept. 11 attacks -- had an "intense" interest in pilot training.

Al Qaeda Contemplates Nairobi Attack

Members of an Al Qaeda cell in Kenya discuss attacking the U.S. embassy there. Ali Mohamed, a U.S. citizen, later admits to investigators that he took photographs and sketches of the embassy and presented them to bin Laden in the Sudan.

Restore Hope in Somalia

October 3-4, 1993: Eighteen US soldiers are attacked and killed in Mogadishu, Somalia, in a spontaneous gun battle (later the subject of the movie *Black Hawk Down*). A 1998 US indictment charges bin Laden and his followers with training the attackers. [[PBS Frontline, 10/3/02](#)] The link between bin Laden and the Somali killers of US soldiers appears to be Pakistani terrorist Maulana Masood Azhar and abu Mohammed al Masri (Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah). [[Los Angeles Times, 2/25/02](#)]

According to [a document released by the British government](#) after the Sept. 11 attacks, between 1992 and 1993, Mohammed Atef, an Egyptian aide to bin Laden, travels frequently to Somalia to organize violent attacks on U.S. and U.N. troops stationed there. After each trip he reports back to bin Laden in Khartoum.

In April 1993; According to [a document published by the British government](#), Muhammad Atef, Saif al Adel and other members of Al Qaeda return to Somalia to train Somali forces to attack U.N. troops.

Expansion to Europe

[According to a later U.S. indictment](#), bin Laden sets up a media information office in London which will serve as a message center and provide cover for Al Qaeda operations. The center is run by Khalid al-Fawwaz.

Expansion to Southeast Asia

Ramzi Yousef Hides

Ramzi Yousef, suspected mastermind of the 1993 WTC attack, hides out in the Philippines with Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, believed to be his uncle. The two reportedly plan a number of potential terrorist attacks.

December 12, 1994: Terrorist Ramzi Yousef attempts a trial run of Operation Bojinka (see January 6, 1995), planting a small bomb on a Philippine Airlines flight to Tokyo (he gets off on a stopover before the bomb is detonated). It explodes, killing one man, and would have caused the plane to crash if not for what were described as heroic efforts by the pilot. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#), [Senate Intelligence Committee, 9/18/02](#)]

Konsojaya Established In Malaysia

Investigators come to suspect that a company named Konsojaya is a front for funneling money from bin Laden to regional operatives. Wali Khan Amin Shah, a Pakistani, and an Indonesian cleric named Riduan Isamuddin (AKA "Hambali") established the company. A number of phone calls are made from Konsojaya offices to Mohammed Khalifa, bin Laden's brother-in-law, who allegedly ran a charity front for Al Qaeda. The Hambali connection to this group is only discovered after Sept. 11.

Konsonjaya, an import-export operation dealing in Sudanese honey and other commodities and based in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur.

What sets KSM apart, in the words of a senior U.S. law-enforcement official, is that "he was at the center of everything." For example, after recruiting the operatives to work with his nephew Ramzi in the Philippines, KSM financed the "Bojinka" plot to down a dozen U.S. airliners over the Pacific Ocean through a Malaysian-based import-export company that dealt in Sudanese honey called Konsonjaya. One of the companies' directors was Riduan Isamudin, better known as Hambali, the operational head of the Jemaah Islamiya terrorist network. Though unknown at the time, Hambali was the "most wanted" man in Southeast Asia for his role in several bombings in the Philippines, the foiled plot to bomb U.S. and other targets in Singapore in December 2001, and the October 2002 Bali bombings.

Abu Sayyef

Abu Sayyef was the cunia used by UBL's brother in law, Mohamed Jamal Khalifa, during the Jihad against the Soviets. UBL encouraged him to form an Islamic group in the southern Philippines.

Airplanes and Buildings

Coincidentally, three separate attacks this year involve hijacking airplanes to crash them into buildings. A disgruntled Federal Express worker tries to crash a DC-10 into a company building in Memphis but is overpowered by the crew. A lone pilot crashes a small plane onto the White House grounds, just missing the President's bedroom. A group of Algerian hijackers seize an Air France flight headed for Paris. The crisis ends after French commandos storm the plane. According to some French investigators, the hijackers planned to blow up the plane above Paris or crash it into the Eiffel Tower.

Uncovering the Network

In Marrakesh, Morocco, two Spaniards are killed when three French Muslims open fire on tourists in a hotel lobby. European investigators reportedly discover phone calls between the suspects and the Office of Services. They also start to uncover a network of Afghan jihad war veterans in Europe.

Bosnia

Independence and Civil War

In Oct., 1991, following the secession of Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia, the Croats and Muslims of Bosnia and Hercegovina, fearing Serbian domination, voted for a declaration of independence from Yugoslavia. In 1992, the sovereignty of Bosnia and Hercegovina was recognized by the European Community (now the European Union) and the United States, and it entered the United Nations. Many Bosnian Serbs opposed the new republic, in which they were a minority, and Serb troops, both from Serbia and Bosnia, began to carve out the Serb-populated areas and declared the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina. Croats in Bosnia, also fearing Muslim domination, declared their own Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna.

An arms embargo reinforced the disparity between the well-armed Serbs and their foes, and Muslims were forced from their homes and towns as part of an ethnic cleansing policy carried out mostly by the Serbs. Thousands were killed, many were placed in detention camps, and many more fled the country. (Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic was among a number of Serbs later indicted in absentia by a United Nations tribunal for war crimes.) The major Western powers rejected military intervention but endorsed the establishment of six safe areas with a United Nations presence, where Muslims would supposedly not be attacked.

Fighting between Muslims and Croats intensified in 1993. Shelling, mainly by Serb forces, destroyed much of Sarajevo and laid waste to other cities throughout the country. In 1994, Yugoslavian and Croatian forces fought in support of Bosnian Serbs and Croats, respectively. The Bosnian government army launched major offensives from Bihac and elsewhere, and the balance of power among Serbs, Croats, and Muslims shifted from time to time.

In 1994, Bosnian Muslims and Croats agreed to a cease-fire and established a joint Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina. During 1995, Serb forces shelled the besieged Sarajevo and launched attacks on the UN-proclaimed safe areas of Tuzla, Zepa, and Srebrenica. There were mass deportations of Muslims and widespread instances of rape and execution of civilians, especially in Srebrenica. Croat and Muslim forces later made heavy inroads against Serbs in western Bosnia.

In late 1995, the Muslim-dominated Bosnian government and the leaders of Croatia and Serbia met under U.S. auspices in Dayton, Ohio, and negotiated a peace accord. It called for a Bosnian republic with a central government and two semiautonomous regions, roughly equal in size, one dominated by Serbs, the other by Muslims and

Croats in federation. The accord provided for the dispatch of NATO-led troops for peacekeeping purposes; the forces originally were to stay until June, 1998. In addition, a high representative of the Peace Implementation Council (the nations overseeing the peace process) is the final authority on the civilian aspects of the settlement. Although the accord was implemented and conditions have slowly improved, much distrust remains among members of all three communities, who now typically live in ethnically homogeneous areas. NATO-led peacekeeping forces remain in the region. Bosnian disillusionment with the moderates who had held power since 1998 resulted in electoral victories for the ethnic nationalist parties in the 2002.

7th Bosnian Muslim Brigade

7th Bosnian Muslim Brigade, based in Zenica - the international Islamic mercenary force known as the mujahedeen

"... The first and foremost of such conclusions is surely the one on the incompatibility of Islam and non-Islamic systems. There can be no peace or coexistence between the "Islamic faith" and non-Islamic societies and political institutions. ... Islam clearly excludes the right and possibility of activity of any strange ideology on its own turf. Therefore, there is no question of any laicistic principles, and the state should be an expression and should support the moral concepts of the religion. ..." page 22 "The Islamic Declaration" book ("Islamska deklaracija"), written by Mr. Alija Izetbegovic, Bosnian Muslim leader.

In preparing the ground for the conflicts between Bosnian Christians (Croats and Serbs) and Bosnian Muslims, residents of different Arab countries who in the B&H had recognized the elements and challenge of "a holy war" - jihad. Coming from different Arab countries, most of them were from Yemen, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia and Afghanistan, and bringing with them experience from a war from some of the Islamic trouble spots.

Mujahedin, or «holy warriors», is a generic term for Muslim volunteers fighting in the former Yugoslavia. Many Mujahedin originate from Muslim countries outside the former Yugoslavia. It was reported that the Mujahedin began arriving in BiH as early as June 1992. (Tom Post & Joel Brand, «Help from the Holy Warriors», Newsweek, 5 October 1992, at 52). Reports on the number of Mujahedin forces operating in BiH vary, but it is unlikely that the Mujahedin forces have made a significant military contribution to the BiH Government's war effort (Christopher Lockwood, «Muslim Nations Offer Troops», Daily Telegraph, 14 July 1993, at 14. According to Lockwood, Muslim nations depended on Western logistical support to deliver troops to BiH. He concludes that the same logistical troubles which kept the Muslim troops promised in July of 1993 from joining UN forces in the UN declared «safe havens» also limited the number of Muslim volunteers in the BiH armed forces. He states that the number of Mujahedin in BiH never exceeded three or four hundred. See also Mohamed Sid-Ahmad, «Muslim World Between Two Fires», War Report, January 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 63744. However, the Belgrade Daily, Vecernje Novosti, reported that as many as 30,000 Mujahedin were operating in BiH. «Other Reports in Brief: Muslims from Abroad Settling in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belgrade Daily Claims», BBC, Summary of World Broadcasts, 19 September 1992.)

The Mujahedin forces came from several Muslim states and many of them were veterans of the Afghan war. (Andrew Hogg, «Arabs Join in Bosnia Battle», Sunday Times, 30 August 1992)

Reports submitted to the Commission of Experts alleged that the Mujahedin have been responsible for the mutilation and killing of civilians, rape, looting, the destruction of property, and the expulsion of non-Muslim populations. The deputy commander of the BiH Army, Colonel Stjepan Siber, has said, «it was a mistake to let them [the Mujahedin] here . . . They commit most of the atrocities and work against the interests of the Muslim people. They have been killing, looting and stealing.» Andrew Hogg, «Terror Trail of the Mujahedin», Sunday Times, 27 June 1993.

Several reports indicate that the Mujahedin were placed under the command of the BiH Army. (See «Some 400 Mujahedin Volunteers Fighting with Bosnian Muslims», Agence France Presse, 22 September 1992; Andrew Hogg, «Arabs Join in Bosnia Battle», Sunday Times, 30 August 1992; see also Charles McLeod, ECMM, «Report on Inter-Ethnic Violence in Vitez, Busovaca and Zenica», April 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 20178-20546, at 20207; Croatian Information Centre, Weekly Bulletin, No. 9, 4 October 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 36434-36438, at 36435; US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62648, 62724, 62730, and 62756)

The Mujahedin forces were closely associated with the 5th Corps, the 6th and 7th Zenica Brigades, the 7th Travnik Brigade, and the 45th Muslim Brigade which belongs to the 6th Corps in Konjic of the Army of BiH (US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62648; see also Croatian Information Centre, Weekly Bulletin, No. 9, 4 October 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 36434-36438, at 36435; «Continuing Clashes in Northwestern Enclave Reported from Both Sides», BBC, Summary of World Broadcasts, 14 December 1993.)

They also allegedly fought alongside the Muslim Police, the Krajiska Brigade from Travnik, units of Kosovo Muslims, Albanian soldiers, and paramilitary groups such as the «Green Legion» and the «Black Swans». (Charles McLeod, ECMM, Report on Inter-Ethnic Violence in Vitez, Busovaca and Zenica, April 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 20178-20546, at 20207; Croatian Information Centre, Weekly Bulletin, No. 9, 4 October 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 36434-36438, at 36435; US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62648, 62724, 62730, and 62756.)

Reports also indicate that the Mujahedin had the support of President Izetbegovic and his government. *57 This was demonstrated in the Bihac pocket, where the Mujahedin joined BiH forces loyal to Izetbegovic. Together, these forces battled separatist forces who entered into a separate peace treaty with Bosnian Serbs («Continuing Clashes in Northwestern Enclave Reported from Both Sides», BBC, Summary of World Broadcasts, 14 December 1993)

In Zenica, between 31 August and 2 September 1992, 250 Mujahedin troops allegedly come to BiH from Turkey, Qatar, Bahrain and Iran. These troops worked alongside the Green Legion and HOS paramilitary groups stationed in Zenica. The Mujahedin allegedly also operated a camp at Arnauti. (Charles McLeod, ECMM, Report on Inter-Ethnic Violence in Vitez, Buscovaca and Zenica, April 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 29043-29131, at 29064; Biljaja Plavsic, Republic of Serbia Presidency, To Serbs All Over the World, 30 September 1992, IHRLI Doc. No. 48072-48093, at 48081)

It was reported that a unit of the Mujahedin, called the «Guerilla», participated in the 16 April 1993 attack on Vitez and attempted to exchange 10 HVO hostages for foreign prisoners held in HVO prisons. (US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62629; see also Charles McLeod, ECMM, Report on Inter-Ethnic Violence in Vitez, Busovaca and Zenica, April 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 29043-29131, at 29072 (attack on Vitez).

The Croatian Ministry of Defence is reported to have provided information about an event occurring in June 1993 -- a joint BiH/Mujahedin unit reportedly attacked Travnik, allegedly forcing 4,000 Croatian civilians and military personnel out of the town. (US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62650. Media reports however claim that Croats left Travnik voluntarily. The incident was investigated by an organization, which reported that the forceful eviction did not take place)

The Mujahedin allegedly fought alongside the 6th Muslim Brigade from Zenica and the Krajiska Brigade from Travnik. Witnesses stated that they saw Mujahedin operating in small patrols ahead of the approaching BiH troops.

According to HVO intelligence, Mujahedin forces arrived in Travnik sometime before June 1993 and came from Algeria, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. The Mujahedin trained at a camp at Mehurici, where they were allegedly financed and equipped by a man named Abdulah, the owner of the «Palma» video store in Travnik. Once in town,

the Mujahedin were linked to the Seventh Brigade of the BiH Army, and were reportedly assembled into units of 10 to 15 men, and moved about on regular patrols. The Mujahedin created tension in Travnik in the days prior to the attack on 3 June. One witness stated that the Mujahedin directed their actions towards the HVO personnel in town. They allegedly demonstrated, shouted slogans and fired their rifles in the air.

Mujahedin allegedly participated in the attack on Maljine in Novi Travnik on 8 June 1993, killing 20 to 30 HVO members and transporting Croatian women and children to the training centre at Mehurici. (Croatian Information Centre, Weekly Bulletin, No. 1, 9 August 1993)

In Konjic, the Mujahedin were part of a 100 member force stationed at Liscioi and led by Haso Hakalovic. The unit was assembled in February 1993 and included some Kosovo Muslims and members of the Black Swans from the Igman mountain region. (US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62756)

Allegedly, Mujahedin troops killed and expelled villagers, and looted and burned homes, when they moved against the Jablanica- Konjic area. The Mujahedin troops and members of the Black Swans reportedly conducted occasional raids without members of BiH forces. (at IHRLI Doc. No. 62752 and 62756. The village of Vrci was attacked on 25 May, and the village of Radesine was attacked on 10 June. See also Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Fifth Periodic Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1994/47, 17 November 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 52399-52435, at 52405 (alleging that the Mujahedin were involved in attacks at Kopjari on 21 October, Doljani on 27 and 28 June, and Maljane on 8 June). UN Special Rapporteur Mazowiecki claims that corpses of Mujahedin victims displayed evidence of protracted cruelty and mutilation.)

Reportedly, the Mujahedin volunteers arrived in Konjic in small groups. It was reported that they were from Afghanistan and that they claimed to be students. They were allegedly armed with Hekleri automatic weapons and former JNA equipment. Some Mujahedin were reportedly former students with no military experience. Mujahedin forces were present in Mostar since early June 1993. They were reportedly stationed in the Santica neighborhood on the Muslim/HVO front, where they manned bunkers, usually in groups of six or seven, armed with 7.62 millimeter semi-automatic weapons, machine-guns, and Zolja anti-tank weapons. They were billeted in a building they shared with the Muslim military police on the east bank of the Neretva River. The Mujahedin forces apparently left Mostar on 15 August. (US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62742 and 62677. For more details on the location of the Neretva living quarters, see Id. at 62739)

FRY reported that the Mujahedin began operations near Teslic in July and August of 1992. Troops from Saudi Arabia allegedly killed three Serbian Territorial Defence members and placed the victims' severed heads on poles near the «Tesanj turret». (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Second Report Submitted to the Commission of Experts, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 28401-29019, at 28533)

Beheadings of Serbs by Mujahadeen forces have also been reported in other areas. The Mujahedin were also alleged to be part of the forces that invaded the village of Trusina near Foca on 15 April 1993. According to the report, attackers wore white ribbons on their arms and fought beside Albanian Muslim troops. Twenty-two civilians reportedly died in the attack. (US Department of State, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 62612-62877, at 62648; Croatian Information Centre, Weekly Bulletin, No. 9, 4 October 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 36434-36438, at 36435)

The Mujahedin allegedly performed crude circumcisions upon Serbian police forces, who were later treated by an American surgeon at the Kosevo hospital in Sarajevo. (Letter dated 7 December 1992 from the Deputy Representative of the US to U.N. Secretary-General, U.N. Doc. S/24918, 8 December 1992, IHRLI Doc. No. 3160-3177, at 3173; Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Second Report Submitted to the Commission of Experts, 1993, IHRLI Doc. No. 28401-29019, at 28566)

The Mujahadeen? What Mujahadeen?

Immediately after the Dayton accords were initialed, official Sarajevo expressed its apprehension that fighting would soon resume. In an interview with Sarajevo weekly *Ljiljan*, President Izetbegovic did not rule out that "the Serb side will annul the [Dayton] agreement, but if that happens... the fighting will continue, but under far more favorable conditions for us. Then the Serbs will wage war against the rest of the world." Furthermore, Izetbegovic attributed the outcome of Dayton, at least to a certain degree, to the contribution of the Muslim world. "The Islamic world is still not well organized and strong enough. Nevertheless, the very fact that the Islamic world exists has influenced the behavior of the West to a degree, and particularly that of some Western countries." Thus, it is impossible for Muslim Bosnia to trust or rely on the West for its future and salvation. Izetbegovic concluded that he returned from Dayton convinced that under the leadership of the West, "it is a world in which it is possible to start an unjust war and impose an unjust peace".

The conclusion driven to by official Sarajevo in late 1995 was that irrespective of the Dayton accords and the anticipated deployment of the strong NATO forces, it was imperative for the Bosnian Muslim forces to prepare for the imminent resumption of fighting.

These were not idle threats. Starting in late November, as the Dayton negotiations were drawing to conclusion, several senior foreign experts with the Bosnian Muslim forces, including senior Iranian intelligence officers, went underground. Many Iranian and Arab "Afghans" were deployed undercover to the Tuzla area, and other sites where US forces were expected to deploy, in order to conduct reconnaissance and operational preparations should the need arise to launch strikes against the US forces.

Meanwhile, there was an increase in the number of attempts by Bosnian Muslim commando units in the greater Sarajevo area to cross the Serb lines. The primary objective of these operations was to instigate provocations which might tarnish the image of the Serbs and strengthen the Muslims' hand in the forthcoming struggle over the Serb sectors of Sarajevo. For example, on November 27/28, a detachment of the 445th Light Infantry Brigade (permanent base in Konjic) was engaged in the Serb rear near Mt. Igman. On December 3/4, another Bosnian Muslim reconnaissance-sabotage detachment was engaged behind the Serb lines in the Mount Ozren area. There were also a few cases of sniping into the Muslim sector of Sarajevo from "gray areas" between the Serb and Muslim lines. The Bosnian Serbs denied that their forces were responsible and UNPROFOR "could not determine" who was responsible for these snipings.

At the same time, the Bosnian Muslim army continued to integrate the *mujahedin* into its ranks. This process was clearly demonstrated in the December 10 parade in Zenica. It was a major show of force presided over by Rasim Delic and President Alija Izetbegovic. Some 10,000 troops representing numerous units paraded, and a variety of heavy weapons -- tanks, artillery, anti-aircraft guns and mortars, rockets and missiles -- were presented. "This is our demonstration of power. We must prove we have the power for further fighting if it's needed; if Dayton doesn't work," an army spokesman explained. The fighters of several elite units paraded in front of Izetbegovic and Delic shouting such slogans as "*Allah-hu-Akbar!*" [God is Great] and "American tanks will not scare us!"

The centrality of the foreign component of the Bosnian Army was evident, albeit not specifically mentioned. In his comments, Mr. Izetbegovic highlighted the contribution of the 3rd Corps -- the mother unit of the *Mujahedin* -- to the war effort. The elite elements \ of the 3rd Corps paraded wearing green and red headbands with Islamic slogans.

Observers on scene noted that "Best-equipped were the elite 7th Muslim brigade ... whose members copy the ardor and bravery of foreign Islamic warriors, known as *mujahedin*, whom they have fought alongside." Actually, even by most conservative estimates, there were still more than 800 *mujahedin* from Islamic countries in the

ranks of the Zenica based 7th Muslim brigade in December 1995. Many of the fighters of the 7th Muslim brigade were dressed in white coveralls over their uniforms. Officially, these were "white winter camouflage", but the green headbands these warriors were wearing left no doubt that these were actually Shaheeds' shrouds. The Zenica parade clearly demonstrated Sarajevo's effort to portray the Bosnian Army as a Muslim force relying as much on public prayers and Iran-style unit motivation methods as on conventional weapons. The vast majority of *mujahedin* have long been fully integrated into these elite forces. Being clean-shaven now, they are impossible to detect from a distance.

A closer examination of the entire Bosnian Muslim Armed Forces of late 1995 clearly demonstrates not only the magnitude of the Islamist forces, but that their relative importance and influence far outweighed their sheer numbers. Significantly, all the Islamist -- so-called *mujahedin* -- units constituted integral parts of the Bosnian Muslim Armed Forces. The Islamists were now serving in Bosnian national uniforms and as such were entitled to Bosnian citizenship and were exempt from eviction by the Dayton-Paris Accord.

In late 1995, the key *Mujahedin* units were:

The *Armija Republike BH 3, Korpus Odred 'el-Mudzahidin'* remained the main *Mujahedin* unit, serving as the primary assault troops of the Bosnian Muslim Army. The main HQ was in Zenica. The 3rd *Mujahedin* Corps was comprised of three Brigades, each of about 1,500 troops. These brigades were: The 7th Muslim Liberation Brigade in Zenica, The 9th Muslim Liberation Brigade in Travnik (now operating under the Tuzla-based 2nd Corps), and The 4th Muslim Liberation Brigade initially deployed in the front lines in the "bulge" (Botsilo region) and then in Konjic. Another Brigade -- the 807th Muslim Liberation Brigade -- was established and sworn-in on December 20, 1995. The 807th Muslim Liberation Brigade is an integral component of the Gorazde-based 81st Division.

There were separate Islamist elite forces in the Zenica-Travnik area known as the Volunteer *Mujahedin* Battalion, the *Ansar*. The *Ansar* was 300 to 600 troops strong. The main headquarters was in the Vatrostalno Factory building in Podbriježje (near Zenica). In addition, there was a new camp called the "Martyrs' Detachment", which, since the Spring of 1995, had absorbed a few hundred new *Mujahedin* (including suicide terrorists and other experts) arriving from Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Another elite special forces unit which was still being expanded in late 1995, at the time the foreign *mujahedin* were supposed to be leaving Bosnia-Herzegovina, was the *Kata 'eb al-Manikin* (Battalions of Believers). Troops, mainly Arabs including "Afghans", were still arriving from Sudan. They were serving under the command of military officers from Pakistan and Afghanistan. The trainers and leadership were from Iran. Each Battalion was 300 to 600 troops strong. The first operational battalion was based in the Buzim area (north-west Bosnia-Herzegovina). Another battalion served as a special forces unit for the 2nd Corps in the Tuzla area. Other battalions were being organized throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina.

According to Abu-Ma'ali, the commander of the *mujahedin*, the entire organized *mujahedin* forces numbered between 5,000 and 6,000 troops. Yugoslav, Croat and Bosnian Muslim military sources put the number at more than 7,000 troops.

Another major Islamist force remained: the *Handzar Division*, named after the 13th SS Handzar Division which served under the German flag in World War II. The current Handzar Division is Sarajevo's Praetorian Guards, and is comprised of a 2,500 to 3,000 elite force deployed in Sarajevo and a 6,000 to 7,500 strong back-up force at a major training base around Fojnica, but is moved around to augment major fighting fronts. The majority of the troops of the Handzar Division come from the region's non-Bosnian Muslim minorities, primarily Albanians, and are led by veteran Pakistani and Afghan experts.

During the escalation of 1995, elements of the Handzar Division took part as special forces in fighting in the Sarajevo area, Tuzla and in the surge into western Bosnia-

Herzegovina. In many cases, particularly in the surge into western Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Summer-Fall of 1995, they operated in close cooperation with the "Eastern Europe" *mujahedin* units.

There were also a few thousand Islamist military experts from Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Egypt, Malaysia, and other Muslim countries serving in key positions in regular units of the Bosnian Muslim forces. They were providing expertise in artillery, air defense, logistics, etc. Their numbers are not included in the estimates above. In late December 1995, there was no indication that they were about to leave for their home countries.

There were other sizable Islamist forces involved in subversive and terrorist operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A major component of the Iran-sponsored Islamist terrorist infrastructure in the former Yugoslavia, and especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina, was being concealed in the ranks of various Islamic charities. The key Islamist humanitarian organizations are confirmed to be working under the sponsorship of Iranian intelligence. These organizations operate from Zagreb, Croatia, in cooperation and coordination with the local representatives of Iranian intelligence and the *HizbAllah*. Mohammad Javad Asayesh, a senior diplomat in the Iranian Embassy in Zagreb, responsible for overseeing intelligence and terrorism operations in the Balkans and Europe under the cover of humanitarian activities. The vast majority of funds for these "charities" are coordinated via the Mostazafin Foundation (a front of Iranian intelligence) and a host of Saudi and Persian Gulf foundations that, through Usama bin Ladin, answer to Sudan's radical Islamist leader, Hassan al-Turabi. Altogether, in late 1995, between 4,000 and 6,000 Islamist terrorists were operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina under the cover of these "charities" and "humanitarian projects". (Their numbers are on top of the *mujahedin* forces in the ranks of the Bosnian Muslim Army.)

As for the anticipated removal of the *mujahedin* by mid-January 1996 -- as promised by President Izetbegovic -- both Islamist and UN sources in Sarajevo were in agreement that, at best, it would be a half-hearted, show effort. With the official estimates of only a few hundred *mujahedin* in-country accepted by the US, Sarajevo would parade a few bearded hard-core cases to the Sarajevo airport and "deport" them, most likely to a well-deserved R&R in Sudan or Pakistan. Indeed, a Sarajevo official explained in late December that "*El-Mujahid*" was "merely a small unit" whose members would pull out "when all other foreign military and paramilitary withdraw from Bosnia". Indeed, the majority of the 15,000 to 20,000 foreign volunteers were already fully integrated into the key Bosnian Muslim units. Both Islamist and UN sources in Sarajevo acknowledged that for as long as these *mujahedin* remained clean shaven and in proper uniforms, nobody would touch them.

The True Meaning of the Dayton-Paris Agreement

Since mid-November 1995, once it was becoming clear that the Dayton negotiations would result in some form of an agreement, the international Islamist leadership (primarily in Iran and Sudan) and their senior representatives in Bosnia-Herzegovina have been studying the ramifications of the agreement for their activities in and out of the Balkans. The primary issue studied by the Islamists is the character of the future Islamic State in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the aftermath of a US-brokered agreement. Presently, the Islamist leadership leaves no doubt as to its determination to ensure the establishment of an Islamist State in Bosnia-Herzegovina even by force of arms. Significantly, the Islamists consider the US forces as the primary threat to their immediate and long-term objectives, thus laying the justification for military confrontations or terrorist strikes in the future.

This commitment was first stated authoritatively on November 18, 1995. Abu-Ma'ali, the commander of the *Mujahedin*, declared their readiness to continue the war against both Serbs and Croats if the just demands of the Bosnian Muslims were not met in Dayton. "Bosnia is the country conquered by Islam," he stressed. Such a situation was irreversible, he said, even though the political process was threatening this development. "For us, there is no difference between the Serbs and the Croats.

Croatia has territorial pretensions toward Bosnia and Serbia wants to create a greater Serbia. The Muslims in Bosnia will never accept such an outcome," Abu-Ma'ali concluded.

Taliban

Starting as Afghani exiles in Pakistan religious schools, the Taliban begin their conquest of Afghanistan.

1994

The Taliban become a force in factional fighting inside Afghanistan. They take control of Kandahar and free a Pakistani convoy seized by warlords. The Taliban's leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar, reputedly starts the movement in response to two warlords engaging in a tank battle in downtown Kandahar over a teenage boy, whom both warlords wanted for sexual purposes. The Taliban take control of two southern provinces.

1995

Afghanistan is battered by fighting among Islamic factions that turned on each other after overthrowing the country's communist rulers in 1992. In September, the Pakistani embassy in Kabul is reduced to rubble. Iran warns the Taliban not to cross into Iran.

September 1996

The Taliban enter Kabul after two days of heavy fighting. The Islamic guerrilla fighters hang Communist President Najibullah. The former president, who had been in hiding for four years, was seized from a U.N. compound and executed.

September 27, 1996: The Taliban conquer Kabul [[AP, 8/19/02](#)], establishing control over much of Afghanistan. A surge in the Taliban's military successes at this time is later attributed to an increase in direct military assistance from Pakistan's ISI. [[New York Times, 12/8/01](#)]

Bojinka Plot

In January 1995, Yousef and his associates plotted to blow up eleven U.S. commercial aircraft in one spectacular day of terrorist rage. The bombs were to be made of a liquid explosive designed to pass through airport metal detectors. But while mixing his chemical brew in a Manila apartment, Yousef started a fire. He was forced to flee, leaving behind a computer that contained the information that led to his arrest a month later in Pakistan. Among the items found in his possession was a letter threatening Filipino interests if a comrade held in custody were not released. It claimed the "ability to make and use chemicals and poisonous gas... for use against vital institutions and residential populations and the sources of drinking water." Yousef fled the country the night of the attack and made it onto the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list, with a \$2 million reward for information leading to his arrest.

January 6, 1995: Philippine investigators uncover an al-Qaeda plot to assassinate the Pope that would take place when he visits the Philippines one week later. While investigating that, they also uncover Operation Bojinka, planned by the same people: 1993 WTC bomber Ramzi Yousef and 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed. [[Independent, 6/6/02](#), [Los Angeles Times, 6/24/02](#), [Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)] FTW The plan is to explode 11 or 12 passenger planes over the Pacific Ocean simultaneously. [[Agence France Presse, 12/8/01](#)] If successful, up to 4,000 people would have been killed in planes flying to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Honolulu, and New York. [[Insight, 5/27/02](#)] Operation Bojinka was scheduled to go forward just two weeks later on January 21. Apparently a plan was also found for a second phase of attacks. [[The Cell](#), John Miller, Michael Stone and Chris Mitchell,

8/02, p. 124, [Insight, 5/27/02](#)] According to an investigator, in this phase, planes would be hijacked and flown into "key structures in the United States. The World Trade Center, the White House, the Pentagon, the Transamerican Tower, and the Sears Tower were among the prominent structures that had been identified in the plans that we had decoded." [Village Voice, 9/26/01](#)] One pilot, Abdul Hakim Murad, who learned to fly in US flight schools, confesses that his role was to crash a plane into the CIA headquarters as part of this phase of attacks. [Washington Post, 9/23/01](#)] An interrogation report from 1995 states: "[Murad] will hijack said aircraft, control its cockpit and dive it at the CIA headquarters. There will be no bomb or any explosive that he will use in its execution. It is simply a suicidal mission that he is very much willing to execute." [Insight, 5/27/02](#)] A Philippine investigator said on the day of 9/11: "It's Bojinka." He later says: "We told the Americans everything about Bojinka." [Washington Post, 9/23/01](#)] In an interview after 9/11, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed will claim that the 9/11 attacks were a refinement and resurrection of Bojinka. [Australian, 9/9/02](#)]

1996 (D): Having found a business card of a US flight school in the possession of Bojinka plotter Abdul Hakim Murad, the FBI investigates the US flight schools Murad attended. [Washington Post, 9/23/01](#)] He had trained at about 6 flight schools off and on, starting in 1990. Apparently they stop their investigation when they fail to find any other potential suspects

September 5, 1996: Terrorist Ramzi Yousef and two other defendants, Abdul Hakim Murad and Wali Khan Amin Shah, are convicted of crimes relating to Project Bojinka, a failed al-Qaeda plan Yousef devised that would have crashed 11 or 12 planes into buildings simultaneously. [CNN, 9/5/96](#)] Many people, including some experts, have said that Yousef was convicted on September 11, 1996 (for instance, see [A Stunning Intelligence Failure, Paul Monk, 2002](#)), and this would explain why that date would be chosen in 2001, but that appears to be incorrect.

Yousef Arrest

February 7, 1995: Terrorist Ramzi Yousef is arrested in Pakistan. The next day, as Yousef is flying over New York City on his way to a prison cell, an FBI agent says to Yousef, "You see the Trade Centers down there, they're still standing, aren't they?" Yousef responds, "They wouldn't be if I had enough money and enough explosives." [MSNBC, 9/23/01, The Cell, John Miller, Michael Stone and Chris Mitchell, 8/02, p. 135](#)]

Authorities also arrested Wali Khan Amin Shah in Malaysia, based on his photo agents found scanned into Yousef's laptop. He later admitted providing money and fake passports to Yousef and Abdul Hakim Murad.

In September 1995, Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, Abdul Hakim Murad, and Wali Khan Amin Shah are convicted for their role in the Bojinka plot.

Oklahoma City

On April 19, 1995, around 9:03 a.m., just after parents dropped their children off at day care at the Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City, the unthinkable happened.

A massive bomb inside a rental truck exploded, blowing half of the nine-story building into oblivion.

A stunned nation watched as the bodies of men, women, and children were pulled from the rubble for nearly two weeks. When the smoke cleared and the exhausted rescue workers packed up and left, 168 people were dead in the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil.

Just 90 minutes after the explosion, an Oklahoma Highway Patrol officer pulled over 27-year-old Timothy McVeigh for driving without a license plate. Shortly before he was to be released on April 21, McVeigh was recognized as a bombing suspect and was charged with the bombing. When McVeigh's ex-Army buddy, Terry Nichols, discovered that he, too, was wanted for questioning, he voluntarily surrendered to police in Herington, Kansas, and was later charged in the bombing. McVeigh and Nichols are awaiting trial in Denver, Colorado, and could receive the death penalty if convicted of terrorism, murder, and conspiracy charges.

Relocation to Afghanistan

May 18, 1996: Sudan expels bin Laden at the request of the US and Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden and al-Qaeda then move to Afghanistan, taking all of their money, resources and personnel. Bin Laden flies there in a C-130 transport plane with an entourage of about 150 men, women and children. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)] The US knows in advance that bin Laden is going to Afghanistan, but does nothing to stop him.

March 1996: The US pressures Sudan to do something about bin Laden, who is based in that country. Sudan readily agrees, not wanting to be labeled a terrorist nation. Sudan's Minister of Defense engages in secret negotiations with the CIA in Washington. Sudan offers to extradite bin Laden to anywhere he might stand trial. The US decides not to take him because they apparently don't have enough evidence at the time to charge him with a crime. Saudi Arabia is discussed as a possibility, but the Saudi Arabian government doesn't want him, even though bin Laden has pledged to bring down the Saudi Arabian government. US officials turn down the offer, but insist that bin Laden leave the country for anywhere but Somalia. One US intelligence source in the region later states: "We kidnap minor drug czars and bring them back in burlap bags. Somebody didn't want this to happen." [[Village Voice, 10/31/01](#), [Washington Post, 10/3/01](#)] Bin Laden leaves under pressure two months later. CIA Director Tenet later denies Sudan made any offers to hand over bin Laden. [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02](#)]

Late 1996: After moving the base of his operations to Afghanistan, bin Laden quickly establishes and maintains a major role in the opium drug trade. The money from opium is vital to keep the Taliban in power and fund bin Laden's terrorist network. Yossef Bodansky, director of the congressional Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare and author of a 1999 biography on bin Laden, says bin Laden takes a 15 percent cut of the drug trade money in exchange for protecting smugglers and laundering their profits. [[Star Tribune, 9/30/01](#)] A different estimate has bin Laden taking a cut of up to 10 percent of Afghanistan's drug trade by early 1999. This would give him a yearly income of up to \$1 billion out of \$6.5 to \$10 billion in drug profits seen within Afghanistan each year. [[Financial Times, 11/28/01](#)]

Khobar Towers

June 25, 1996: Explosions destroy the Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 American soldiers and wounding 500. [[CNN, 6/26/96](#)] Saudi officials later interrogate the suspects, declare them guilty, and execute them - without letting the FBI talk to them. [[PBS Frontline, 2001](#), [Irish Times, 11/19/01](#)] Saudis blame the Hezbollah, the Iranian-influenced group, but (some misguided) US investigators still believe bin Laden was somehow involved (in June 2001 a US grand jury indicted 13 Saudis for the bombing). [[Seattle Times, 10/29/01](#)] Bin Laden admitted instigating the attacks in a 1998 interview. [[Miami Herald, 9/24/01](#)] Ironically, the bin Laden family is later awarded the contract to rebuild the installation. [[New Yorker, 11/5/01](#)] In 1997, Canada catches one of the Khobar Tower attackers and extradites him to the US. But

in 1999, he is shipped back to Saudi Arabia before he can reveal what he knows about al-Qaeda and the Saudis.

Freeh Links Iran To Khobar Bombing

Former FBI director Louis Freeh testified that he believed there was "overwhelming evidence" that senior Iranian government officials financed and directed the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia.

Freeh testified as a key witness on behalf of the families of 12 Americans killed in the bombing, who are suing the government of Iran. The former director took particular interest in the investigation into the bombing, traveling to Saudi Arabia soon after the June 25, 1996, explosion. The bombing ripped a dormitory in half and killed 19 Air Force servicemen and servicewomen.

Freeh's testimony came at a fragile stage in the civil trial, which is in its third week and had been set to end today. U.S. Magistrate Judge Deborah A. Robinson said last week she might dismiss the suit if the plaintiffs could not produce Freeh and his former FBI counterterrorism chief, Dale Watson, the other critical witness in the case. Neither man got clearance from the Justice Department to testify until late last Friday night.

Freeh told Robinson he was "heavily involved" in the Khobar investigation, and had traveled to the bomb site hours after the explosion. He said he spent nearly two years trying to persuade Saudi diplomats to let FBI agents interview six Saudi citizens whom the Saudi government considered the bombing's perpetrators, and he ultimately succeeded.

"They admitted they were members of Saudi Hezbollah," Freeh said. "They admitted complicity in the act. And they implicated senior Iranian officials in the funding and planning of the attack."

Robinson repeatedly questioned what led Freeh to his conclusion that Iran was responsible, other than the confessions of six Saudis.

Freeh responded that other witnesses and evidence corroborated their stories. He said they also named leaders in the Iranian military and information agency who helped select the target site and pay for the group's training and explosives.

Outside the courtroom, Freeh said in a brief interview that he rejects recent theories that al Qaeda may have had a role in the Khobar Towers attack. He praised top Saudi officials for their cooperation, which led to indictments in 2001 and an ongoing criminal case against 13 Saudis and one Lebanese man.

Wadh el Hage Raid

21 August 1996 Police search Wadh el-Hage's home in Nairobi, Kenya. On his computer they discover documents, which outline the presence of an Al Qaeda cell in Nairobi. After the raid, el-Hage is questioned but not detained, and he returns to America.

During the August 1997 raid on El Hage's house in Nairobi, the FBI recovered this letter from his personal computer. They believe it was written by Haroun Fazul, one of the suspects in the Nairobi bombing who had stayed in El Hage's house. In the letter, Haroun expresses concern that the cell members in East Africa are in great danger from American intelligence forces, and asks, Are we ready for that big clandestine battle?

The letter stated: "Brother Sharif, Do not worry when I'm late in communicating with you since as you know the equipment is limited and now one is afraid to talk with you given the circumstances. Perhaps the worker could serve as the line of communications between me and you and whom you could send after he arrives at your location in the middle in circa one week; he can take the latest news which I will receive from 'Abd al-((Sabbur)). Tell him (the worker) not to call me on any of the telephones here at our end and advise all of the same. He (the worker) can call at the

al-Bunda (nfi) and leave a message that he has arrived at the middle so that I can proceed towards him God willing
Brother Sharif, 'abd al-((Sabbur)) called before he came and while I was writing that report on 13 August 1997 and informed us he is coming in one week. He (Sabbur) told Salim to prepare himself for travel to the manager (comment: could also mean director) and to also submit the request to vacate the house immediately. I understood that 'Abd al-Sabbur will travel quickly and I met Ahmad and told him about the matter. I also asked Ahmad about the feasibility of him assuming responsibility of the agency (comment: could also mean organization) and he told me he will not touch anything. He (Ahmad) further told me that it is better to sell all the items and to rent a regular house and put one of us there along with the communications equipment. What I see (recom[m]end) is that you come down to Nairobi immediately in order to see the situation for yourself and see how to arrange things in the future.
Brother, my family has been in touch with me and told me that my mother is very sick and that they would like me to go there. What do you think? Keep in mind we only have \$500. Should I come down or wait for Wadi' until he comes back whereby he may return wit[h] some money. As you know he took the rest of the money which had arrived from Safwan and he traveled with that money. I sat down wit[h] 'Abdallah ((Hasan)) and he thanked you for all your words and advised me the time had come to move forward and take care of the ...

[MISSING TEXT]

Third: The Security Position

We can now state that the security position on the cell is at 100 percent danger. In this report, I will try to explain the reasons that make us feel that danger (way). I will also try to offer my recommendation to honored and wise high command which I know understands everything and we hope it is seeking the best. There are many [r]easons that lead me to believe that the cell members in East Africa are in great danger, which leaves us no choice but to think and work hard to foil the enemy's plans who is working day and night to catch one of us or gather more information about any of us. (This report stems from the basic principle that) anyone who studies security matters seriously, will never handle anything carelessly, regardless of how small or great it is, but will take all matters seriously. As we have heard, seen and read that the "Hajj" (comments: reference to Usama bin Ladin) has declared the war on America and that was confirmed when we saw the interview that took place in Jalalabad in which the Shaykh stated the following points:

-- declaring war upon America because it had appointed itself the policeman of the world.

-- he had nothing to do with the two explosions in Saudi Arabia but he was glad they took place.

-- my future plans will be heard in the radio stations.

(Above was made) in addition to other points which pleased us all, thank God. In fact America's goal in that interview was to slander the Shaykh in the American people's mind and open a new door (of attack). This is being done in order to pave the way to catch him without any domestic opposition from within the states. The interview showed the Shaykh's picture when he was in Afghanistan and on the war fronts and they were showing his picture when they were showing the dead bodies of the Jews in Palestine and the Americans in Somalia and Yemen. They have also shown the two explosions in Riyadh and connected them with his opposition to the Saudi regime. After they described him as a rich businessman who owns millions of dollars, they accused him of being the major financier of the mujahedin "terrorists" in the world and that he has a huge multi-national army and had become America's primary target. They have also shown another film for the Shaykh on 10 August 1997 on the same network CNN. From all this talk, we understood that America is willing to move against the Shaykh or those who are associated with him. After that a lot of news were broadcasted about the Hajj and his followers in the radio and magazines. We then heard the news of his move with his family from Jalalabad to Qandahar; they

even named the village where he lives with his family. We were surprised to read in one of the English newspapers which noted that America had sent a force of one thousand multi-national mercenaries to Pakistan to try and kidnap the Shaykh or Mr. 'Atif.

From all these developments we understood that there is a war on and the situation is dangerous and that anybody who is associated with the Hajj regardless of their position and their nationality are at risk. Also, the American forces carry kidnaping operations against anyone who threatens its national security and its citizens, and we have seen that when they kidnaped the Pakistani national from one of the border villages whereby while he was sleeping in one location he found himself the next morning in Washington.

My recommendation to my brothers in East Africa was to not be complacent regarding security matters and that they should know that now they have become America's primary target and that they should know that there is an American-Kenyan-Egyptian intelligence activity in [Na]irobi aiming to identify the names and residences of the members who are associated with the Shaykh since America knows well that the youth who lived in Somalia and were members of the Shaykh's cell are the ones who killed the Americans in Somalia. They know that since Kenya was the main gateway for those members, there must be a center in Kenya. Ahmed ((Tawii)) told me that he will talk to Taysir about t[h]e changes since we are really in danger. Our biggest problem is that our security situation here is very weak. I told him that the network will appreciate the changes (in security) since we are convinced one hundred percent that the Kenyan intelligence are aware about us and that indeed our security situation is extremely bad.

We read in the Kenyan newspaper the "standard" news of the arrest of five terrorists in Kenya. When DC Gharissa declared that news, I warned Ahmad ((Madubi)) that there is an intelligence operation in Kenya to identify the leaders a[n]d the foreigners who deal with them. We think there is American pressure on Kenya to search for the Arabs living in the area (country). Therefore, brother Sharif, please watch out and also let the brother engineers be careful and be advised that anyone of us could fall in the trap. If the engineers come down, it would be better if they did not contact me and God willing, I will try and visit them at their homes.

The last bit of news which almost made me explode (go crazy) and which I consider the primary cause of danger for the East Africa network (concerned) the following. (This was in conjunction with what) we read in one of the British newspapers "The Daily Telegraph" and which I have asked brother Tawfiq to buy from Nairobi after hearing on BBC on 2 August 1997. The gist of the news is this: "There is an individual from the bin Ladin finance department currently in the hands of the American Central Intelligence Agency "CIA" and also in the hands on the British intelligence service "MI6" and is in Saudi Arabia. He was delivered to them through the Saudi intelligence service during the middle of May. Along with him is another individual called "Jallud" who is an assistant to Usama and who may have cooperated with the Saudi government after he was arrested since May. The newspaper also mentioned that Sidi Tayib had advised the American intelligence service about the scope of distribution of money to various Arab communities who cooperate with al Shaykh in the United States especially in Brooklyn, New Jersey and Je[r]sey City. This individual was also said to have given details about Usama's financial information in Afghanistan and Pakistan and how much was sent to London and to Detroit in America. The newspaper also linked this news with the Jerusalem bombing and the arrest of Lafi Khalil in New York and [h]is colleague Abu Mayzi. The the newspaper further discussed the current residence of Usama in Qandahar and the number of his wives and his description and age and mentioned that he is wanted in Britain because of the bombings in [France] during 1995 which it noted he had financed and which was conducted by the Algerians who were based there at the time. It also noted that he has a hand within the Saudi opposition movement in London known as the "Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights". Additionally, it also noted that he is

wanted by the Egyptian government for his involvement in the attempted assassination against the Egyptian president in 1995 in Ethiopia as well as for his support of the blind Shaykh "Imar 'Abd al-Rahman" who was targeting tourists in Egypt.

We have tried to take some measures here in Nairobi but first we wanted to verify that the man called Sidi Tayib is identifiable with Abu al-Fadhl the amputee who is married to the Shaykh's relatives. In this connection and to the best of my knowledge, there is only one Abu al-Fadhl from Saudi Arabia who is known as Abu al-Fadhl al-Makki (the Meccan). We have matter seriously, despite the limited resources we have here in the office. (As such) I have sent a fax to Hamad to (try to) verify this information to no avail since I do not know if he had received my message or not. Until now, I have not received his answer. Also, I have contacted the engineer al-'Utaybi in Qatar but his telephone is always busy. Finally, I have sent a fax to Abu Ibrahim in the Sudan and till the writing of this message on [?]4 August 1997, I have not received his answer through the fax.

I have also contacted Abu Khadijah the Iraqi in Germany on 13 August 1997 and informed him about the news which shocked him. I told him to be careful. In the final analysis we do not care much to verify the man's name. What matters is the fact that an important man with close links to the Shaykh seems to have fallen into the enemy's hands and we have to take all the appropriate security precautions against that. (Hence) I, along with Tawfiq, have collected all the files which we do not need here and which might pose a threat against us and have placed them in another location. We did not burn them since they belong to engineer 'Abd 'al-Sabbur who may have a different opinion about what we are seeing here, but anyway we are awaiting for his return next week. He had called from there to inform Tawfiq to prepare himself as they will join the director there after his approval. We tried to leave the house but we have a problem with cash flow. We also thought that if we were under surveillance, that (by moving) this may look very suspicious. On the same day we heard the (above) news the partisans from Mombasa called. I told them I will get in touch with them and asked them never to call me at that number again. They told me that Khalid wanted to talk to me about an important subject but I told them I will get in touch with them but never to call me at that number again. After two days they called me at the same number so I forced them to burn that number immediately informed Khalid that I had prohibited them from calling me here as I am one hundred percent sure that the telephone is tapped. This was (my conclusion) after Wadi's wife told me after three days of reading the newspaper, that she had heard strange voices in the television when she was trying to adjust the speaker. (She relayed the following). She told me she heard "This is it. This is the line". She then said, there was a pause and then the following "Yes, yes, is he Arab or English?" Then (she) said the line went dead. May be that seems normal when you surf the television channels and you hear overlapping voices from movies or channels. But I took this matter seriously since we are in a state of emergency after what we heard about Abu al-Fadhl. She (Wadi's wife) also told me that there was an American lady living in the same complex who had visited them. This was (after) Abdallah whom she had seen when he had gone to buy bread. She (the lady) had asked him "Are you American?" and he answered her affirmatively. She (the lady) then came to the house to which Abdallah had provided the number for. When she (the lady) came to the house, she asked to use the phone. (Wadi's wife) then said "I was suspicious of that call since she perhaps did something to the phone and hence we took care in using the telephone at the house." I advised Umm Abdallah to put the television set in the box so that we can take it to another location.

The fact of these matters and others leave us no choice but to ask ourselves are we ready for that big clandestine battle? Did we take the necessary measures to avoid having one of us fall in the trap? Knowing we were counting on God's blessing with our limited resources.

The second matter is that I would recommend to the good and wise supreme command which I implore to God to keep safe to work hard to return the caliphate to earth and fight the forces of atheism and dictators who wreaked havoc on earth. We, the East Africa cell members, do not want to know about the operations plans since we are just implementers. We trust our command and appreciate their work and know that they have a lot of problems. But my advise here is for the practical part only since we started the project for "ree-establishing the Moslem state" is a collective effort and not an individual one; we are all part of it. So we are asking you, for the sake of organizing the work, to tell us that there is a possible danger that may take place in a while due to a certain decision so we can prepare ourselves accordingly or (so that) we may go underground for a while since our presence might foil or complicate your plans that we know no[t]hing of.

As you know, the decision to declare war on America was taken and we only know about it from t[h]e news media and we should have known about that decision (and the decision only) and not the plans so that we could take the necessary precautions and to prevent ca[us]ing any complications or failure in your plans due to our ignorance of them.

As you (know) if one of us fall in the trap due to one of your decisions, God forbids, that will be a loss to the whole cell. We ask you to keep in touch wit[h] us through the internet from Pakistan, as we get a lot of informmation now about the Shaykh from that network. Or you can follow 'Abd al-Sabbur's example such as when he faxed his family fro[m] the border village next to you. We need to hear your good words and we are afraid to be in the dark and from taking any unapproved plans domestically since we do not have the necessary expertise regarding such difficult decisions; decisions which (only you) can undertake.

I did not write this report until I was officially asked by brother Khalid to be responsible for the media information office for the cell in Nairobi. He (Klhalid) had asked me also to write periodically about the security situation on the cell and the whole group in here in general in East Africa. This is to be included in al-Baraka fi[l]e[s] which usuallly include seven items, the third of

[MISSING TEXT]

affairs of the people there where you are needed urgently in order to arrange things for them. Also, the coordination will take place there.

Brother, I finished the first and the second Baraka (files) but I know we had agreed to correspond with each other by discs, so I printed for you the most important and last item: the third one. Finally, my greetings to all the engineers and I have not yet visited anyone and perh[ap]s I may not visit them until the situation improves. Umm Fatma delivered (a baby), however, we have not gone there because I am in Nairobi and perh[ap]s I will not go. I do want to complicate matters further by including them in the network. It is enough what had happen[e]d. Will rearrange our affairs anew.

Say a lot of prayers for us so God may grant us success, may God give you his reward.

Your brother,

Salih Suhayb al-((Ansari)).“

9/11 Hijackers

1996-December 2000: Thirteen of the hijackers disappeared for significant periods of time before the end of 2000:

1) Nawaf Alhazmi: The CIA says he was in the Bosnia conflict in the mid-1990s [[CIA Director Tenet Testimony, 6/18/02](#)] He fought in Chechnya in 1996 [[Observer, 9/23/01](#)] and/or 1998. [[Arab News, 9/20/01](#), [ABC News, 1/9/02](#)] He also visited Afghanistan before 1998 and swore loyalty to bin Laden. [[CIA Director Tenet Testimony, 6/18/02](#)]

2) Khalid Almihdhar: The CIA says he was in the Bosnia conflict in the mid-1990s [[CIA Director Tenet Testimony, 6/18/02](#)] His family claims he left to fight in Chechnya in 1997. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)]

- 3) Salem Alhazmi: spent time in Chechnya with his brother Nawaf Alhazmi. [[ABC News, 1/9/02](#)]
 - 4) Ahmed Alhaznawi: left for Chechnya in 1999 [[ABC News, 1/9/02](#)], lost family contact in late 2000. [[Arab News, 9/22/01](#)]
 - 5) Hamza Alghamdi: left for Chechnya in early 2000. [[Independent, 9/27/01](#), [Washington Post, 9/25/01](#)] Another report says he went there around January 2001. He called home several times until about June 2001, saying he was in Chechnya. [[Arab News, 9/18/01](#)]
 - 6) Mohand Alshehri: went to fight in Chechnya in early 2000. [[Arab News, 9/22/01](#)]
 - 7) Ahmed Alnami: left home in June 2000, called home once in June 2001 from an unnamed location. [[Arab News, 9/19/01](#), [Washington Post, 9/25/01](#)]
 - 8) Fayez Ahmed Banihammad: left home in July 2000 saying he wanted to participate in a holy war or do relief work. [[St. Petersburg Times, 9/27/01](#), [Washington Post, 9/25/01](#)] He called his parents one time since. [[Arab News, 9/18/01](#)]
 - 9) Ahmed Alghamdi: left his studies to fight in Chechnya in 2000, last seen by his family in December 2000. He last called his parents in July 2001 but didn't mention being in the US. [[Arab News, 9/18/01](#), [Arab News, 9/20/01](#)]
 - 10) Waleed Alshehri: disappeared with Wail Alshehri in December 2000, spoke of fighting in Chechnya. [[Washington Post, 9/25/01](#), [Arab News, 9/18/01](#)]
 - 11) Wail Alshehri: had psychological problems, went with his brother to Mecca to seek help and both disappeared, spoke of fighting in Chechnya. [[Washington Post, 9/25/01](#)]
 - 12) Majed Moqed: last seen by a friend in 2000 in Saudi Arabia, who said, "he had a plan to visit the United States to learn English." [[Arab News, 9/22/01](#)]
- Clearly there is a pattern: 11 appear likely to have fought in Chechnya, and two others are known to have gone missing. It's possible that others have similar histories, but it's hard to tell because "almost nothing [is] known about some." [[New York Times, 9/21/01](#)] Furthermore, a colleague claims hijackers Atta, Marwan Alshehhi, Ziad Jarrah and would-be hijacker Ramzi bin al-Shibh wanted to fight in Chechnya but were told in early 2000 that they were needed elsewhere. [[Washington Post, 10/23/02](#), [Reuters, 10/29/02](#)]

1998: According to later closed session congressional testimony by the heads of the CIA, FBI and NSA, al-Qaeda begins planning the 9/11 attacks in this year. [[USA Today, 6/18/02](#)] In a June 2002 interview, 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed also says the planning for the attacks began at this time. [[AP, 9/8/02](#)] But it appears the targeting of the WTC and pilot training began even earlier. An al-Qaeda operative in Spain will later be found with videos filmed in 1997 of major US structures (including "innumerable takes from all distances and angles" of the WTC). There are numerous connections between Spain and the 9/11 hijackers, including an important meeting there in July 2000. [[AP, 7/17/02](#)] Hijacker Waleed Alshehri was living in Florida since 1995, started training for his commercial pilot training degree in 1996, and got his license in 1997. [[Sunday Herald, 9/16/01](#), [Boston Globe, 9/14/01](#)]

1998-2000: Hijackers Atta and Marwan Alshehhi live periodically in the town of Mabalacat, Philippines. They stay in the Woodland Resort hotel and apparently learn to fly planes at a nearby flight school. Philippine and US investigators have looked into these visits but haven't confirmed the hijackers' presence there. Locals, however, are certain they saw them frequently partying, drinking alcohol, sleeping with local women, and consorting with many other, unknown Arabs (most of whom disappear shortly before 9/11). For instance, according to a former waitress at the hotel, Alshehhi throws a party in December 1999 with six or seven Arab friends: "They rented the open area by the swimming pool for 1,000 pesos. They drank Johnnie Walker Black Label whiskey ... They came in big vehicles, and they had a lot of money. They all had girlfriends." Several employees recall Atta staying at the hotel during the summer of 1999, acting unfriendly and cheap. One hotel employee claims

that most of the guests were Arab, and many took flying lessons at the nearby school. These witnesses claim the two used aliases, but the other Arabs referred to Atta as "Mohamed." [[Manila Times, 10/2/01](#), [International Herald Tribune, 10/5/01](#), [AP, 9/28/01](#)] Apparently, other hijackers and 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed visit the Philippines during this time. However, according to the official version of events, Atta and Alshehhi are in Hamburg, Germany during this time. Atta is still working on his thesis, which he completes in late 1999. [[Australian Broadcasting Corp., 11/12/01](#)]

May 18, 1998: An Oklahoma newspaper later reports that the FBI office in Oklahoma City sends a memo on this day warning that "large numbers of Middle Eastern males" are getting flight training in Oklahoma and could be planning terrorist attacks. [[AP, 9/26/01](#), [CNN, 9/18/01](#)] This remarkable story seems to have been reported only by one Oklahoma daily. [[NewsOK, 5/29/02](#), see the [memo](#) here] It appears this warning was not followed up. In 1999 it is learned that an al-Qaeda agent had studied flight training at the Airman Flight School in Norman, Oklahoma. Hijackers Atta and Marwan Alshehhi consider studying at the same school in 2000; Zacarias Moussaoui does study at the school in 2001.

Chechnya

Aug. 1991: Chechnya's Communist leadership supports an abortive coup in Moscow. They are overthrown, with Russian President Boris Yeltsin's blessing, by a local firebrand, former Soviet Air Force Gen. Dzhokhar Dudayev.

October 1991: After winning a dubious election, Dudayev declares independence.

December 1994: Russian troops invade Chechnya. Moscow succeeds in occupying all the republic's urban areas, but is unable to defeat guerrillas in the mountainous south.

August 1996: The rebels re-take Grozny. Under the Khasavyurt Peace Accords, Russia withdraws from Chechnya and agrees to discuss its independence after five years.

January 1997: Rebel military commander Aslan Maskhadov, a moderate nationalist, wins presidential elections.

August-September 1999: Chechen militants led by warlord Shamil Basayev launch two invasions of neighboring Dagestan. Apartment bombings in Moscow and two other Russian cities kill some 300 people. The Kremlin blames Chechen extremists.

Oct. 2, 1999: Russian forces invade Chechnya for the second time.

Dec. 25, 1999: A full-scale assault on Grozny begins.

Frequently asked questions about Chechnya

By Fred Weir

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

What does the Caucasus refer to?

The Caucasus comprises three post-Soviet states and six autonomous Russian republics occupying the mountainous isthmus joining Russia and Turkey between the Black and Caspian Seas. The historic divide between Europe and Asia, the traits of both mix - often wildly - in the South Caucasus countries of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. The mainly Muslim North Caucasus includes the Russian provinces of Kabardino-Balkaria, Karacheyevo-Cherkessia, North Ossetia, Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Dagestan.

What ethnic groups live there?

The Caucasus is possibly the world's most complex ethnic mosaic, making the Balkans appear simple by comparison. More than 100 distinct groups, speaking dozens of languages and practicing several different religions, occupy traditional

economic niches in the region's mountain slopes, broad valleys, and subtropical seacoasts. Dagestan alone has 32 ethnic groups and 14 official languages.

Who are the Chechens?

The Chechens are an indigenous group of mountain herdsmen, farmers, and fighters who have lived in the North Caucasus for thousands of years. They speak a distinct Caucasian tongue, which is non-Slavic, non-Turkic, and non-Persian. Russian novelist Mikhail Lermontov wrote of the Chechens in 1832: "Their god is freedom, their law is war." The last census in 1989 put their number at just over 1 million.

Is Chechnya an independent country?

Chechnya broke away from Russia in 1991. But the declaration went unrecognized by Moscow and the world community. In 1994 Russian forces invaded, but were forced to withdraw after two years of bloody warfare and an estimated 80,000 deaths. The cease-fire agreement ending the conflict left Chechnya's national status in limbo until 2001.

Why is Chechnya important to Russia?

Moscow regards Chechnya as part of the Russian Federation; the 1993 Constitution written by President Boris Yeltsin does not acknowledge the right of any territory to secede. The North Caucasus republics command mountain passes into the South Caucasus, where Russia is jockeying with the West for influence with those post-Soviet states and control over output of potentially vast Caspian oil fields.

What are the prospects for peace?

Russia appears to be staking all on military victory and has consistently ruled out talks with Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov or any international mediation. A pro-Moscow Chechen leader serving prison time for embezzlement, Bislan Gantamirov, was recently pardoned by President Yeltsin and sent to Chechnya, probably to head an eventual puppet government. Most analysts believe Russia can capture Chechnya's towns and cities, but doubt it can win an extended guerrilla war against Chechnya's highly-motivated and fast-moving irregular forces.

What has life been like for ordinary Chechens?

Chechnya was one of the poorest regions in the former Soviet Union, but isolation and lawlessness made things incomparably worse after the republic declared independence in 1991. The 1994-96 war devastated towns, ruined infrastructure, and killed thousands. The present war has cut off power, heat, and water to most towns and villages and led more than 200,000 people to flee to ill-supplied, makeshift refugee camps in neighboring Ingushetia.

What is the international community doing?

Western leaders have condemned Russia's battle tactics in harsh terms, but have taken few practical steps to rein in the Kremlin. On Dec. 28 the World Bank approved a \$100-million loan to Moscow, signaling that business-as-usual is likely to prevail.

'CHECHEN ARABS': THE REAL AL-QA'IDA TERRORISTS

In November 2003, the FBI announced that it was launching an investigation into reputed links between the anti-Russian Chechen resistance and Al Qaeda as a result of the death of a US citizen who was killed in October 2002 during the storming of the Nord Ost theater production in Moscow. The following article is meant to assist the FBI - and others -- by presenting an introduction to a thorny issue that has all too often been dangerously misrepresented.

A Misunderstood Link

In subjecting the anti-Russian Chechen insurgents, the Arab-dominated Al Qaeda

organization, and the gray world where they overlap to careful systematic scrutiny, it is feared that the existence of a distinct group that has yet to be analyzed in its own right, namely the 'Chechen-Arabs', might be missed.

To fully comprehend the Chechens and their purported links to Al Qaeda transnational terrorism, one must understand an ingredient that is absent in the war of Al Qaeda terrorism experts -- the Chechens themselves -- and read such basic introductions to the Chechens as Khassan Baiev's seminal work, *The Oath*. A point that will become glaringly obvious from the works dealing with the Chechens is that their real enemy is Russia. Like the localized separatist movements of the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) or the Kurdish PKK, the Chechen resistance is not in and of itself a threat to the West. All Chechen resistance elements, including fringe groups such as that element lead by Shamil Basayev, have their hands full with the enemy at hand, the Russian Federation.

This clear absence of any Chechen propensity to attack US or other Western targets is in marked contrast to the modus operandi of bona fide Al Qaeda terrorism. The latter, as demonstrated by the recent bombings of double Jewish and British targets in Istanbul, dual Australian-Western targets in Bali, twin US targets in Washington and New York, and the two embassies in Kenya and Tanzania indicate, is to engage in simultaneous mega-attacks designed to inflict maximum Western casualties. The purpose of Al Qaeda attacks is not to make specific demands, as was the case with the Nord Ost theater hostage takers, who demanded a Russian withdrawal from their homeland.

Jihadis' Chechnya Move

To understand the 'Chechen-Arabs' one must go back to the year 1995 when an exploratory group of first-generation 'Afghan-Arabs' led by one Amir (Commander) Khattab arrived in Chechnya to assist the out-gunned Chechens in their struggle against Russian Federal Forces. Amir Khattab (the nom de guerre of Saudi citizen Samer ben Saleh ben Abdallah al Sweleim) was a member of the roaming brotherhood of jihadi paladins that continued to wage holy war on behalf of front line Muslim groups long after the 'divine' victory over the Soviets in the Afghan jihad of 1979-1988. In the aftermath of the Soviet defeat, Khattab and other members of the Afghan alumni swore an oath to the patron saint of the international jihad movement, Abdullah Azzam, to continue the defense of other threatened Muslim groups across the globe.

By 1995, a major component of this movement, which included such fighters as Abu Walid, began to trickle to Chechnya as the jihad in Bosnia came to an unexpected halt following the Dayton Peace Accords. Unlike the Bosnians or Kosovo Albanians after them, however, the diplomatically-isolated Chechen insurgents received no support from the West. In 1995, the Chechen nationalist rebels finally received help from an unexpected source when Khattab and his group of fighters arrived to wage a holy war against their old enemies from the Afghan jihad, the Urus Kafirs (Russian infidels).

While Khattab's fighters were few, they brought the outgunned Chechen resistance access to the immense financial resources of his powerful supporters, the quasi-official charities of Saudi Arabia, such as the wealthy Al Hamein foundation. While the hard-drinking Sovietized Chechen sufis initially found Khattab's bearded jihadi-puritan Wahhabis to be something of an oddity, the scrappy Chechens soon came to appreciate the contribution these professional infidel-killers could make to their cause.

A Fateful Alliance

The influence of Khattab's International Islamic Battalion (IIB) in Chechnya began to grow after the Chechens' most prominent field commander, Shamil Basayev, declared Khattab his 'brother' and began to coordinate activities with the jihadis. It was this alliance between the 'Second Shamil' (the first being the 19th century guerilla commander Imam Shamil) and a Saudi holy warrior who saw himself as something of an Islamic 'Che Guevera' that was to have such negative consequences for hundreds of thousands of innocent Chechens who simply dreamed of rebuilding their lives following Russia's defeat in the 1994-96 Russo-Chechen War. One cannot underestimate the importance of this alliance between Basayev and Khattab for it gave the Kremlin a pretext for later reinvading the Chechen statelet and painting the Chechen secessionist leadership as 'Al Qaeda.'

In the aftermath of the Russian withdrawal from Chechnya in 1996, Khattab and many of his rootless Arab jihadis stayed on in Chechnya and continued to coordinate activities with Shamil Basayev. It was at this time that Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov and his moderate supporters (including foreign minister Ilyas Akhmadov) began to call on Khattab and his IIB jihadis to decamp from Chechnya and proceed to some other zone of jihad. But far from leaving Chechnya, Khattab signaled his intention to stay on in the war torn Chechen republic by marrying a Muslim woman from the neighboring Russian republic of Dagestan and gradually joining the anti-Maskhadov resistance in Chechnya.

Most ominously, Khattab further signaled his real intentions by opening a series of training camps in southeastern Chechnya which trained unemployed young Chechen men and Muslims from throughout the CIS for a never-ending jihad that was far greater in scope than the micro-republic envisioned by Chechnya's nationalist leadership.

Ample proof of the danger these camps posed to Chechnya and the neighboring Russian Federation came in August and September of 1999 when Dagestani, Chechen, and Arab militants poured over the border from these camps and raided the neighboring Russian republic of Dagestan. As a horrified Chechen populace led by President Maskhadov and his secularist aids, such as Ilyas Akhmadov, disclaimed Khattab and Basayev's jihadi attack, Russia used these incursions as a *causis belli* to reinvade Chechnya. It was during these jihadi invasions into Dagestan that the name of Khattab's Naib Amir (Deputy Commander), Abu Walid, first began to be disseminated in Islamist circles abroad.

While Khattab and Walid may have become heroes to Islamists across the globe who followed their jihad exploits on-line at azzam.com and kavkaz.org (jihadi websites glorifying the Chechens' desperate struggle to repel the Russians as a 'holy war'), they were hated by many average Chechens who saw them as foreign trouble-makers who gave Russia a pretext to reinvade their lands. This division between the foreign jihadis and indigenous Chechens was, to a degree, healed by the Kremlin's subsequent response to the invasion of Dagestan. Although the Russian Federation had initially limited its retaliatory bombing strikes to Khattab's camps in southeastern Chechnya, the Kremlin launched a total invasion of Chechnya in October 1999. This indiscriminate invasion drove Chechnya's moderate leadership (the only force in Chechnya that might have assisted in expelling the foreign jihadis) into a strategic alliance with Khattab and his IIB.

Most importantly, as Russia's bloody war in Chechnya continues to fester, it increasingly attracts attention in Islamist circles around the globe where the Chechens' historic struggle is defined as jihad. Young Egyptians, Yemenis, Saudis, Pakistanis, Turks, etc. continue to make their way at great risk to Chechnya to assist

the Chechens in their uneven struggle. Many of those who have fought in Chechnya have been radicalized by their experience as front line jihadis. While there are no statistics on their numbers, it cannot be doubted that some of these Chechen-Arab jihadis have subsequently drifted into Al Qaeda terrorist circles in much the same way that Afghan-Arabs from the anti-Soviet jihad were drawn to bin Laden's terrorist struggle against the other Great Satan, America.

Chechen Links

Thus far no systematic attempt has been made to coalate the activities of Al Qaeda terrorists who have had previous experience in the Chechen 'jihad'. Below are just some of the overlaps between Chechen-Arabs who fought (or sought to fight) in Chechnya and Al Qaeda which are credible. In none of the cases below, however, is there any question of Chechen involvement in Al Qaeda terrorist activities, even though in most of them the Chechen Arabs' Al Qaeda terrorism was reported in the Western press as 'Chechen' Al Qaeda terrorism:

--1995. Sudanese Al Qaeda defector Jamal al Fadl testifies that Osam bin Laden offered \$1,500 per person (to be used for the purchase of Kalishnikov rifle and travel expenses) for jihad volunteers willing to travel to Chechnya to assist the Chechens in their struggle against the Russian 'infidels.' 1

--December 1996. Ayman al Zawaheri, leader of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and member of Al Qaeda's ruling troika, travels to Dagestan in search of a new base of operations for his organization in response to its expulsion from Sudan. Zawaheri's plans are foiled by Russian security services which arrest him and hold him in jail for several months.2

---1999-2000. The US government claims that prior to 9/11, the Islamic Benevolence Foundation (a US-based charity that sent \$700,000 to the Chechens) and Al Haramain (an international charity based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia which channeled funds to Khattab's aid, Abu Daba, via its offices in Baku, Azerbaijan) also siphoned money to Al Qaeda. Another charity known to have sponsored the Chechen resistance was the Kifah refugee center which had close links to the Al Qaeda bombers in the 1993 WTC attack.3

---September 2001. Ahmed al Ghamidi, a Saudi jihadi who fought in Chechnya after studying engineering in Mecca, is one of the hijackers of United Airlines flight 175 which hit the south WTC tower. Another 9/11 hijacker on the flight that crashed into the Pentagon (Nawaq al Hamzi) also fought in Chechnya. Ahmed al Haznawi, a hijacker on United Airlines flight 93 which crashed in Pennsylvania on September 11 is reported to have left his home in the al Baha region of Saudi Arabia in 2000 telling friends he was going to train in an Al Qaeda camp in Afghanistan for jihad in Chechnya.4

---September 2001. Several minutes after the September 11th attack on the USA, American intelligence registers a mobile phone call from Afghanistan to the Pankisi Gorge, an inaccessible valley in Georgia that was known as the home base for 'Chechen-Arabs' who trained new recruits for jihad in neighboring Chechnya.5

--September 2001. Mounir El Motassadeq, a member of the 9/11 Al Qaeda support network arrested in Germany, claims that Mohammad Atta, the mission leader for the attack, "really wanted to get to Chechnya to fight because of the massacre the Russians were committing there."6

---August 2002. Sweeps of the Chechen-inhabited Pankisi Gorge in Georgia by American-trained Georgian forces nab one Saif al Islam el Masry, a member of Al Qaeda's shura (council) and disrupt a plot by Arab jihadis training there to bomb or use improvised chemical weapons against Western (not Russian) targets in Russia and Central Asia. Interpol and Western intelligence agencies also believe that Abu Khabab (Al Qaeda's 'mad scientist' seen experimenting with poison gases in an Al Qaeda video seized by coalition forces in Afghanistan) transferred his operations to the Pankisi after the destruction of the Taliban.⁷

--January 2003. British authorities arrest six North African Arabs in London accusing them of attempting to produce ricin poison in their flat. Several of those arrested are later found to have trained in the Pankisi Gorge camps with the aim of eventually fighting jihad with the Chechen-Arabs in Chechnya.⁸

---May 2003. The Saudi mastermind of the Al Qaeda bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (which galvanized the Saudis to move against domestic Al Qaeda influence) is found to have fought in Chechnya before later traveling to Afghanistan to fight the USA and coalition forces at Tora Bora.

---November 2003. Turkish authorities claim that a deadly wave of bombings in Istanbul of British and Jewish targets were carried out by domestic militants belonging to the Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front who were trained by Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. Several of this group's members previously fought jihad in Chechnya.¹⁰

---November 2003. Yemeni authorities arrest Mohammed Hamdi al Ahdal, a 32-year old Saudi citizen responsible for the bombing of the USS Cole in Aden, Yemen in 2000. Al Ahdal, one of the top 20 Al Qaeda leaders, previously fought in Chechnya, where he lost a leg (currently he has a prosthetic leg).¹¹

Conclusion

As this sampling of evidence of 'Chechen-Arab' involvement in Al Qaeda terrorism clearly indicates, the FBI and other Western intelligence agencies should focus their investigations on the 'Chechen-Arab' alumni of the 'jihad' in the Caucasus. The author has found many further such examples of Chechen-Arab involvement in Al Qaeda terrorism and this group of fighters, like the Afghan-Arabs before them, represent a clear and present danger to US and Western interests.

While Osama bin Laden and radical Islamic extremists from across the globe are prone to see the Chechens as victims of Russian infidel aggression and a people in need of assistance, (bin Laden broadcast a message on Al Jazeera following the Nord-Ost theater seizure by the Chechens which proclaimed "As you look at your dead in Moscow also recall ours in Chechnya"), this sort of effort to support for the Chechens' struggle does not translate into Chechen support for Al Qaeda's struggle against America or the West. As for the Chechens themselves, the world awaits the arrest of a single Chechen by coalition forces for involvement in Al Qaeda terrorism anywhere in the globe.

Notes:

1. Jane Corbin. *The Base. In Search of Al Qaeda*. London; Simon and Schuster. 2002. p. 55.
2. Dore Gold. *Hatred's Kingdom*. Washington. Regnery Publishing 2003. p. 137. Lawrence Wright. "The Man Behind Bin Laden." *The New Yorker*. Sept. 9, 2002.
3. See the Benevolence International Foundation's website for information on how to donate zakat tithe money to Chechnya at: www.benevolence.org/OSP/chorphan.asp

See also "An Islamic Foundation in the USA Made 'Benevolence' to the Militants in Chechnya." Pravda. Nov. 2, 03. The US State Dept. declared Al Haramain a charity that supports Al Qaeda, see www.ustreas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sancionts/terrorism.html

4. "The Men Who Brought the World to the Brink of War." The Observer. (UK). Sept. 23, 2001.
5. "Georgian Security Minister Unveils Classified Details on Pankisi." Civil Georgia. <http://www.civil.gel/cgi-bin/newsprof/fullnews.cgi>. The Pankisi Gorge in Georgia is home to the Kist Chechens and was the base of an Arab unit of fighters who were tied to Ruslan Khamzat Gelayev's Chechen guerilla militia.
6. "Chechnya. The New Afghanistan?" American Future Foundation Magazine. Jul. 1 2003.
7. Paul Quinn-Judge. "The Surprise in the Gorge. Al Qaeda Flourishes in Far-Off Spots." Time Magazine. Oct. 20, 2002.
8. Jeffrey M. Bale. "Ricin Found in London. An Al Qaeda Connection." CNS Reports (Center for Non Proliferation Studies).
9. "Profile: Saudi's Top Al Qaeda Leader." BBC.co.uk (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3025546.stm)
11. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A4669-2003Nov21.html>
12. Ahmed al Haj. "Yemen Arrests Suspected Al Qaeda Leader." Associated Press. Nov. 26, 2003.

Dr. Brian Glyn Williams is assistant professor of Islamic History at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth. Reproduced with permission of The Jamestown Foundation.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

Mid-1996-September 11, 2001: After fleeing Qatar, 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed travels the world and plans many terror acts. He is apparently involved in the 1998 US embassy bombings, the 2000 USS Cole bombing and other attacks. He previously was involved in the 1993 WTC bombing and the Bojinka plot. [[Time, 1/20/03](#)] One US official says, "There is a clear operational link between him and the execution of most, if not all, of the al-Qaeda plots over the past five years." [[Los Angeles Times, 12/22/02](#)] He lives in Prague, Czech Republic, through much of 1997. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)] By 1999 he is living in Germany and visiting with the hijackers there. [[New York Times, 9/22/02](#)] Using 60 aliases and as many passports, he travels through Europe, Africa, the Persian Gulf, Southeast Asia and South America, personally setting up al-Qaeda cells. [[Los Angeles Times, 12/22/02](#), [Time, 1/20/03](#)] The US announces a \$2 million reward for his capture in 1998. [[New York Times, 6/5/02](#)] But supposedly, US investigators only learn of Mohammed's large role in al-Qaeda after 9/11. [[Committee Findings, 12/11/02](#), [Los Angeles Times, 12/22/02](#)]

The Declaration of War

World Islamic Front

In February 1998, Usama bin Laden and his close associate, Ayman al Zawahiri, endorsed a fatwa under the banner of the "International Islamic Front for Jihad on the Jews and Crusaders." This fatwa, published in the newspaper, Al-Quds Al-Arabi, on February 23, 1998, stated that Muslims should kill Americans - including civilians - anywhere in the world where they can be found.

"Praise be to God, who revealed the Book, controls the clouds, defeats factionalism, and says in His Book: "But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them, seize them, beleague them, and lie in wait for

them in every stratagem (of war)"; and peace be upon our Prophet, Muhammad Bin-'Abdallah, who said: I have been sent with the sword between my hands to ensure that no one but God is worshipped, God who put my livelihood under the shadow of my spear and who inflicts humiliation and scorn on those who disobey my orders. The Arabian Peninsula has never -- since God made it flat, created its desert, and encircled it with seas -- been stormed by any forces like the crusader armies spreading in it like locusts, eating its riches and wiping out its plantations. All this is happening at a time in which nations are attacking Muslims like people fighting over a plate of food. In the light of the grave situation and the lack of support, we and you are obliged to discuss current events, and we should all agree on how to settle the matter.

No one argues today about three facts that are known to everyone; we will list them, in order to remind everyone:

First, for over seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples. If some people have in the past argued about the fact of the occupation, all the people of the Peninsula have now acknowledged it. The best proof of this is the Americans' continuing aggression against the Iraqi people using the Peninsula as a staging post, even though all its rulers are against their territories being used to that end, but they are helpless.

Second, despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the crusader-Zionist alliance, and despite the huge number of those killed, which has exceeded 1 million... despite all this, the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres, as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war or the fragmentation and devastation.

So here they come to annihilate what is left of this people and to humiliate their Muslim neighbors. Third, if the Americans' aims behind these wars are religious and economic, the aim is also to serve the Jews' petty state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there. The best proof of this is their eagerness to destroy Iraq, the strongest neighboring Arab state, and their endeavor to fragment all the states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper statelets and through their disunion and weakness to guarantee Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal crusade occupation of the Peninsula. All these crimes and sins committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on God, his messenger, and Muslims. And ulema have throughout Islamic history unanimously agreed that the jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries. This was revealed by Imam Bin-Qadamah in "Al- Mughni," Imam al-Kisa'i in "Al-Bada'i," al-Qurtubi in his interpretation, and the shaykh of al-Islam in his books, where he said: "As for the fighting to repulse [an enemy], it is aimed at defending sanctity and religion, and it is a duty as agreed [by the ulema]. Nothing is more sacred than belief except repulsing an enemy who is attacking religion and life." On that basis, and in compliance with God's order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims:

The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies -- civilians and military -- is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim. This is in accordance with the words of Almighty God, "and fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together," and "fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in God." This is in addition to the words of Almighty God: "And why should ye not fight in the cause of God and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? -- women and children, whose cry is: 'Our Lord, rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from thee one who will help!'"

We -- with God's help -- call on every Muslim who believes in God and wishes to be rewarded to comply with God's order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. We also call on Muslim ulema, leaders, youths, and soldiers to launch the raid on Satan's U.S. troops and the devil's supporters allying with them, and to displace those who are behind them so that they may learn a lesson.

Almighty God said: "O ye who believe, give your response to God and His Apostle, when He calleth you to that which will give you life. And know that God cometh between a man and his heart, and that it is He to whom ye shall all be gathered."

Almighty God also says: "O ye who believe, what is the matter with you, that when ye are asked to go forth in the cause of God, ye cling so heavily to the earth! Do ye prefer the life of this world to the hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life, as compared with the hereafter. Unless ye go forth, He will punish you with a grievous penalty, and put others in your place; but Him ye would not harm in the least. For God hath power over all things."

Almighty God also says: "So lose no heart, nor fall into despair. For ye must gain mastery if ye are true in faith." "

Egyptian Islamic Jihad Warning

August 6 1998 The group, led by Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, warns of a "message" they will be sending to Americans, "which we hope they read with care, because we will write it, with God's help, in a language they will understand."

African Embassy Bombing

August 7, 1998: Terrorists bomb the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The bomb in Nairobi, Kenya kills 213 people, including 12 US nationals, and injures more than 4,500. The bomb in Dar es Salaam kills 11 and injures 85. The attack is blamed on al-Qaeda. [PBS Frontline, 2001]

US Dept. Of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D.C. 20535
November 18, 1998.

Orcon/Law Enforcement Sensitive The information contained herein is extremely sensitive and is being shared with your government to help you detect and prevent acts of terrorism in your country and to identify information your service might be in a position to provide which could aid the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in its investigation of the above matter. This information should be kept confidential, and under no circumstances should it be further disseminated without prior clearance from the government of the United States of America.

On August 7, 1998, at approximately 10:30 a.m. local time, two Embassies of the United States of America, located in the East African cities of Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, were attacked in coordinated truck bombings, later determined to have occurred approximately four minutes apart. In Nairobi, 213 people were killed in the blast, while 11 individuals died in the bombing at Dar es Salaam. The bombings were carried out by members and associates of Usama Bin Ladin's organization, known by the Arabic word "al-Qaeda", literally, "the base"). Under US. Federal law, the FBI is mandated with the responsibility of investigating certain crimes committed against American persons and property abroad. The attacks against the Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam fall under this mandate. Within hours of the bombings, FBI personnel were dispatched to East Africa to assist the Kenyan Criminal Investigative Division (CID) and Tanzanian CID in conducting crime scene forensic examinations, as well as investigative interviews, searches and arrests. The information detailed herein was primarily developed as a result of these investigations, still ongoing, at Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.

It should be noted however, that a significant reason for the success of these

investigations to date has been the willingness of the Kenyan, Tanzanian and many other friendly foreign governments to assist and facilitate our investigative efforts when possible. The FBI recognizes that this spirit of cooperation has been, and will continue to be, very important to our ability in countering the very real threat posed by Usama Bin Ladin and his affiliates to the safety of ordinary people worldwide. Background:

Sometime in 1993 to early 1994, individuals associated with al-Qaeda, a terrorist organization founded by Usama Bin Ladin and Muhammed Atef, began to locate to Kenya, primarily to the Nairobi and Mombasa areas. Some were "mujahedin" or "holy warriors" who, like Usama Bin Ladin himself, had fought against the former Soviet Union after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Al-Qaeda opposed the involvement of the United States in the Gulf War in 1991, operation "Restore Hope" in Somalia in 1992-1993 and the US presence in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Al-Qaeda also opposed the United States because of the arrest, conviction and imprisonment of persons belonging to Al-Qaeda and associated groups such as Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman.

One of the first Usama Bin Ladin associates and former mujahidin to move to Kenya was Wadih El-Hage, (hereafter referred to as El-Hage), a Lebanese Christian by birth, who later became a naturalized American citizen and converted to Islam. Others included Fazul Abdullah Mohammed also known as (aka) Harun Fazhl, (hereafter referred to as Harun), and Muhammed Sadiq Odeh, aka Mohammed Sadiq Howaida (hereafter referred to as Odeh). At this time, Abu Ubaida Al-Banshiri, aka Jalal, aka Aadil Habib, (hereafter referred to as Abu Ubaida), a powerful member of Usama Bin Ladin's leadership, was also in Tanzania. Abu Ubaida was both a landowner and a businessman in Mwanza, Tanzania. Until his death in a ferry accident on Lake Victoria in May 1996, Abu Ubaida was a known Harun associate and is believed to have been one of Usama Bin Ladin's two most influential military commanders. One commonality amongst the above individuals is the fact that at one time or another, all were associated with Kenya based non-governmental organizations (NGO's), organizations ostensibly created for the purposes of humanitarian relief and aid work. A chapter of one NGO, Help Africa People, allegedly founded in Germany, was established in Nairobi by El-Hage. At one time, Help Africa employed Harun. Odeh was given an identity card for Help Africa People to show his wife and her family as an indication of his employment. Aside from their NGO work, many of these individuals, who the FBI believes may be part of the original core group of the Usama Bin Ladin cell in East Africa, also set up other businesses; commercial fishing and clothing companies were common to many of them. To the casual observer, these individuals would have appeared to live ordinary lives. Planning The Nairobi Attack: Initial planning of the attacks against the US embassy at Nairobi seems to have begun in Spring 1998, with the movement of key personnel into East Africa. In May 1998, Harun rented an estate home in an upscale residential neighborhood outside the center of Nairobi at 43 Runda Estates. The home was isolated by high walls that surrounded the property, making it nearly impossible for any passerby to observe activity in and around the house. Moreover, the gated driveway was large enough to accommodate trucks, as was the garage. It is believed that the bomb used to destroy the US Embassy at Nairobi may have been constructed and actually stored at this location.

The FBI believes that the following individuals were involved in the operation to bomb the US Embassy in Nairobi: Harun, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah (hereinafter referred to as Saleh); Odeh; Fahad Mohammed Ally (hereinafter referred to as Ally); Abdul Rahman (hereinafter referred to as Rahman); Mohammed Rashed Daoud Al-Owhali, (hereinafter referred to as Al-Owhali); and Jihad Mohammed Ali (hereinafter referred to as Azzam).

Saleh is described as the "mastermind" of both the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam attacks. Odeh is an "explosives consultant" and trained architect. Ally was the owner of a pick-up truck subsequently believed to be used by Harun to lead the bomb

delivery truck to the rear of the US Embassy in Nairobi. Rahman is described to be a bomb technician. Al-Owhali was a passenger in the bomb delivery truck driven by Azzam. Al-Owhali and Azzam had prepared for their martyrdom in what was to be a suicide bombing. Al-Owhali, however, fled the scene of the bombing when the attack diverged from the original plan. He was subsequently arrested and rendered to the United States on August 27, 1998. Odeh was arrested by the Kenyans on August 14th, 1998 and rendered to the United States on August 28th, 1998.

On August 4, 1998, Saleh and Al-Owhali reportedly conducted a reconnaissance of the US Embassy, in part to finalize the plan concerning the bomb-delivery truck's placement : It was decided to locate the truck as close as possible to the rear of the building, instead of attempting to drive it into the Embassy's underground garage or place it in the front of the embassy building.

On or about August 5, 1998, Rahman is said to have made the final connection between the bomb and the detonation device, which was located in the passenger compartment of the bomb-delivery truck. At that time, the bomb-delivery truck was located in the garage at 43 Runda estates.

Executing The Nairobi Attack:

On August 7, 1998, prior to the bombing, two light colored vehicles exited 43 Runda Estates. In the first, a pick-up truck, was Harun, who led the second vehicle, a truck, containing the passenger Al-Owhali and the driver Azzam to the US embassy. At that time, Al-Owhali was armed with a pistol and a number of homemade stun grenades. Once in the Embassy parking lot, Al-Owhali's role was to "scare away" people in the vicinity of the Embassy compound. The objective was allegedly to reduce the number of potential Kenyan casualties. Al-Owhali was also to manually detonate the bomb, in the event that the detonation device malfunctioned. However, upon exiting the bomb delivery vehicle, Al-Owhali forgot his pistol in the truck and was left only with the stun grenades. Instead of returning to the bomb vehicle, Al-Owhali brandished a stun grenade before throwing it in the direction of a security guard. Al-Owhali then fled the scene. At about the same time, Azzam (the driver) manually detonated the bomb. It is believed that Azzam was killed instantly.

Planning The Dar Es Salaam Attack:

In June 1998, about one month after Harun leased 43 Runda Estates in Nairobi, Khalfan Khamis Mohammed (hereinafter known as Khamis) signed a lease to rent a house in the Ilala District of Dar es Salaam. This house shared many of the same characteristics as 43 Runda Estates. For instance, it was also located away from the city center, and the whole of the property was surrounded by high walls to block the view of passersby. It, too, had a garage large enough to accommodate a truck. Preliminary analysis suggests it may have been where the bomb used to destroy the US embassy in Dar es Salaam was constructed and stored.

The following individuals have been identified as being possibly members of the Dar es Salaam cell : Ally, Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani (hereinafter referred to as Ghailani); Ahmed Salim Swedan (hereinafter referred to as Swedan); and Khamis. Ghailani purchased the bomb delivery vehicle with the assistance of Swedan. In addition both Ally and Khamis were associated with the bomb delivery vehicle. As noted previously, Saleh has been described as the "mastermind" of both the Dar es Salaam and the Nairobi attacks.

Investigations subsequent to the bombing revealed that Ally and Khamis had been residing with Rashid Saleh Hamed. Hamed is currently in the custody of Tanzanian officials and has been charged with the murder of eleven people as a direct result of the bombing. Another individual currently in Tanzanian custody and charged with this bombing is Mustafa Mahmud Said Ahmed (hereinafter referred to as Mahmud). Mahmud was reportedly involved a past incident of surveilling the US Embassy in Nairobi in 1997.

Executing The Dar Es Salaam Attack:

According to information received Saleh aka Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah said that

Hamden Khalif Allah Awad aka "Ahmed the German," was chosen to drive the bomb vehicle in Dar es Salaam. The FBI believes that "Ahmed the German" was the driver of the bomb delivery vehicle and that he was killed instantly as a result of the bomb's detonation outside the US Embassy in Dar es Salaam.

Composition Of The Bombs:

The FBI is of the opinion that the bombs used in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam both employed TNT as a principle explosive component. Certain statements made by the subjects and/or witnesses in the case have mentioned the use of TNT and the FBI Laboratory has confirmed its presence at both bomb sites. The FBI Laboratory is continuing with it's forensic examination of the evidence from the two bombings and, as those examinations are completed, further details of the two explosive devices will become known.

Investigative Strategy:

The FBI will continue to investigate all aspects of the bombing, inside and outside of East Africa; will continue to pursue all known and unknown subjects who participated in the bombings; and will continue to pursue other Al-Qaeda members suspected of otherwise being involved in criminal activity directed at American targets. Upon apprehension the FBI will seek to have all subjects tried at the federal level in United States District Court in the Southern District of New York.

Prosecutorial Status:

The United States Attorney's Office in the Southern District of New York has filed an indictment which names the following individuals : Usama Bin Ladin, Muhammed Atef, Harun, Odeh and Al-Owhali, each charged as follows: one(1) count of conspiracy to kill US nationals; two(2) counts of bombing US Embassies; and two hundred twenty four counts of murder. Wadih El-Hage is charged with one(1) count of conspiracy to kill US nationals, eight (8) counts of perjury before a Federal Grand Jury and three(3) counts of lying to a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The indictment charges that the above-mentioned-individuals and other conspired to conduct acts of terrorism against the US interests as members of the terrorist organization, al-Qaeda. These acts of terrorism include the bombing of US embassies in Nairobi and Tanzania; the killing of US military personnel in Somalia; the recruitment of US citizens to commit acts of terrorism; the shipment of weapons and explosives to Saudi Arabia; and efforts to obtain weapons of mass destruction. This conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism against US interests originated in 1989 and has continued to the present time.

The al-Qaeda conspiracy targeted the US Government because the United States is an "infidel" power, governing in a manner inconsistent with al-Qaeda's interpretation of Islam and because of US support for other "infidel" governments, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt. In addition, al-Qaeda opposed the involvement of the United States in the Gulf War in 1991, operation "Restore Hope" in Somalia in 1992-1993 and the presence of US military currently in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Finally, al-Qaeda opposed the United States because of the arrest, conviction, and imprisonment of persons belonging to al-Qaeda and associated groups, such as Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman.

The FBI and the Southern District of New York expect to charge others in the bombing of the US Embassies at Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. The US Government will also vigorously investigate members of the al-Qaeda organization in the United States and around the world.

Tomahawk Response

August 20, 1998: The US fires 66 missiles at six training camps in Afghanistan and 13 missiles at a pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum, Sudan in retaliation for the US embassy bombings. [[Washington Post, 10/3/01 \(C\)](#)] The US makes clear the attacks are aimed at terrorists "not supported by any state" despite obvious evidence to the contrary in Afghanistan. About 30 people are killed in the attacks, but no important al-

Qaeda figures. [Observer, 8/23/98, New Yorker, 1/24/00] Suspected terrorist financiers Khalid bin Mahfouz and Mohammed Hussein al-Amoudi appear to have been the main investors in the Sudanese factory. However, "subsequent lab tests and court actions leave little doubt the El Shifa plant was producing only human and veterinary drugs." [Ottawa Citizen, 9/29/01] The US later unfreezes the bank accounts of the nominal factory owner and takes other actions indicating guilt, but admits no wrongdoing. It is later learned that of the six camps targeted in Afghanistan, only four were hit, and of those only one had connections to bin Laden. Two of the camps belong to the ISI, and five ISI officers and some twenty trainees are killed. Clinton says on TV that the missiles were aimed at a "gathering of key terrorist leaders", which turns out to have taken place a month earlier, in Pakistan. [Observer, 8/23/98, New Yorker, 1/24/00]

Hijacker Update

November 1, 1998-February 2001: Mohamed Atta and al-Qaeda terrorists Said Bahaji and Ramzi bin al-Shibh move into a four bedroom apartment at 54 Marienstrasse, in Hamburg, Germany and stay there until February 2001 (Atta is already mainly living in the US well before this time). Investigators believe this move marks the formation of their Hamburg al-Qaeda terrorist cell. [Los Angeles Times, 1/27/02, New York Times, 9/10/02] Up to six men at a time live at the apartment, including other al-Qaeda agents such as hijacker Marwan Alshehhi and cell member Zakariya Essabar. [New York Times, 9/15/01] During the 28 months Atta's name is on the apartment lease, 29 ethnically Middle Eastern or North African men register the apartment as their home address. [The Cell, John Miller, Michael Stone and Chris Mitchell, 8/14/02, p. 256]

9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed "repeatedly" visits Mohamed Atta and others in the Hamburg al-Qaeda cell. [AP, 8/24/02] US and German officials say a number of sources place Mohammed at Atta's Hamburg apartment. It isn't clear when he visits or who he visits. [Los Angeles Times, 6/6/02, New York Times, 11/4/02] However, it would be logical that he at least visits Atta's housemate Ramzi bin al-Shibh, since investigators believe he is the "key contact between the pilots" and Mohammed. [Los Angeles Times, 1/27/03] Mohammed is living in Germany at the time. [New York Times, 9/22/02]

Hijackers Mohamed Atta and Marwan Alshehhi, plus would-be hijacker Ramzi Bin al-Shibh and associate Mounir El Motassadeq, hold a meeting in Amsterdam, Netherlands. All are living in Hamburg at the time, so it's not clear why they go to meet there, though it's speculated they are meeting someone. Motassadeq also goes to the town of Eindhoven, Netherlands, on three occasions, in early 1999, late 1999 and 2001. [AP, 9/13/02] On at least one occasion, Motassadeq receives cash provided by unnamed "Saudi financiers" that is meant to fund a new Eindhoven mosque. Investigators believe he uses the money to help pay for some 9/11 hijacker flying lessons. [Baltimore Sun, 9/2/02] Alshehhi also flies to Amsterdam from the US in the summer of 2001, but it isn't known why. (al Waqf Foundation)

Zacarias Moussaoui, living in London, is observed by French intelligence making several trips to Pakistan and Afghanistan. French investigators later claim the British spy agency MI5 was alerted and requested to place Moussaoui under surveillance. The request appears to have been ignored. [Independent, 12/11/01]

November 1999: Hijackers Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar enter the US and begin living in San Diego [Washington Post, 9/30/01, San Diego Channel 10, 10/5/01, Newsweek, 6/2/02] (some reports have them in the US even earlier [Wall Street Journal, 9/17/01, Las Vegas Review Journal, 10/26/01]). Alhazmi's name is on an apartment lease beginning in November 1999.

Late November 1999: Investigators believe hijackers Atta, Marwan Alshehhi and Ziad Jarrah and associates Ramzi bin al-Shibh and Said Bahaji (all members of the same Hamburg, Germany cell) arrive separately in Afghanistan around this time. They meet with bin Laden and train for several months. [CBS, 10/9/02, [New York Times](#), 9/10/02] In a 2002 interview with Al Jazeera, bin al-Shibh says "We had a meeting attended by all four pilots including Nawaf Alhazmi, Atta's right-hand man." The Guardian interprets this to mean that Alhazmi flew Flight 77, not Hani Hanjour as popularly believed. [[Guardian](#), 9/9/02]

Late 1999: Hijackers Atta and Marwan Alshehhi report their passports missing, Ziad Jarrah reports his missing in February 2000. [[Sun Sentinel](#), 9/28/01, *Inside 9-11: What Really Happened*, by Der Spiegel, 2/02, pp. 257-258] Alshehhi has a replacement issued on December 26, 1999. [[London Times](#), 9/20/01]

Millennium Plot

November 30, 1999: Jordanian officials successfully uncover an al-Qaeda plot to blow up the Radisson Hotel in Amman, Jordan and other sites on January 1, 2000. [[PBS Frontline](#) 10/3/02] A call between al-Qaeda leader Abu Zubaydah and Musaab al Zarqawi, a Jordanian terrorist, exposes the plot. In the call, Zubaydah states, "The grooms are ready for the big wedding." [[Seattle Times](#), 6/23/02] This call reflects an extremely poor code system, because the FBI already determined in the wake of the 1998 US embassy bombings that "wedding" was the al-Qaeda code word for bomb. [*The Cell*, John Miller, Michael Stone and Chris Mitchell, 8/02, p. 214] Furthermore, it appears al-Qaeda fails to later change their code system, because the codename for the 9/11 attack is also "The Big Wedding." [[Chicago Tribune](#), 9/5/02]

December 14, 1999: Al-Qaeda terrorist Ahmed Ressay is arrested in Port Angeles, Washington, attempting to enter the US with components of explosive devices. 130 pounds of bomb-making chemicals and detonator components are found inside his rental car. He subsequently admits he planned to bomb Los Angeles International Airport on December 31, 1999. [[New York Times](#), 12/30/01] This would have been part of a wave of attacks against US targets over the New Year's weekend. He is later connected to al-Qaeda and convicted, but he still hasn't been formally sentenced. [[Senate Intelligence Committee](#), 9/18/02, [PBS Frontline](#) 10/3/02]

Air India Hijacking

December 24-31, 1999: An Indian Airlines flight is hijacked and flown to Afghanistan where 155 passengers are held hostage for eight days. They are freed in return for the release of three militants held in Indian prisons. One of the hostages is killed. One of the men freed in the exchange is 9/11 paymaster Saeed Sheikh. [[BBC](#), 12/31/99] Another freed militant is terrorist leader Maulana Masood Azhar. Azhar emerges in Pakistan a few days later, and tells a crowd of 10,000, "I have come here because this is my duty to tell you that Muslims should not rest in peace until we have destroyed America and India." [[AP](#), 1/5/00] He then tours Pakistan for weeks under the protection of the ISI. [[Vanity Fair](#), 8/02] The ISI and Saeed helps Azhar form a new terrorist group called Jaish-e-Mohammad, and Azhar is soon plotting terrorist acts again. [[Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#), 3/3/02, [Guardian](#), 7/16/02, [Washington Post](#), 2/8/03]

January 1, 2000-September 11, 2001: After being released from prison, Saeed Sheikh stays in Kandahar, Afghanistan, for several days and meets with Taliban leader Mullah Omar. He also meets with bin Laden, who is said to call Saeed "my special son." He then travels to Pakistan and is given a house by the ISI. [[Vanity Fair](#), 8/02] He lives openly and opulently in Pakistan, even attending "swanky parties attended by senior Pakistani government officials." US authorities conclude he is an

asset of the ISI. [[Newsweek, 3/13/02](#)] Amazingly, he is allowed to travel freely to Britain, and visits family there at least twice. [[Vanity Fair, 8/02](#)] He works with Ijaz Shah, a former ISI official in charge of handling two terrorist groups, Lieutenant-General Mohammad Aziz Khan, former deputy chief of the ISI in charge of relations with Jaish-e-Mohammad, and Brigadier Abdullah, a former ISI officer. He is well known to other senior ISI officers. He regularly travels to Afghanistan and helps train new terrorist recruits in training camps there. [[New York Times, 2/25/02](#), [National Post, 2/26/02](#), [Guardian, 7/16/02](#), [India Today, 2/25/02](#)] Saeed helps train the 9/11 hijackers also, presumably in Afghanistan. [[Telegraph, 9/30/01](#)] He also helps al-Qaeda develop a secure web-based communications system, and there is even talk that he could one day succeed bin Laden. [[Vanity Fair, 8/02](#), [Telegraph, 7/16/02](#)] He wires money to the 9/11 hijackers on at least one occasion and possibly others. Presumably he sends the money from the United Arab Emirates during his many trips there. [[Guardian, 2/9/02](#)]

U.S.S. The Sullivans

January 3, 2000: An al-Qaeda attack on USS The Sullivans in Yemen's Aden harbor fails when their boat filled with explosives sinks. The attack remains undiscovered, and a duplication of the attack by the same people later successfully hits the USS Cole. [[PBS Frontline 10/3/02](#)]

Malaysia Meeting

Late 1998: An al-Qaeda operative involved in the bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi is captured and interrogated by the FBI. The FBI learns of a safe house telephone number in Yemen, owned by bin Laden associate Ahmed Al-Hada, hijacker Khalid Almihdhar's father-in-law. [[Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] US intelligence taps the phone line and learns the safe house is an al-Qaeda "logistics center" used by agents around the world to communicate with each other and plan attacks. [[Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] It has been revealed that even bin Laden, from 1996 to 1998 (the two years he had a traced satellite phone), called the safe house dozens of times. [[Sunday Times, 3/24/02](#), [Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)] In late 1999 the phone line will lead the CIA to an important al-Qaeda "summit" in Malaysia. [[Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] It appears al-Qaeda was still using the phone line until a government raid in February 2002. [[CBS News, 2/13/02](#)]

January 5-8, 2000: About a dozen of bin Laden's trusted followers hold a secret, "top-level al-Qaeda summit" in the city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. [[CNN, 8/30/02](#), [San Diego Union-Tribune, 9/27/02](#)] Plans for the October 2000 bombing of the USS Cole and the 9/11 attacks are discussed. [[USA Today, 2/12/02](#), [CNN, 8/30/02](#)] At the request of the CIA, the Malaysian secret service follows, photographs, and even videotapes these men, and then passes the information on to the US. However, the meeting is not wiretapped. [[Newsweek, 6/2/02](#), [Ottawa Citizen, 9/17/01](#), [Observer, 10/7/01](#), [CNN, 3/14/02](#), [New Yorker, 1/14/02](#)] Attendees of the meeting include:
1 and 2) Hijackers Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar. The CIA and FBI will later miss many opportunities to foil the 9/11 plot through these two hijackers and the knowledge of their presence at this meeting.
3) Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, a top al-Qaeda leader and the alleged "mastermind" of the 9/11 attacks. [[Independent, 6/6/02](#), [CNN, 8/30/02](#)] The US had known Mohammed was a major terrorist since the exposure of Operation Bojinka in 1995, and knew what he looked like, as can be seen from a 1998 wanted poster. US officials have stated that they only realized the meeting was important in the summer of 2001, but the presence of Mohammed should have proved the meeting's importance. [[Los Angeles Times, 2/2/02](#)]
4) An Indonesian terrorist known as Hambali. He was the main financier of Operation Bojinka. [[CNN, 8/30/02](#), [CNN, 3/14/02](#)] Philippine intelligence officials learned of Hambali's importance in 1995, but didn't track him down or share information about

him. [[CNN, 3/14/02](#)]

5) Yazid Sufaat, a Malaysian man who owned the condominium where the meeting was held. [[Newsweek, 6/2/02](#), [Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] A possibility to expose the 9/11 plot through Sufaat's presence at this meeting is later missed.

6) Fahad al-Quso, a top al-Qaeda operative. [[Newsweek, 9/20/01](#)] A possibility to expose the 9/11 plot through al-Quso's presence at this meeting is later missed.

7) Tawifiq bin Atash, better known by his alias "Khallad." Bin Atash, a "trusted member of bin Laden's inner circle," was in charge of bin Laden's bodyguards, and served as bin Laden's personal intermediary at least for the USS Cole attack. [[Newsweek, 9/20/01](#)] A possibility to expose the 9/11 plot through bin Atash's presence at this meeting is later missed.

8) Ramzi bin al-Shibh, who misguided investigators believe was supposed to be the 20th hijacker, except he couldn't get a US visa. His presence at the meeting may not have been realized until after 9/11, despite a picture of him next to bin Atash, and even video footage of him. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#), [Time, 9/15/02](#) [Die Zeit, 10/1/02](#), [Newsweek, 11/26/01](#)] One account says he was recognized at the time of the meeting, which makes it hard to understand why he wasn't tracked back to Germany. [[Der Spiegel, 10/1/02](#)] Another possibility to expose the 9/11 plot through bin al-Shibh's presence at this meeting is later missed. It appears bin al-Shibh and Almihdhar were directly involved in the attack on the USS Cole [[Newsweek, 9/4/02](#), [Washington Post, 7/14/02](#), [Guardian, 10/15/01](#)], so better surveillance or follow-up from this meeting should have prevented that attack as well.

9 and more?) Unnamed members of the Egyptian based Islamic Jihad were also known to have been at the meeting. [[Cox News, 10/21/01](#)] Islamic Jihad had merged with al-Qaeda in February 1998. [[ABC News, 11/17/01](#)]

March 5, 2000: An unnamed nation tells the CIA that hijacker Nawaf Alhazmi had flown from the January meeting in Malaysia to Los Angeles. [[New York Times, 10/17/02](#)] This confirms what the CIA already knows. [[CNN, 3/02](#)] The CIA also learns that hijacker Khalid Almihdhar arrived in the US on the same flight. [[Michael Rolince Testimony, 9/20/02](#)]

2000-September 10, 2001: The names of four hijackers are later discovered in Philippines immigration records, according to Philippine Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo. However, it hasn't been confirmed if these are the hijackers, or just other Saudis with the same names. Abdulaziz Alomari visits the Philippines once in 2000, then again in February 2001, leaving on February 12. [[AP, 9/19/01](#), [Telegraph, 9/20/01](#), [Philippines Daily Inquirer, 9/19/01](#)] Ahmed Alghamdi visits Manila, Philippines more than 13 times in the two years before 9/11. He leaves the Philippines the day before the attacks. [[Arizona Daily Star, 9/28/01](#), [Telegraph, 9/20/01](#)] Fayez Ahmed Banihammad visits the Philippines on October 17-19, 2000. [[Arizona Daily Star, 9/28/01](#), [Telegraph, 9/20/01](#)] Saeed Alghamdi visits the Philippines on at least 15 occasions in 2001, entering as a tourist. The last visit ends on August 6, 2001. [[Telegraph, 9/20/01](#)] Hijackers Atta and Marwan Alshehhi may also have been living in the Philippines, and 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed occasionally stays there. When in the Philippines, it is possible the hijackers meet with associates of Mohammad Jamal Khalifa, bin Laden's brother-in-law. Khalifa has been closely linked with the Philippines chapter of the International Islamic Relief Organization, which gets much of its money from the Saudi Arabian government and has lately been accused of being a front for al-Qaeda. Amongst other connections to terrorism, Khalifa helped fund the Islamic Army of Aden, a group that claimed responsibility for the bombing of the USS Cole. [[Boston Herald, 10/14/01](#)] Khalifa has been connected through phone calls to Hambali, a major terrorist who attended a planning meeting for the 9/11 attacks in Malaysia, also attended by two hijackers connected to the Islamic Army of Aden. [[PBS Frontline, 10/3/02](#), [Cox News, 10/21/01](#)]

San Diego

January 15-August 2000: Hijackers Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar return to their apartment in San Diego, and live there openly. Hijacker Hani Hanjour joins them as a roommate in February 2000. [[San Diego Union-Tribune, 9/21/01](#), [San Diego Channel 10, 9/18/01](#)] They use their real names on their rental agreement, [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/20/02](#)] driver's licenses, Social Security cards and credit cards, [[Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] car purchase, and bank account. Alhazmi is even listed in the 2000-2001 San Diego phone book. [[South Florida Sun-Sentinel, 9/28/01](#), [Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] Neighbors notice odd behavior: they have no furniture, they are constantly using cell phones on the balcony, constantly playing flight simulator games, keep to themselves, and strange cars and limousines pick them up for short rides in the middle of the night. [[Washington Post, 9/30/01](#), [Time, 9/24/01](#)]

Mid-January 2000: Omar al-Bayoumi, a Saudi who has been living in the US for several years (see [June 1998 \(D\)](#)), throws a welcoming party for future 9/11 hijackers Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar in San Diego that introduces them to the local Muslim community. [[Washington Post, 12/29/01](#)] He also introduces hijacker Hani Hanjour to the community a short time later. [[San Diego Union-Tribune, 9/14/02](#)] One associate later says an al-Bayoumi party "was a big deal ... it meant that everyone accepted them without question." [[San Diego Union-Tribune, 10/25/01](#)]

March 5, 2000: An unnamed nation tells the CIA that hijacker Nawaf Alhazmi had flown from the January meeting in Malaysia to Los Angeles. [[New York Times, 10/17/02](#)] This confirms what the CIA already knows. [[CNN, 3/02](#)] The CIA also learns that hijacker Khalid Almihdhar arrived in the US on the same flight.

Hijacker Khalid Almihdhar, while living in San Diego, contacts a "terrorist facility" in the Middle East that is under US surveillance (see [January 15-August 2000](#)). Intelligence agencies are aware of the call but don't understand its significance. [[Los Angeles Times, 12/12/02](#), [St. Petersburg Times, 12/12/02](#)] Apparently his location is not known from the call, and some but not all of the information about the call is reported to other intelligence agencies. The name of the terrorist facility or organization has not been released. [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 12/11/01](#)]

Reported Slip Ups

April-May 2000: Around this time hijacker Marwan Alshehhi boasts of planning an attack to a Hamburg librarian. He says, "There will be thousands of dead. You will think of me." He also specifically mentions the WTC. [[AFP, 8/29/02](#), [New York Times, 8/29/02](#)] "You will see," Alshehhi adds. "In America something is going to happen. There will be many people killed." [[New York Times, 9/10/02](#)] This "demonstrates that the members of the Hamburg cell were not quite as careful to keep secret their plans as had previously been thought. And it appears to bury for good the theory that the pilots were informed of their targets only hours before they took off. Not least, though, Marwan Alshehhi's boast provides a key element for the reconstruction of the plot - a date by which the terrorists had decided on their target." [[Guardian, 8/30/02](#)]

Late April-Mid-May 2000: Atta reportedly has a very strange meeting with Johnelle Bryant of the US Department of Agriculture (incidentally, one month before the official story claims he arrived in the US for the first time). According to Bryant, in the meeting Atta does all of the following:

- 1) He initially refuses to speak with one who is "but a female."
- 2) He asks her for a loan of \$650,000 to buy and modify a crop-dusting plane.
- 3) He mentions that he wants to "build a chemical tank that would fit inside the aircraft and take up every available square inch of the aircraft except for where the pilot would be sitting."
- 4) He uses his real name even as she takes notes, and makes sure she spells it

correctly.

5) He says he has just arrived from Afghanistan.

6) He tells about his travel plans to Spain and Germany.

7) He expresses an interest in visiting New York.

8) He asks her about security at the WTC and other US landmarks.

9) He discusses al-Qaeda and its need for American membership.

10) He tells her bin Laden "would someday be known as the world's greatest leader."

11) He asks to buy the aerial photograph of Washington hanging on her Florida office wall, throwing increasingly large "wads of cash" at her when she refuses to sell it.

[[ABC News, 6/6/02](#)]

12) After Bryant points out one of the buildings in the Washington photograph as her former place of employment, he asks her, "How would you like it if somebody flew an airplane into your friends' building?" [[The Cell](#), John Miller, Michael Stone and Chris Mitchell, 8/14/02, p. 270]

13) He asks her, "What would prevent [me] from going behind [your] desk and cutting [your] throat and making off with the millions of dollars" in the safe behind her.

14) He asks, "How would America like it if another country destroyed [Washington] and some of the monuments in it like the cities in [my] country had been destroyed?"

15) He gets "very agitated" when he isn't given the money in cash on the spot. Atta later tries to get the loan again from the same woman, this time "slightly disguised" by wearing glasses. Three other terrorists also attempt to get the same loan from Bryant, but all of them fail. Bryant turns them down because they don't meet the loan requirements, and fails to notify anyone about these strange encounters until after 9/11. Government officials not only confirm the account and say that Bryant passed a lie detector test, but elaborate that the account jibes with other information they have received from interrogating prisoners. Supposedly, failing to get the loan, the terrorists switched plans from using crop dusters to hijacking aircraft. [[ABC News, 6/6/02](#), [London Times, 6/8/02](#)]

Summer 2000

June 2000: Atta and other hijackers begin to open bank accounts in Florida. At least 35 accounts are opened, 14 of them at SunTrust Bank. All are opened with fake social security numbers (some with randomly made up numbers), yet none of the accounts are checked or questioned by the banks. [[New York Times, 7/10/02](#)] One transfer from the United Arab Emirates three months later totaling \$69,985 prompts the bank to make a "suspicious transaction report" to the US Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. [[Financial Times, 11/29/01](#)]

June 3, 2000: Atta supposedly arrives in the US for the first time, flying from Prague to Newark on a tourist visa issued May 18 in Berlin. [[Miami Herald, 9/22/01](#), [Australian Broadcasting Corp. 11/12/01](#)] *Yet there's evidence someone using Atta's name and appearance was in the US before this.*

June 10, 2000: Hijacker Khalid Almihdhar flies from San Diego to Frankfurt, Germany. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/20/02](#)] Authorities later believe that Almihdhar visits Ramzi bin al-Shibh and bin al-Shibh's roommate Atta and other al-Qaeda members in bin al-Shibh's terrorist cell. But since the CIA fails to notify Germany about their suspicions of either Almihdhar or bin al-Shibh, both of whom were seen attending the al-Qaeda summit in Malaysia, German police fail to surveil them and a chance to uncover the 9/11 plot is missed. [[Die Zeit, 10/1/02](#)] Note that FBI Director Mueller and the Congressional inquiry into 9/11 claim that Almihdhar doesn't return to the US for over a year, despite obvious evidence to the contrary, even the claims of a landlord who lived with him for six weeks [[Wall Street Journal, 9/17/01](#)], presumably because there are no INS records of his reentry. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/20/02](#), [Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)]

June 29, 2000-September 18, 2000: Someone using the aliases "Isam Mansour," "Mustafa Ahmed Al-Hisawi," "Mr. Ali" and "Hani (Fawaz Trdng)," sends a total of \$109,910 to the 9/11 hijackers in a series of transfers between these dates. [[MSNBC, 12/11/01](#), [Newsweek, 12/2/01](#), [New York Times, 12/10/01](#), [Financial Times, 11/30/01](#), [Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)] The money is sent from Sharjah, a emirate in the United Arab Emirates that is a center for al-Qaeda's illegal financial dealings. The identity of this money man "Mustafa Ahmed al-Hisawi" is in dispute. It has been claimed that the name "Mustafa Ahmed" is an alias used by Saeed Sheikh, a known ISI and al-Qaeda agent who sends the hijackers money on other occasions. [[CNN, 10/6/01](#)] India claims ISI Director Lt. Gen. Mahmood Ahmed orders Saeed to send the hijackers the money at this time. [[Frontline, 10/6/01](#), [Daily Excelsior, 10/18/01](#)] FBI Director Mueller's most recent theory is that this money is sent by the previously unheard of "Ali Abdul Aziz Ali." But of the four aliases used in the different transactions, Mueller connects this man only to three, and not to the alias "Mustafa Ahmed Al-Hisawi." [[New York Times, 12/10/01](#), [Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#), [AP, 9/26/02](#)] It appears that most of the money is sent to an account shared by Marwan Alshehhi and Mohamed Atta, who would obtain money orders and distribute the money to the other hijackers. [[CNN, 10/1/01](#), [MSNBC, 12/11/01](#), [Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)] The New York Times later suggests that the amount passed from "Mustafa Ahmed" to the Florida bank accounts right until the day before the attack is around \$325,000. The rest of the \$500,000 - \$600,000 they receive for US expenses comes from another, still unknown source. [[New York Times, 7/10/02](#)]

July 2000 (B): Atta and Marwan Alshehhi move to Venice, Florida, and enroll in pilot classes at Huffman Aviation. [[Chicago Sun-Times, 9/16/01](#)]

August 12, 2000: Italian intelligence successfully wiretap the al-Qaeda terrorist cell in Milan, Italy from late 1999 until summer 2001. [[Boston Globe, 8/4/02](#)] In a wiretapped conversation from this day, suspected Yemeni terrorist Abdulsalam Ali Abdulrahman tells wanted Egyptian terrorist Es Sayed about a massive strike against the enemies of Islam involving aircraft and the sky, a blow that "will be written about in all the newspapers of the world. This will be one of those strikes that will never be forgotten.... This is a terrifying thing. This is a thing that will spread from south to north, from east to west: The person who came up with this program is a madman from a madhouse, a madman but a genius." In another conversation, Abdulrahman tells Es Sayed: "I'm studying airplanes. I hope, God willing, that I can bring you a window or a piece of an airplane the next time we see each other." The comment is followed by laughter. Beginning in October 2000, FBI experts helped Italian police analyze the intercepts and warnings. Neither Italy nor the FBI understands their meaning until after 9/11, but apparently Italians understand enough to give the US an attack warning in March 2001). [[Los Angeles Times, 5/29/02](#), [Guardian, 5/30/02](#), [Washington Post, 5/31/02](#)] [FTW](#) The Milan cell "is believed to have created a cottage industry in supplying false passports and other bogus documents." [[Boston Globe, 8/4/02](#)]

September-October 2000: Zacarias Moussaoui visits Malaysia twice, and stays at the very same condominium where the January al-Qaeda meeting was held. [[CNN, 8/30/02](#), [Los Angeles Times, 2/2/02](#), [Washington Post, 2/3/02](#)] After that meeting, Malaysian intelligence keeps watch on the condominium at the request of the CIA. But the CIA stops the surveillance before Moussaoui arrives, spoiling a chance to expose the 9/11 plot by monitoring Moussaoui's later travels. The Malaysians later say they were surprised by the CIA's lack of interest. "We couldn't fathom it, really," Rais Yatim, Malaysia's Legal Affairs minister, told Newsweek. "There was no show of concern." [[Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] While Moussaoui is in Malaysia, Yazid Sufaat, the owner of the condominium, signs letters falsely identifying Moussaoui as a

representative of his wife's company. [[Reuters, 9/20/02](#), [Washington Post, 2/3/02](#)] When Moussaoui is later arrested in the US about one month before the 9/11 attacks, this letter in his possession could have led investigators back to the condominium and the connections with the January 2000 meeting attended by two of the hijackers. [[USA Today, 1/30/02](#)] Moussaoui's belongings also contained phone numbers that could have linked him to Ramzi bin al-Shibh (and his roommate Atta), another participant in the Malaysian meeting. [[Associated Press, 12/12/01](#)] But the papers aren't examined until after the 9/11 attack

U.S.S. Cole

October 12, 2000: The USS Cole is bombed in the Aden, Yemen harbor by al-Qaeda terrorists. 17 US soldiers are killed. [[ABC News, 10/13/00](#)] The Prime Minister of Yemen at the time later claims that hijacker "Khalid Almihdhar was one of the Cole perpetrators, involved in preparations. He was in Yemen at the time and stayed after the Cole bombing for a while, then he left." [[Guardian, 10/15/01](#)] John O'Neill and his team of 200 hundred FBI investigators enter Yemen two days later, but are unable to accomplish much due to restrictions placed on them, and tensions with US Ambassador Barbara Bodine. All but about 50 investigators are forced to leave by the end of October. Even though O'Neill's boss visits and finds that Bodine is O'Neill's "only detractor," O'Neill and much of his team is forced to leave in November, and the investigation stalls without his personal relationships to top Yemeni officials. [[New Yorker, 1/14/02](#), [Sunday Times, 2/3/02](#), [The Cell](#), John Miller, Michael Stone and Chris Mitchell, 8/14/02, p. 237] Increased security threats forces the reduced FBI team still in Yemen to withdraw altogether in June 2001. [[PBS Frontline 10/3/02](#)] The Sunday Times later notes, "The failure in Yemen may have blocked off lines of investigation that could have led directly to the terrorists preparing for September 11." [[Sunday Times, 2/3/02](#)]

Early December 2000: Terrorist Fahad al-Quso is arrested by the government of Yemen. [[PBS Frontline, 10/3/02](#), [PBS Frontline, 10/3/02](#)] In addition to being involved in the USS Cole bombing, al-Quso was at the January 2000 Malaysian. FBI head investigator John O'Neill feels al-Quso is holding back important information and wants him interrogated. But O'Neill had been kicked out of Yemen by his superiors a week or two before, and without his influential presence the Yemeni government won't allow an interrogation. Al-Quso is finally interrogated days after 9/11, and admits to meeting with Alhazmi and Almihdhar in January 2000. One investigator calls the missed opportunity of exposing the 9/11 plot through al-Quso's connections "mind-boggling." [[PBS Frontline, 10/3/02](#)] There are pictures from the Malaysian meeting of al-Quso next to hijacker Khalid Almihdhar, but the CIA doesn't share the pictures with the FBI. [[Newsweek, 9/20/01](#)]

January 4, 2001: The FBI's investigation into the USS Cole bombing learns that terrorist Khallad bin Atash had been a principal planner of the bombing [[AP, 9/21/02](#)], and that two other participants in the bombing had delivered money to bin Atash at the time of the January 2000 meeting in Malaysia. The FBI shares this information with the CIA, and when CIA analysts reexamine pictures from the Malaysian meeting to learn more about this, they find a picture of him standing next to hijacker Khalid Almihdhar. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/20/02](#), [Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] The CIA is aware that Almihdhar entered the US a year earlier, yet they don't attempt to find him. CNN later notes that at this point the CIA at least "could have put Alhazmi and Almihdhar and all others who attended the meeting in Malaysia on a watch list to be kept out of this country. It was not done." [[CNN, 6/4/02](#)] More incredibly, even bin Atash is not placed on the watch list at this time, despite being labeled as the principal planner of the Cole bombing. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/22/02](#)]

Dual Identity?

Late November 2000-January 30, 2001: When Ziad Jarrah is questioned at Dubai, United Arab Emirates on January 30, 2001, he reveals that he has been in Pakistan and Afghanistan for the previous two months and five days, and that he is returning to Florida. [[Chicago Tribune, 12/13/01](#)] Investigators also later confirm that "Jarrah had spent at least three weeks in January 2001 at an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan." [[CNN, 8/1/02](#)] However, the Florida Flight Training Center where Jarrah has been studying for the previous six months, later says he is in school there until January 15, 2001. His family later reports he arrives in Lebanon to visit them on January 26, five days before he supposedly passes through Dubai. His father had just undergone open heart surgery, and Jarrah visits him every day in the hospital until after January 30. Pointing out this incident, his uncle Jamal Jarrah later asks, "How could he be in two places at one time?" [*Among the Heroes*, Jere Longman, 2002, p. 101-102]

January 30, 2001: Hijacker Ziad Jarrah is questioned for several hours at the Dubai International Airport, United Arab Emirates, at the request of the CIA for "suspected involvement in terrorist activities," then let go. This is according to United Arab Emirates, US and European officials, but the CIA denies the story. The CIA notified local officials that he would be arriving from Pakistan on his way back to Europe, and they wanted to know where he had been in Afghanistan and how long he had been there. US officials were informed of the results of the interrogation before Jarrah left the airport. Jarrah had already been in the US for six months learning to fly. "UAE and European intelligence sources told CNN that the questioning of Jarrah fits a pattern of a CIA operation begun in 1999 to track suspected al-Qaeda operatives who were traveling through the United Arab Emirates." He was then permitted to leave, eventually going to the US. [[CNN, 8/1/02](#)]

Learning to Fly

December 26, 2000: Hijackers Atta and Marwan Alshehhi, while still learning to fly in Florida, stall a small plane on a Miami International Airport runway. Unable to start the plane, they simply walk away. Flight controllers have to guide the waiting passenger airliners around the stalled aircraft until it is towed away 35 minutes later. They weren't supposed to be using that airport in the first place. The FAA threatens to investigate the two students and the flight school they are attending. The flight school sends records to the FAA, but no more is heard of the investigation. [[New York Times, 10/17/01](#)] "Students do stupid things during their flight course, but this is quite stupid," says the owner of the flight school. Nothing was wrong with the plane. [[CNN, 10/17/01](#)]

January 2001: An Arizona flight school alerts the FAA that hijacker Hani Hanjour lacks the English and flying skills necessary for the commercial pilot's license he has. The flight school manager: "I couldn't believe he had a commercial license of any kind with the skills that he had." An FAA official actually sits next to Hanjour in class to observe his skills. This official offers a translator to help Hanjour pass, but the flight school points out that "that went against the rules that require a pilot to be able to write and speak English fluently before they even get their license." [[AP, 5/10/02](#)] FAA "records show [Hanjour] obtained a commercial pilot's license in April 1999, but how and where he did so remains a lingering question that FAA officials refuse to discuss." [[Cape Cod Times, 10/21/01](#)]

February 23, 2001: Zacarias Moussaoui flies to the US. He starts flight training in Norman, Oklahoma three days later. He trains there until May, but doesn't do well and drops out before getting a pilot's license. His visa expires on May 22, but he doesn't attempt to renew it or get another by briefly leaving the country. He stays in Norman, making arrangements to change flight schools and frequently exercising in a gym. [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02](#), [MSNBC, 12/11/01](#)] According to US

investigators, Ramzi bin al-Shibh said he met Moussaoui in Karachi (Pakistan) in June 2001. [[Washington Post, 11/20/02](#)] Moussaoui moves to a flight school in Minnesota in August and is arrested by the FBI a short time later. [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02](#), [MSNBC, 12/11/01](#)]

Immigration

January 4, 2001: Atta flies from Miami, Florida to Madrid, Spain. He has been in the US since June 3, 2000, learning to fly in Florida with Marwan Alshehhi. [[Miami Herald, 9/22/01](#)] He returns to the US on

January 10. He makes a second trip to Spain later that year.

January 10, 2001: "INS documents, matched against an FBI alert given to German police, show two men named Mohamed Atta [arrive] in Miami on Jan. 10, each offering different destination addresses to INS agents, one in Nokomis, near Venice, the other at a Coral Springs condo. He was admitted, despite having overstayed his previous visa by a month. The double entry could be a paperwork error, confusion over a visa extension. It could be Atta arrived in Miami, flew to another country like the Bahamas and returned the same day. Or it could be that two men somehow cleared immigration with the same name using the same passport number." [[Miami Herald, 9/22/01](#)] Officials later call this a bureaucratic snafu, and insist only one Atta entered the US on this date. [[AP, 10/28/01](#)] Also, Atta arrives on a tourist visa yet tells immigration inspectors that he is taking flying lessons in the US, which requires a M-1 student visa. [[Washington Post, 10/28/01](#)] The fact that he had overstayed his visa over a month on a previous visit also doesn't cause a problem. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/27/01](#)]

January 11-18, 2001: Hijacker Marwan Alshehhi flies from the US to Casablanca, Morocco and back, for reasons unknown. He is able to reenter the US without trouble, despite having overstayed his previous visa by about five weeks. [[Department of Justice, 5/20/02](#), [Los Angeles Times, 9/27/01](#)]

Martyrdom Muscle

March 2001: Supposedly, all 13 of the "muscle" hijackers record a farewell video before leaving training in Kandahar, Afghanistan around this time. [[CBS, 10/9/02](#)] A video of Ahmed Alhaznawi is shown by the Al Jazeera TV network in April 2002. In it, he pledges to give his life to "martyrdom" and swears to send a "bloodied message" to Americans by attacking them in their "heartland." [[Guardian, 4/16/02](#)] Compare a still frame of the video with an FBI photo of Alhaznawi. [[CNN, 4/16/02](#)] In September 2002, Al Jazeera also shows a similar farewell video of Abdulaziz Alomari made around the same time. [[AP, 9/9/02](#)] Alomari states, "I am writing this with my full conscience and I am writing this in expectation of the end, which is near... God praise everybody who trained and helped me, namely the leader Sheik Osama bin Laden." [[Washington Post, 9/11/02](#)] Al-Jazeera also shows Ahmed Alnami, Hamza Alghamdi and Saeed Alghamdi and Wail Alshehri in Kandahar studying maps and flight manuals. [[Financial Times, 9/11/02](#)]

May 2001 (H): The US introduces the "Visa Express" program in Saudi Arabia, which allows any Saudi Arabian to obtain visas through his or her travel agent instead of appearing at a consulate in person. An official later states, "The issuing officer has no idea whether the person applying for the visa is actually the person in the documents and application." [[US News and World Report, 12/12/01](#), [Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/20/02](#)] At the time, warnings of an attack against the US led by the Saudi Osama bin Laden are higher than they had ever been before - "off the charts" as one senator later puts it. [[Los Angeles Times, 5/18/02](#), [Senate Intelligence Committee, 9/18/02](#)] A terrorism conference had recently concluded that Saudi Arabia was one of four top nationalities in al-Qaeda. [[Minneapolis Star Tribune, 5/19/02](#)] Five

hijackers - Khalid Almihdhar, Abdulaziz Alomari, Salem Alhazmi, Saeed Alghamdi, and Fayez Ahmed Banihammad - use Visa Express over the next month to enter the US. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/20/02](#)] The widely criticized program is finally canceled in July 2002

April 23-June 29, 2001: The 13 hijackers commonly known as the "muscle" first arrive in the US. The muscle provides the brute force meant to control the hijacked passengers and protect the pilots. [[Washington Post, 9/30/01](#)] According to FBI Director Mueller, they all pass through Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and their travel was probably coordinated from abroad by Khalid Almihdhar. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)] But some information contradicts their official arrival dates:

April 23: Waleed Alshehri and Satam Al Suqami arrive in Orlando, Florida. Suqami in fact arrived before February 2001. Alshehri was leasing a house near Washington in 1999 and 2000 with Ahmed Alghamdi. He also lived with Ahmed Alghamdi in Florida for seven months in 1997. [[Telegraph, 9/20/01](#)] Alshehri appears quite Americanized in the summer of 2001, frequently talking with an apartment mate about football and baseball, even identifying himself a fan of the Florida Marlins baseball team. [[AP, 9/21/01](#)]

May 2: Majed Moqed and Ahmed Alghamdi arrive in Washington. Both actually arrived by mid-March 2001. Ahmed Alghamdi was living with Waleed Alshehri near Washington until July 2000. He also lived with Waleed Alshehri in Florida for seven months in 1997. [[Telegraph, 9/20/01](#)]

May 28: Mohand Alshehri, Hamza Alghamdi, and Ahmed Alnami arrive in Miami, Florida. Both Mohand Alshehri and Hamza Alghamdi arrived by January 2001.

June 8: Ahmed Alhaznawi and Wail Alshehri arrive in Miami, Florida.

June 27: Fayez Banihammad and Saeed Alghamdi arrive in Orlando, Florida.

June 29: Salem Alhazmi and Abdulaziz Alomari arrive in New York. Alhazmi in fact arrived before February 2001.

After entering the US (perhaps reentering for some), the hijackers arriving at Miami and Orlando airports settle in the Fort Lauderdale, Florida, area along with Mohamed Atta, Marwan Alshehhi, and Ziad Jarrah. The hijackers, arriving in New York and Virginia, settle in the Paterson, New Jersey, area along with Nawaf Alhazmi and Hani Hanjour. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)] Note that the FBI's early conclusion that 11 of these muscle men "did not know they were on a suicide mission," [[Observer, 10/14/01](#)] is contradicted by video confessions made by all of them in Afghanistan, and CIA Director Tenet later says they "probably were told little more than that they were headed for a suicide mission inside the United States." [[CIA Director Tenet Testimony, 6/18/02](#)] They didn't know the exact details of the 9/11 plot until shortly before the attack. [[CBS, 10/9/02](#)]

Speeding Ticket

April 1, 2001: Hijacker Nawaf Alhazmi is stopped by an Oklahoma policeman for speeding. His license is run through a computer to check if there is a warrant for his arrest. There is none, so he is given a ticket and sent on his way. The CIA has known Alhazmi is a terrorist and possibly living in the US since March 2000, but has failed to share this knowledge with other agency. [[Daily Oklahoman, 1/20/02](#), [Newsweek, 6/2/02](#)] He also has been in the country illegally since January 2001, but this also doesn't raise any flags. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/20/02](#)]

April 26, 2001: Atta is stopped at a random inspection near Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and given a citation for having no driver's license. He fails to show up for his May 28 court hearing a warrant is issued for his arrest on June 4. After this, he flies all over the US using his real name, and even flies to Spain and back in July and is never stopped or questioned. The police never try to find him. [[Wall Street Journal, 10/16/01](#), [Australian Broadcasting Corp., 11/12/01](#)]

Prague Spring

April 8, 2001: Supposedly, Atta flies from the US to Prague, Czech Republic, and meets with Ahmed Khalil Ibrahim Samir al-Ani, an Iraqi spy. He returns on April 9 or 10. [[New York Times, 10/27/01](#)] But did he actually fly to Prague? A US official later states, "Neither we nor the Czechs nor anybody else has any information [Atta] was coming or going [to Prague] at that time." [[Newsweek, 4/28/02](#)] FBI Director Mueller states, "We ran down literally hundreds of thousands of leads and checked every record we could get our hands on, from flight reservations to car rentals to bank accounts," yet no evidence that he left the country was found. [[Washington Post, 5/1/02](#)] Investigators believe Atta was in Florida the whole time, and the Czech government eventually agrees. [[BBC, 5/1/02](#), [UPI, 10/20/02](#), [New York Times, 10/21/02](#)] *But assuming al-Ani met with someone, could it be someone other than Atta, perhaps someone impersonating him?* "After months of investigation, the Czechs [say] they [are] no longer certain that Atta was the person who met al-Ani, saying 'he may be different from Atta.'" [[Washington Post, 5/1/02](#)] "Some in Prague who knew the diplomat say he met with a used car salesman named Saleh from Nuremberg, Germany, who looked like Mr. Atta. 'He is a perfect double for Atta,' said a Syrian businessman who has lived in Prague for 35 years and says he knew the diplomat and the car salesman. 'I saw him several times with [al-Ani].' ... Czech intelligence officials offered still another theory: the Mohamed Atta who came to Prague last April was not the hijacker but a Pakistani of the same name. 'He didn't have the same identity card number,' an unidentified Interior Ministry official told the newspaper Mlada Fronta Dnes. 'There was a great difference in their ages, their nationalities didn't match, basically nothing — it was someone else.'" [[New York Times, 12/16/01](#)]

Driver's Licenses

April 12-September 7, 2001: At least six hijackers get more than one Florida driver's license. They get the second license simply by filling out change of address forms. 1) Waleed Alshehri: first license May 4, duplicate May 5. 2) Marwan Alshehhi: first license, April 12, duplicate in June. 3) Ziad Jarrah: first license May 2, duplicate July 10. 4) Ahmed Alhaznawi: first license July 10, duplicate September 7. 5) Hamza Alghamdi: first license June 27, two duplicates, the second in August. 6) the sixth man with a Florida duplicate is not named. [[South Florida Sun-Sentinel, 9/28/01](#)] Additionally, some hijackers got licenses in multiple states. For instance, Nawaf Alhazmi had licenses from California, New York, and Florida at the same time, apparently all in the same name. [[South Florida Sun-Sentinel, 9/28/01](#), [Newsday, 9/21/01](#), [Daily Oklahoman, 1/20/02](#)]

Eindhoven Again

April 18, 2001: Hijacker Marwan Alshehhi flies from Miami, Florida, to Amsterdam, Netherlands. He returns on May 2. Investigators have not divulged where he went or what he did while in Europe. [[Justice Department, 5/20/02](#)]

The Wall Street Journal, 15 April 2003

A Saudi Group Spreads Extremism In 'Law' Seminars, Taught in Dutch Searching for Roots of 9/11, Europeans Find 6 Plotters Took Course in Holland
By IAN JOHNSON and DAVID CRAWFORD

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands -- In late February, more than 300 young men from across Europe gathered for a weekend seminar on Islamic law put on by the Al-Waqf al-islami Foundation. In the bright, austere rooms of this city's Al-Furqaan Mosque, they heard sermons on the hell that awaits unbelievers and the benefits of resisting Western ways of living. The language was Dutch, but the message was imported from Saudi Arabia, via Saudi books and lecturers who taught a strict, orthodox interpretation of Islam. Mourat, an attendee who offered only his first name, said: "I

don't want a separation of state and religion. I want Shariah [Islamic law] here and now."

For years, the Al-Waqf foundation's seminars have drilled extremist messages into the heads of thousands of young Muslims from across the Continent: Mixing with unfaithful is a form of pollution, Jews are to blame for much of what's wrong in the world, and the rest can be laid at the doorstep of the U.S., according to foundation literature and interviews with attendees.

The seminar's most famous graduates: half a dozen members of the group of young men from Hamburg, Germany, who plotted the Sept. 11 attacks. As European government investigators explore the roots of terrorism, they are discovering foundations such as Al-Waqf. Muslim foundations and charities initially came under the microscope for channeling money to terrorists. Now, investigators are taking another look at whether these groups are encouraging terrorism by teaching an intolerant and xenophobic strain of Islam.

In France, investigators have raised concerns about L'Institut Europeen des Sciences Humaines at the Chateau-Chinon in the Burgundy region. One member of the Hamburg cell took a correspondence course offered by the institute, the investigators say. In Germany, the Haus des Islam in the small town of Lutzelbach near Frankfurt is under observation, according to German intelligence officials. This organization was set up in the 1980s with cash smuggled into the country from the Middle East, the officials say. Wolfgang Burgfeld, who heads the Haus des Islam, says, "We're just a normal teaching institution." The French institute declined to comment. Of these groups, Eindhoven's branch of the Al-Waqf foundation stands out. Its courses have been attended since the late 1980s by self-styled holy warriors from across Europe. Attendance has become a critical credential for those aspiring to jihad, according to terrorism investigators. Like many of the foundations, Al-Waqf is tightly linked to Saudi Arabia. Its headquarters are there, and wealthy Saudis dominate the board of the Dutch branch. Its courses reflect the puritanical strain of Islam promoted worldwide by the Saudi government.

Here in Eindhoven, the foundation's history is interwoven with that of the Cheppih family. Ahmed Cheppih came to the Netherlands from Morocco more than 30 years ago, seeking political asylum from what his son, Mohammed, says was persecution for his Islamic activism.

After taking early retirement as a laborer in 1986, the elder Mr. Cheppih got even more involved in Islamic affairs, his son says. "That became his profession here in Holland," explains Mohammed Cheppih, who is 25 years old.

The elder Mr. Cheppih helped found the mostly Moroccan Al-Furqaan Mosque and the Netherlands' first Islamic primary school. In 1989, the Saudi-based Al-Waqf foundation opened its branch in Eindhoven, eventually locating in the Al-Furqaan Mosque. It helped fund the elder Mr. Cheppih's primary school and began running seminars in Islamic law and spiritual belief, attracting several thousand students a year during the 1980s and 1990s.

The younger Mr. Cheppih says his father sent him to Saudi Arabia to finish high school and then attend university. In 2000, the son returned to the Netherlands as representative of the Muslim World League, Saudi Arabia's main international charity.

A heavy-set man with a beard and rimless glasses, the younger Mr. Cheppih looks old for his years. The widely recognized spokesman for the Al-Furqaan Mosque and Al-Waqf foundation, Mr. Cheppih has had a difficult year. Two young men from the

mosque were killed in 2002 by Indian soldiers fighting Muslim militants in Kashmir. The Dutch domestic intelligence agency, known as AIVD, said in public reports last year that the pair were recruited in Eindhoven by Islamist extremists. AIVD also alleged that his father's elementary school spreads extremist beliefs and that the Al-Waqf foundation is "damaging to the Dutch democratic order."

"These allegations are wrong," says Mr. Cheppih at the end of a long Sunday spent lecturing on Islamic law to young men in the Dutch city of Utrecht. "We are for integration. We hold our lectures in Dutch, not Arabic, and encourage people to be the best citizens possible." Until 2000, the Eindhoven seminars were held in a semidetached house on Paulus Potter Street, a run-down neighborhood now slated for demolition. The house still has some traces of its last owners, which according to city records was the Al-Waqf foundation. Overturned furniture lies in the living room, trash cans in the weedy backyard and a few trial-subscription magazines in the hallway.

Two and a half years ago, however, the house -- like the Al-Furqaan Mosque today -- was one of Europe's training grounds for puritanical Islam. Attendees were told to be quiet and attract as little attention as possible, according to Arabic-language handouts that were later seized by German police during raids in Hamburg. Allah, the three-page documents said, was to be worshipped "secretively." But neighbors knew that something unusual was taking place.

"Young Arab men with beards and carrying books would arrive in buses and stay for a long weekend or a week," a neighbor says, gesturing over to the house.

Narrow Interpretation

The readings centered on an extremely narrow interpretation of Islamic law. A key message: mixing with nonbelievers is taboo. A handout from a 1999 conference during the holy month of Ramadan, for example, warned participants not to visit Christians in their homes or accept Christmas cards or gifts. "According to the scholars' consensus, this is forbidden," stated a handout in Arabic that German police seized during a search of the home of El-Hassen Ragi, a Hamburg resident currently under investigation for possibly aiding the Sept. 11 attackers.

The 1999 Ramadan conference had an electric effect on Mr. Ragi, his wife, Beate Ragi, said in a sealed deposition taken by police last year and reviewed by The Wall Street Journal. He began to spout hateful slogans, blaming Jews and the U.S. for the world's problems, Beate Ragi said. She is separated from her husband but still lives in Hamburg and shares custody of their child. "Afterwards, he was completely changed," she added. "He demanded that food be put on the table. Then he'd leave us some, and take the rest to his friends. He was hardly home anymore." Condemnation and abandonment of Western influences are central to the extremist Islamic seminars, a German terrorism investigator says. "If you teach that people are inferior, then it's easier to justify killing them," the investigator says.

In a separate sealed police deposition, Mr. Ragi said he couldn't remember anything about the 1999 Ramadan seminar: neither who went or who organized it.

But another member of the Hamburg circle of young Muslim immigrants who also attended the 1999 seminar, Mohamed Raji, had a better memory. After coming under investigation 18 months ago for allegedly helping to handle logistics for the Sept. 11 hijackers, Mr. Raji returned to his native Morocco. At the request of German police, he was detained by Moroccan police and interrogated.

"The event [in Eindhoven] was organized by the Saudi Ministry for Islamic Affairs for five days. Invitations were sent from across Europe," Mr. Raji said in a sealed deposition taken by Moroccan police last year. The Saudi Embassy in Berlin denies that its government sponsored this or any other seminar abroad. On March 24, however, new links came to light between the Saudi Embassy, Eindhoven and the Hamburg cell. The Saudi Foreign Ministry recalled Mohammad J. Fakihi, director of the Islamic Affairs Department at the Saudi Embassy in Berlin. German police say that earlier, they had found Mr. Fakihi's business card among the possessions of convicted Hamburg cell member Mounir Motassadeq. The Saudi Embassy declined to comment on the recall of Mr. Fakihi.

Mr. Raji placed Mr. Ragi, Mr. Motassadeq and Zakaria Essabar at the 1999 Ramadan seminar. Mr. Motassadeq was convicted in February in Germany for aiding the hijackers. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison. Mr. Essabar, who is wanted as a principal organizer of the attacks, is believed to be in Pakistan or Afghanistan. He left Germany shortly before the attacks. Not long after attending the 1999 Ramadan seminar, Mr. Motassadeq travelled to Afghanistan to train in an al Qaeda-run camp, according to German court documents used to convict him. He later stayed in contact with clerics who spoke at the seminar, according to court records. And earlier that year, according to German investigators, alleged Sept. 11 pilots Mohamed Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi came to a conference in either Eindhoven or Amsterdam. They subsequently went to al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. Another man who attended an Al-Waqf seminar in Eindhoven was Ibrahim Diab, a regular at the Al-Quds mosque in Hamburg attended by Mr. Atta and his friends. Mr. Diab left Germany the day before the Sept. 11 attacks, according to German court documents. He was detained about a month later at the Afghani border by Pakistani police.

Graduation Certificate

One of the few things he took with him on this trip: a graduation certificate from the 1999 seminar, according to a Pakistani police inventory. "It was like a credential that you have that shows you have the necessary knowledge of Islam in order to be a holy warrior," says another German investigator.

Officials at the Al-Waqf foundation's headquarters in Riyadh and Jeddah declined several interview requests and ignored faxed questions. Mr. Cheppih says he "can't rule out" that seminar handouts have included references to cutting off contacts with outsiders and not integrating into Western society. But he denies that foundation gatherings could have contributed to any person's development as a terrorist. "They're just lectures," he says. "They don't cause radicalism. If they cause terrorists, then so could a Rambo movie. It was just a course on law and creed, nothing more."

Mr. Cheppih says he doesn't know how much money the Al-Waqf foundation spends on its programs in the Netherlands. He says that the local branch of the Muslim World League, which he represents, spends \$50,000 a year to offer courses on Islamic law and beliefs in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, among other activities in the Netherlands.

The Dutch domestic intelligence agency, AIVD, which designates the Al-Waqf foundation as "radical," believes it has significant financial clout. In a report published last year on Islamic education in the Netherlands, the agency estimated that Al-Waqf helps finance about six primary schools in the Netherlands, in addition to the periodic seminars for adults. Mr. Cheppih says most of the money is donated by pious Dutch Muslims. But the group also has connections to wealthy Saudi Arabians who have alleged links to terrorism.

According to articles of incorporation filed with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce, the

foundation's board includes Sheikh Hamad al Hussaini, a Saudi businessman who heads Akel Trading Co. Spanish terrorism investigators say that the Hussaini family has had business dealings with and transferred money to Muhammad Galeb Zouaydi. Jailed in Spain, Mr. Zouaydi is awaiting trial there on charges of being one of the principal financiers in Europe of Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. Mr. Hussaini declined to comment. Mr. Zouyadi has denied the charges.

Whatever its financial associations, Al-Waqf has helped create a milieu where the world is divided into Muslims and inferior non-Muslims, European investigators say. At the seminar last month, Mr. Cheppih gave a 90-minute lecture on the Islamic concept of tawhid, which means the unity of God. That, he said is important in a country where Muslims are a minority and their culture threatened by the majority population of secular Christians. Speaking in the spartan Al-Furqaan Mosque -- pictures of any sort, even of Mecca, are banned -- Mr. Cheppih warned some 300 listeners against accepting the secular, non-Islamic world. At times he was humorous, declaring: "Tawhid is not Steven Spielberg, Hollywood; it is reality." But his message was at core serious and uncompromising: sacrifice everything for Islam.

"He who understands what tawhid is will find a place in paradise," Mr. Cheppih told the young men, many of whom were taking notes. "All acts [supporting Islam] will be rewarded. All initiatives, even when they are bad, will be rewarded."

Preparation

May-August 2001: A number of the hijackers make at least six trips to Las Vegas. It's probable they met here after doing practice runs on cross-country flights. At least Atta, Alshehhi, Nawaf Alhazmi, Ziad Jarrah, Khalid Almihdhar and Hani Hanjour were involved. All of these "fundamentalist" Muslims drink alcohol, gamble, and frequent strip clubs. They even have strippers perform lap dances for them. [[San Francisco Chronicle, 10/4/01](#), [Newsweek, 10/15/01](#)]

May 6-September 6, 2001: The hijackers work out at various gyms, presumably getting in shape for the hijacking. Ziad Jarrah appears to have trained intensively from May to August, and Atta and Marwan Alshehhi also took exercising very seriously. [[New York Times, 9/23/01](#), [Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#)] But these three are presumably pilots who would need the training the least. For instance, Jarrah's trainer says "If he wasn't one of the pilots, he would have done quite well in thwarting the passengers from attacking." [[Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#)] *Most of the rest appear to have only made token efforts, if at all.* For instance, Hani Hanjour, Majed Moqed, Khalid Almihdhar, Nawaf Alhazmi, and Salem Alhazmi work out for four days in early September. [[AP, 9/21/01](#)] Three others - Waleed Alshehri, Wail Alshehri and Satam al-Suqami - "simply clustered around a small circuit of machines, never asking for help and, according to a trainer, never pushing any weights. 'You know, I don't actually remember them ever doing anything ... They would just stand around and watch people.'" [[New York Times, 9/23/01](#)] Those three also had a one month membership in Florida - it isn't known if they actually worked out then or not. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#)]

Casing for Follow On?

June 2001 : Three Middle Eastern men are detained for snapping reconnaissance photos of 26 Federal Plaza, the location of FBI offices in New York City. They are questioned by the FBI and let go. Days later the confiscated film is developed, and it shows photos of security checkpoints, police posts and surveillance cameras at 26 Federal Plaza, two federal courthouses and the federal building at 290 Broadway. It is now believed they were al-Qaeda agents and possibly connected to the 9/11 attacks. A terrorism expert questions why the pictures weren't developed immediately, and detailed intelligence checks conducted. [[New York Post, 9/16/01](#)]

Finances

June 25, 2001: Hijacker Fayeze Banihammad opens a bank account in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), with 9/11 paymaster "Mustafa Ahmed al-Hawsawi." That name is a likely alias for Saeed Sheikh, who is known to frequently visit Dubai in this time period. [[MSNBC, 12/11/01](#)] Banihammad flies to the US the next day. Banihammad gives power of attorney to "al-Hawsawi" on July 18, and then "al-Hawsawi" sends Banihammad Visa and ATM cards in Florida. Banihammad uses the Visa card to buy his airplane ticket for 9/11. [[Washington Post, 12/13/01](#), [MSNBC, 12/11/01](#)] The same pattern of events occurs for some other hijackers, though the timing is not fully known. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)] Visa cards are given to several other hijackers in Dubai. [[London Times, 12/1/01](#)] Other hijackers, including Hani Hanjour, Abdulaziz Alomari and Khalid Almihdhar, open foreign bank and credit card accounts in the UAE and in Saudi Arabia. Majed Moqed, Saeed Alghamdi, Hamza Alghamdi, Ahmed Alnami, Ahmed Alhaznawi, Wail Alshehri and possibly others purchase travelers checks in the UAE, presumably with funds given to them when they pass through Dubai. It is believed that "al-Hawsawi" is in Dubai every time the hijackers pass through. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)]

Back to Europe

July 8-19, 2001: Atta travels to Spain again. Three others cross the Atlantic with him but their names are not known, as they apparently use false identities. [[El Mundo, 9/30/01](#)] Ramzi bin al-Shibh, a member of his Hamburg terrorist cell, arrives in Spain on July 9, and stays until July 16. [[New York Times, 5/1/02](#)] Hijacker Marwan Alshehhi also comes to Spain at about the same time and leaves on July 17. [[AP, 6/30/02](#)] Alshehhi must have traveled under another name, because US immigration has no records of his departure or return. [[Department of Justice, 5/20/02](#)] Investigators believe Atta, Alshehhi and bin al-Shibh meet with at least three unknown others in a secret safe house near Tarragona. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#), [AP, 6/30/02](#)] It is theorized this meeting is when the final details of the 9/11 attacks are set. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)] It is probable Atta meets with and is hosted by Barakat Yarkas and other Spanish al-Qaeda members. [[International Herald Tribune, 11/21/01](#)] One of the unknowns at the meeting could be Yarkas's friend Mamoun Darkazanli, a German with connections to the Hamburg al-Qaeda cell. Darkazanli travels to Spain and meets with Yarkas during the time Atta is there. He travels with an unnamed Syrian Spanish suspect, who lived in Afghanistan and had access there to al-Qaeda leaders. [[Los Angeles Times, 1/14/03](#)] The Spanish newspaper La Vanguardia later reports that Atta also meets with fellow hijackers Waleed Alshehri and Wail Alshehri on July 16. [[AP, 9/27/01](#)] Strangely enough, on July 16, Atta stayed in the same hotel in the town of Salou that had hosted FBI counter-terrorist expert John O'Neill a few days earlier, when he made a speech to other counter-terrorism experts on the need for greater international cooperation by police agencies to combat terrorism. Bin al-Shibh arrived in Salou on July 9, which means he would have been there when the counter-terrorist meeting took place.

Mock-Ups

June or July 2001: At least two witnesses from the Hamburg university where Atta had studied later claim Atta, Marwan Alshehhi and an unknown third person are seen in the ground-floor workshops of the architecture department at this time. They are seen on at least two occasions with a white, three foot scale model of the Pentagon. Between 60 and 80 slides of the Sears building in Chicago and the World Trade Center are found to be missing from the technical library after 9/11. [[Sunday Times, 2/3/02](#)]

Deployment

August 2001 (B): At least six 9/11 hijackers, including all of those that boarded Flight 77, live in Laurel, Maryland from about this time. They reportedly include Hani

Hanjour, Majed Moqed, Khalid Almihdhar, Nawaf Alhazmi and Salem Alhazmi. Laurel, Maryland is home to a Muslim cleric named Moataz Al-Hallak who teaches at a local Islamic school and has been linked to bin Laden. He has testified three times before a grand jury investigating bin Laden. NSA expert James Bamford later states, "the terrorist cell that eventually took over the airliner that crashed into the Pentagon ended up living, working, planning and developing all their activities in Laurel, Maryland, which happens to be the home of the NSA. So they were actually living alongside NSA employees as they were plotting all these things." [[Washington Post, 9/19/01](#), [BBC, 6/21/02](#)]

August 1-2, 2001: Hijackers Hani Hanjour and Khalid Almihdhar meet Luis Martinez-Flores, an illegal immigrant from El Salvador, in a 7-Eleven parking lot in Fall Church, Virginia. He is paid \$100 cash to Martinez-Flores accompany the two to a local Department of Motor Vehicles office and signs forms attesting to their permanent residence in Virginia. Given new state identity cards, the cards are used the next day to get Virginia identity cards for between five and seven additional hijackers, including Abdulaziz Alomari, Ahmed Alghamdi, Majed Moqed, and Salem Alhazmi. [[Arizona Daily Star, 9/28/01](#), [Washington Post, 9/30/01](#), [Wall Street Journal, 10/16/01](#)]

Going to Ground

August 14, 2001: Two apparent associates of Mohamed Atta's Hamburg al-Qaeda cell, Ismail Ben Mrabete and Ahmed Taleb, purchase tickets to fly to Pakistan on September 3, 2001. They are joined on that flight by cell member Said Bahaji. All three apparently then disappear into Afghanistan. It is later discovered that Taleb had been in e-mail contact with al-Qaeda leader Abu Zubaida. [[Chicago Tribune, 2/25/03](#)]

September 3-5, 2001: Members of Atta's Hamburg terrorist cell leave Germany for Pakistan. Said Bahaji flies out of Hamburg on September 3. [[Chicago Tribune, 2/25/03](#)] German intelligence already had Bahaji under surveillance, and German border guards were under orders to report if he left the country. For some reason, they fail to note his departure. [[FAZ, 2/2/03](#)] German agents later discover two other passengers on the same flight traveling with false passports who stay in the same room with Bahaji when they arrive in Karachi, Pakistan. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)] Investigators now believe his flight companions are Ismail Ben Mrabete and Ahmed Taleb, both Algerians in their late 40s. Three more associates - Mohammed Belfatmi, an Algerian extremist from the Tarragona region of Spain, and two brothers with the last name Joya - also travel on the same plane. All of these people still remain unaccounted for. [[Chicago Tribune, 2/25/03](#)] Ramzi bin al-Shibh flies out of Germany on September 5 and stays in Spain a few days before presumably heading for Pakistan. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02](#)]

Moussaoui Detention

August 13-15, 2001: Zacarias Moussaoui trains at the Pan Am International Flight School in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he pays \$8,300 (\$1500 by credit card and the remainder in cash) to use a Boeing 747 Model 400 aircraft simulator. After just one day of training most of the staff is suspicious that he's a terrorist. They discuss "how much fuel [is] on board a 747-400 and how much damage that could cause if it hit[s] anything." They call the FBI with their concerns later that day. [[New York Times, 2/8/02](#), [Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02](#)] They are suspicious because:

- 1) In contrast to all the other students at this high-level flight school, he has no aviation background, little previous training and no pilot's license. [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02](#)]
- 2) He wants to fly a 747 not because he plans to be a pilot, but as an "ego boosting thing." [[New York Times, 10/18/02](#)] Yet within hours of his arrival, it is clear he "was not some affluent joy-rider." [[New York Times, 2/8/02](#)]
- 3) He is "extremely" interested in the operation of the plane's doors and control panel.

[Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02] He also is very keen on learning the protocol for communicating with the flight tower despite having no plans to actually become a pilot. [New York Times, 2/8/02]

4) He is evasive and belligerent when asked about his background. When an instructor, who notes from his records that Moussaoui is from France, attempts to greet him in French, Moussaoui appears not to understand, saying that he had spent very little time in France and that he is from the Middle East. The instructor considers it odd that Moussaoui did not specify the Middle Eastern country. [Minneapolis St. Paul Star Tribune, 12/21/01; Washington Post, 1/2/02]

5) He tells a flight instructor he is not a Muslim, but the instructor senses he is lying, badly, about it. [New Yorker, 9/30/02]

6) He says he would "love" to fly a simulated flight from London to New York, raising fears he has plans to hijack such a flight. [Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02] His original e-mail to the flight school similarly stated he wanted to be good enough to fly from London to New York. [New York Times, 2/8/02]

7) He pays for thousands of dollars in expenses from a large wad of cash. [New York Times, 2/8/02]

8) He seemed to be trying to pack a large amount of training in a short period of time for no apparent reason. [New York Times, 2/8/02]

9) He mostly practices flying in the air, not taking off or landing (although note that reports claiming he didn't want to take off or land at all appear to be an exaggeration). [New York Times, 2/8/02, Slate, 5/21/02, Minneapolis St. Paul Star Tribune, 12/21/01, New York Times, 5/22/02]

Failing to get much initial interest from the FBI, the flight instructor tells the FBI agents, "Do you realize how serious this is? This man wants training on a 747. A 747 fully loaded with fuel could be used as a weapon!" [New York Times, 2/8/02]

August 15, 2001: Based on the concerns of flight school staff (see August 13-15, 2001), Zacarias Moussaoui is arrested and detained in Minnesota on the excuse of an immigration violation. [Time, 5/27/02, some reports say the 16th because the arrest happened late at night] The FBI confiscates his possessions, including a computer laptop, but don't have a search warrant to search through them. But when arresting him they note he possesses two knives, fighting gloves and shin guards, and had prepared "through physical training for violent confrontation." An FBI interview of him adds more concerns. For example, he is supposedly in the US working as a "marketing consultant" for a computer company, but is unable to provide any details of his employment. Nor can he convincingly explain his \$32,000 bank balance. [MSNBC, 12/11/01, Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02] An FBI report states that when asked about his trips to Pakistan, the gateway to Afghanistan, "the questioning caused him to become extremely agitated, and he refused to discuss the matter further." The report also notes "Moussaoui was extremely evasive in many of his answers." [CNN, 9/28/02] His roommate is interviewed on the same day, and tells agents that Moussaoui believes it is "acceptable to kill civilians who harm Muslims," that Moussaoui approves of Muslims who die as "martyrs", and says Moussaoui might be willing to act on his beliefs. [Washington Post, 5/24/02] But Minnesota FBI agents quickly become frustrated at the lack of interest in the case from higher ups. [New York Times, 2/8/02] For instance, on August 21 they e-mail FBI headquarters saying it's "imperative" that the Secret Service be warned of the danger a plot involving Moussaoui might pose to the President's safety. But no such warning is ever sent. [Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02, New York Times, 10/18/02]

August 23-27, 2001: In the wake of the French intelligence report on Zacarias Moussaoui, FBI agents in Minnesota are "in a frenzy" and "absolutely convinced he [is] planning to do something with a plane." One agent writes notes speculating Moussaoui might "fly something into the World Trade Center." [Newsweek, 5/20/02] Minnesota FBI agents become "desperate to search the computer lap top" and

"conduct a more thorough search of his personal effects," especially since Moussaoui acted as if he was hiding something important in the laptop when arrested. [[Time, 5/21/02](#), [Time, 5/27/02](#)] FTW They decide to apply for a search warrant under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). "FISA allows the FBI to carry out wiretaps and searches that would otherwise be unconstitutional" because "the goal is to gather intelligence, not evidence." [[Washington Post, 11/4/01](#)] Standards to get a warrant through FISA are so low that out of 10,000 requests over more than 20 years, not a single one was turned down. When the FBI didn't have a strong enough case, it appears it simply lied to FISA. In May 2002, the FISA court complained that the FBI had lied in at least 75 warrant cases during the Clinton administration, once even by the FBI Director. [[New York Times, 8/27/02](#)] However, as FBI agent Coleen Rowley later puts it, FBI headquarters "almost inexplicably, throw[s] up roadblocks" and undermines their efforts. Headquarters personnel bring up "almost ridiculous questions in their apparent efforts to undermine the probable cause." One Minneapolis agent's e-mail says FBI headquarters is "setting this up for failure." That turns out to be correct. [[Time, 5/21/02](#), [Time, 5/27/02](#)]

August 24, 2001: Frustrated with lack of response from FBI headquarters about Zacarias Moussaoui, the Minnesota FBI contact an FBI agent working with the CIA's Counter-Terrorism Center, and asks the CIA for help. [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02](#)] On this day, the CIA sends messages to stations and bases overseas requesting information about Moussaoui. The message says that the FBI is investigating Moussaoui for possible involvement in the planning of a terrorist attack and mentions his efforts to obtain flight training. It also suggests he might be "involved in a larger plot to target airlines traveling from Europe to the US." [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 9/18/02](#)] It calls him a "suspect 747 airline attacker" and a "suspect airline suicide hijacker" - showing that the form of the 9/11 attack isn't a surprise, at least to the CIA. [[Senate Intelligence Committee, 10/17/02](#)] FBI headquarters responds by chastising the Minnesota FBI for notifying the CIA without approval. [[Time, 5/21/02](#)]

Preparation

August 20, 2001: In a later interview, would-be hijacker Ramzi bin al-Shibh claims that roughly around this day, he receives a coded e-mail about the 9/11 plot from Mohamed Atta. It reads, "The first term starts in three weeks.... There are 19 certificates for private studies and four exams." Bin al-Shibh learns the exact day of the attack on August 29. [[Guardian, 9/9/02](#)] Hijacker Hani Hanjour also makes surveillance test flights near the Pentagon and WTC around this time, showing the targets have been confirmed as well. [[CBS, 10/9/02](#)] Information in a notebook later found in Afghanistan suggests the 9/11 attack was planned for later, but was moved up at the last minute. [[MSNBC, 1/30/02](#)] The FBI later notices spikes in cell phone use between the hijackers just after the arrest of Zacarias Moussaoui and just before the hijackers begin to buy tickets for the flights they would hijack. [[New York Times, 9/10/02](#)] CIA Director Tenet has hinted that Zacarias Moussaoui's arrest a few days earlier may be connected to when the date of the attack was picked. [[CIA, 6/18/02](#)] On the other hand, some terrorists appear to have made plans to flee Germany in advance of the 9/11 attacks one day before Moussaoui's arrest.

August 24, 2001 (B): Hijacker Khalid Almihdhar buys his 9/11 plane ticket on-line using a credit card; Nawaf Alhazmi does the same the next day. [[Congressional Intelligence Committee, 9/26/02](#)] Both men had been put on a terrorist watch list on August 23. Procedures are in place for law enforcement agencies to share watch list information with airlines and airports and such sharing is common, but the FAA and the airlines are not notified, so the purchases raise no red flags. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#)] An official later states that had the FAA been properly warned, "they should have been picked up in the reservation process." [[Washington Post, 10/2/02](#)]

August 24-29, 2001: The hijackers book their flights for 9/11, using their apparent real names. Most pay using credit cards on the internet. [[Miami Herald, 9/22/01](#)] At least five tickets are one way only. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/18/01](#)]

August 28, 2001: Hijacker Atta is able to buy his flight ticket, despite being wanted by police for driving without a license (see [April 26, 2001](#)) and violating visa regulations. He should have been wanted for sabotaging a stalled aircraft as well, [[Australian Broadcasting Corp., 11/12/01](#)]

September 5, 2001 : Two men, believed to be Hani Hanjour and Majed Moqed, are captured on camera at an ATM in Maryland. [[St. Petersburg Times, 9/27/01](#)] A picture of this is later released, which appears to be the only picture released of any of the hijackers in the US, except for those on identification cards and some of Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari in Portland, Maine in the 24 hours before the 9/11 attacks

September 8-10, 2001 (C): The hijackers send money to and receive money from a man in the United Arab Emirates who uses the aliases "Mustafa Ahmed," "Mustafa Ahmad," and "Ahamad Mustafa." [[MSNBC, 12/11/01](#)] This "Mustafa" transfers money to Mohamed Atta in Florida on September 8 and 9. He sends the money from a branch of the Al Ansari Exchange in Sharjah, UAE, a center of al-Qaeda financial dealings. [[Financial Times, 11/30/01](#)] On September 9, three hijackers, Atta, Waleed Alshehri and Marwan Alshehhi, transfer about \$15,000 back to "Mustafa"'s account. [[Time, 10/1/01](#), [Los Angeles Times, 10/20/01](#)] Apparently the hijackers are returning money meant for the 9/11 attacks that they didn't use. "Mustafa" then transfers \$40,000 to his Visa card and then, using a Saudi passport, flies from the UAE to Karachi, Pakistan, on 9/11. He makes six ATM withdrawals there two days later, then disappears into Pakistan. [[MSNBC, 12/11/01](#)] In early October 2001 it is reported that the financier "Mustafa Ahmed" is an alias used by Saeed Sheikh. [[CNN, 10/6/01](#)] It will later be reported that Saeed wired money to Atta the month before. These last-minute transfers are touted as the "smoking gun" proving al-Qaeda involvement in the 9/11 attacks, since Saeed is a known financial manager for bin Laden. [[Guardian, 10/1/01](#)]

September 9, 2001 : Hijacker Ziad Jarrah is stopped in Maryland for speeding, ticketed and released. No red flags show up when his name is run through the computer by the state police. However, he already had been questioned in United Arab Emirates at the request of the CIA for "suspected involvement in terrorist activities". Baltimore's mayor has criticized the CIA for not informing them that Jarrah was on the CIA's watch list. [[Chicago Tribune, 12/14/01](#), [AP, 12/14/01](#)]

Prior Knowledge

August 29, 2001 (C): In a later interview, would-be hijacker Ramzi bin al-Shibh claims that on this day Atta calls him in Germany from the US. Atta asks him what is "two sticks, a dash and a cake with a stick down?" The answer, which bin al-Shibh figures out, is 11-9 - the European and Arabic way of writing 9/11. [[Knight-Ridder, 9/9/02](#), [CBS, 10/9/02](#)] So knowing the date of the attack, bin al-Shibh later claims that he orders active cells in Europe, the US, and elsewhere to evacuate

Late August 2001 (C): A Telegraph article later claims that Iraq leader Saddam Hussein puts his troops on their highest military alert since the Gulf War. A CIA official states that there was nothing obvious to warrant this move: "He was clearly expecting a massive attack and it leads you to wonder why." Hussein apparently made a number of other moves at the time suggesting foreknowledge and the article strongly suggests Iraqi complicity in the 9/11 attacks. [[Telegraph, 9/23/01](#)]

Early September 2001 : The NSA intercepts "multiple phone calls from Abu Zubaida, bin Laden's chief of operations, to the United States." The timing and information

contained in these intercepted phone calls has not been disclosed. [[ABC News, 2/18/02](#)]

Early September 2001 : A few days before 9/11, a Seattle security guard of Middle Eastern descent tells an East Coast friend on the phone that terrorists will soon attack the US. After 9/11 the friend tells the FBI, and passes a lie detector test. The security guard refuses to cooperate with the FBI or take a lie detector test. He isn't arrested - apparently the FBI determines that while he may have had 9/11 foreknowledge, he wasn't involved in the plot. [[Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 10/12/01](#)]

Early September 2001 : Shortly before 9/11, people attending a New York mosque are warned to stay out of lower Manhattan on 9/11. The FBI's Joint Terrorist Task Force interviews dozens of members of the mosque, who confirm the story. The mosque leadership denies any advanced knowledge and the case apparently remains unsolved. [[New York Daily News, 10/12/01](#)]

Early September 2001 : A veteran detective with post-9/11 investigations later claims that rumors in New York City's Arab-American community about the 9/11 attacks are common in the days beforehand. The story "had been out on the street" and the number of leads turning up later is so "overwhelming" that it is difficult to tell who knows about the attacks from secondhand sources and who knows about it from someone who may have been a participant. After 9/11, tracking leads regarding Middle Eastern employees who didn't show up for work on 9/11 are "a serious and major priority." [[Journal News, 10/11/01](#)]

Early September 2001 : The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) later announces that they are investigating the trading of shares of 38 companies in the days just before 9/11. The San Francisco Chronicle states that the New York Stock Exchange sees "unusually heavy trading in airline and related stocks several days before the attacks." All of the 38 companies logically stood to lose from the attacks. They include parent companies of major airlines American, Continental, Delta, Northwest, Southwest, United and USAirways as well as cruise lines Carnival and Royal Caribbean, aircraft maker Boeing and defense contractor Lockheed Martin. The SEC is also looking into suspicious short selling of numerous insurance company stocks. [[AP, 10/2/01](#), [San Francisco Chronicle, 10/3/01](#)]

Early September 2001: There is a sharp increase in short selling of the stocks of American and United airlines on the New York Stock Exchange prior to 9/11. A short sell is a bet that a particular stock will drop. There is an increase of 40 percent of short selling over the previous month for these two airlines, compared to an 11 percent increase for other big airlines and one percent for the exchange overall. A significant profit was to be made: United stock dropped 43 percent and American dropped 39 percent the first day the market reopened after the attack. Short selling of Munich Re, the world's largest reinsurer, is also later noted by German investigators. Inquiries into short selling millions of Munich Re shares were made in France days before the attacks. [[Reuters, 9/20/01](#), [San Francisco Chronicle, 9/22/01](#)] Munich Re stock plummets after the attacks, as they claim the attacks will cost them \$2 billion. [[Dow Jones Business News, 9/20/01](#)] There is also suspicious trading activity involving reinsurers Swiss Reinsurance and AXA. These trades are especially curious because the insurance sector "was one of the brightest spots in a very difficult market" at this time. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/19/01](#)] There is also a short spike on Dutch airline KLM stock three to seven days before 9/11, reaching historically unprecedented levels. [[USA Today, 9/26/01](#)]

September 6, 2001 : According to a later interview with Ramzi bin al-Shibh, a courier sent by bin al-Shibh tells bin Laden on this day when the 9/11 attacks will take place. [[Australian, 9/9/02](#)]

Massoud Assassination

September 9, 2001: General Ahmed Shah Massoud, the leader of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance, is assassinated by two al-Qaeda agents posing as Moroccan journalists. [Time, 8/4/02] A legendary Mujahadeen commander and a brilliant tactician, Massoud had pledged to bring freedom and democracy to Afghanistan. The BBC says the next day, "General Massoud's death might well have meant the end of the [Northern] alliance" because there clearly was no figure with his skills and popularity to replace him. [BBC, 9/10/01, BBC, 9/10/01] "With Massoud out of the way, the Taliban and al-Qaeda would be rid of their most effective opponent and be in a stronger position to resist the American onslaught." [St. Petersburg Times, 9/9/02] It appears the assassination was supposed to happen earlier- the "journalists" waited for three weeks in Northern Alliance territory to meet Massoud. Finally on September 8, an aide says they "were so worried and excitable they were begging us." They were granted an interview after threatening to leave if the interview didn't happen in the next 24 hours.

GO!

September 10, 2001: Mohamed Atta calls Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the operational planner of the 9/11 attacks, in Afghanistan. Mohammed gives final approval to Atta to launch the attacks. This call is monitored and translated by the US, though it isn't known how quickly that takes, and the specifics of the conversation haven't been released. [Independent, 9/15/02] The NSA had been intercepting calls between Mohammed and Atta for the past several months, and US intelligence had learned Mohammed was interested in sending terrorists to the US and supporting them there.

The Last Night

In the days before the attacks, some of the hijackers (including Waleed Alshehri and/or Wail Alshehri) apparently sleep with prostitutes in Boston hotel rooms, or try to. A driver working at an "escort service" used by the hijackers claims he regularly drove prostitutes to a relative of bin Laden about once a week until 9/11, when the relative disappeared. Bin Laden has several relatives in the Boston area, most or all of whom returned to Saudi Arabia right after 9/11. [Boston Herald, 10/10/01] On September 10, four other hijackers in Boston (Marwan Alshehhi, Fayez Ahmed Banihammad, Mohand Alshehri, and Satam Al Suqami) call around to find prostitutes to sleep with on their last night alive, but in the end decline. Says one official, "It was going to be really expensive and they couldn't come to a consensus on price, so that was the end of it... Either they thought it was too extravagant [over \$400] or they didn't have enough money left." [Boston Globe, 10/10/01] FBI agents have also reportedly questioned the owners of Nardone's Go-Go Bar in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Several of the terrorists spent time in nearby Paterson and Newark and reportedly patronized the club, even on the weekend before 9/11. [Boston Herald, 10/10/01, Wall Street Journal, 10/16/01] Majed Moqed visits a porn shop and rents a porn video. The mayor of Paterson, New Jersey says of the six hijackers who stayed there: "Nobody ever saw them at mosques, but they liked the go-go clubs." [Newsweek, 10/15/01] Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar often frequented Cheetah's, a nude bar in San Diego. [Los Angeles Times, 9/1/02] Hamza Alghamdi watched a porn video on September 10. [Wall Street Journal, 10/16/01] University of Florida religion professor Richard Foltz states, "It is incomprehensible that a person could drink and go to a strip bar one night, then kill themselves the next day in the name of Islam... People who would kill themselves for their faith would come from very strict Islamic ideology. Something here does not add up." [Sun-Sentinel, 9/16/01]

Bush Assassination??

September 11, 2001: A small Florida newspaper will later report an extremely curious story. Around 6:00 a.m., a van occupied by men of Middle Eastern arrives at the hotel Bush is staying at. The men tell security guards they are reporters scheduled to conduct a poolside interview with Bush (who is getting ready to go on his morning

jog). They ask for a Secret Service agent by name. Another Secret Service agent says that he doesn't know of that agent or the poolside interview, and the men are turned away. An FBI agent later calls the whole incident "very strange." [[Longboat Observer, 9/26/01](#)]

2001 PENTTBOM

(5:53 a.m.) Hijackers Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari board a Colgan Air flight from Portland, Maine, to Boston. They are filmed going through security in Portland. This is the only footage of the hijackers in airports on 9/11, and it's not even one of the suicide flights. [[Time, 9/24/01](#)] [5:45, [New York Daily News, 5/22/02](#), 5:45, [FBI, 10/4/01](#), 5:53, [Miami Herald, 9/22/01](#), strangely, the photos show two time stamps, one showing 5:45, the other showing 5:53]

(6:00 a.m.) Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari's flight from Portland, Maine to Boston takes off. [[FBI, 10/4/01](#)] Two passengers later say Atta and Alomari board separately from each other, keep quiet, and don't draw attention to themselves. [[Washington Post, 9/16/01](#), [Chicago Sun-Times, 9/16/01](#)]

(6:00 a.m.) President Bush has just spent the night at Colony Beach and Tennis Resort on Longboat Key, Florida. Surface-to-air missiles have been placed on the roof of the resort. [[Sarasota Herald-Tribune, 9/10/02](#)] Bush wakes up around 6:00 a.m. and is preparing for his morning jog. [[MSNBC, 10/27/02](#), [New York Times, 9/16/01 \(B\)](#), [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#)] A van occupied by men of Middle Eastern descent pull up to the Colony stating they have a "poolside" interview with the president. They are turned away for not having an appointment. [[Longboat Observer, 9/26/01](#)] *Was this an assassination attempt modeled on the one used on Afghani leader Ahmed Massoud two days earlier?* [[Time, 8/4/02](#)]

(6:30 a.m.) Lt. Col. Dawne Deskins and other NORAD employees at NEADS (NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector that covers the Washington and New York areas) are starting their work day. NORAD is unusually prepared on 9/11, because it is conducting a week-long semiannual exercise called Vigilant Guardian. [[Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] NORAD is thus fully staffed and alert, and senior officers are manning stations throughout the US. The entire chain of command is in place and ready when the first hijacking is reported. An article later says, "In retrospect, the exercise would prove to be a serendipitous enabler of a rapid military response to terrorist attacks on Sept. 11." [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#)] ABC News later reports that because NORAD is "conducting training exercises [it] therefore [has] extra fighter planes on alert." [[ABC News, 9/14/02](#)] Colonel Robert Marr, in charge of NEADS, says, "We had the fighters with a little more gas on board. A few more weapons on board." [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] The exercise poses "an imaginary crisis to North American Air Defense outposts nationwide." [[Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] Accounts by participants vary on if 9/11 was the second, third, or fourth day of the exercise. [[Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#), [Ottawa Citizen, 9/11/02](#), [Code One Magazine, 1/02](#)]

(6:30 a.m.) A man has an argument with five Middle Eastern men over a parking space in the parking lot of Boston's Logan Airport. Later in the day he reports the event, and the car is discovered to have been rented by Mohamed Atta. Inside, police find a ramp pass, allowing access to restricted airport areas. ["About 6.30," [News of the World, 9/16/01](#), time unknown, [Miami Herald, 9/22/01](#)]

(6:31 a.m.) Bush goes for a four-mile jog around the golf course at the Colony Beach and Tennis Resort. [6:30, [Washington Post, 1/27/02](#), 6:30, [MSNBC, 10/27/02](#), 6:32, [Washington Times, 10/7/02](#)]

(6:45 a.m.) "Approximately two hours prior to the first attack", at least two workers at the instant messaging company Odigo receive messages warning of the WTC attack. This Israeli owned company has its headquarters two blocks from the WTC. [[Washington Post, 9/28/01](#), [Ha'aretz, 9/26/01](#)]

6:50 a.m. Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari's flight from Portland arrives on time at Boston's Logan Airport. [[The book *Inside 9-11: What Really Happened*, 2/02](#)]

(7:45 a.m.) Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari board Flight 11. Atta's bags contain airline uniforms and many other remarkable things, but are checked through to his final destination, making them unusable for the attacks. The bags are not loaded onto the plane in time and are later found by investigators. [[Boston Globe, 9/18/01](#)] But at least two other hijackers on Flight 11 are able to use stolen uniforms and IDs to board the plane. [[Sunday Herald, 9/16/01](#)] There is speculation that the bags were meant to be left behind and found. [[New Yorker, 10/1/01](#)]

(Before 7:59 a.m.) Supposedly, nine of the 19 hijackers are selected for special screening before they board their planes. None of their names are known [[Washington Post, 3/2/02](#)], but one article makes clear hijackers Khalid Almihdhar and Nawaf Alhazmi, already on a terrorist watch list for international flights, are not selected. [[Cox News, 10/21/01](#)] Six of the nine are chosen for extra scrutiny by a computerized screening system, prompting a sweep of their checked baggage for explosives or unauthorized weapons. Two of the nine are chosen because of irregularities in their identification documents, and one is chosen for traveling with someone having such documents. After screening, all are allowed to board. [[Washington Post, 3/2/02](#)]

(Before 7:59 a.m.) Hijacker Mohamed Atta on Flight 11 calls hijacker Marwan Alshehhi in Flight 175 as both planes sit on the runway. They confirm the plot is on. ["Just before 8:00," [Time, 8/4/02](#)]

(7:59 a.m.) Flight 11 takes off from Boston's Logan Airport, 14 minutes after scheduled departure. [7:45 (actually the scheduled time), [Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#), 7:59, [ABC News, 7/18/02](#), 7:59, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 7:59, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 8:00, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:00, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 8:00, [Newsday, 9/10/02](#)]

(8:00 a.m.) Bush sits down for his daily intelligence briefing. "The President's briefing appears to have included some reference to the heightened terrorist risk reported throughout the summer" but contained nothing serious enough to call National Security Adviser Rice. The briefing ends at about 8:20. [[Telegraph, 12/16/01](#)]

8:01 a.m. Flight 93 is delayed for 41 minutes on the runway in Newark, finally taking off at 8:42. The Boston Globe credits this delay as a major reason why this was the only one of the four flights not to succeed in its mission. [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)] [[Newsweek, 9/22/01](#), [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#)] Apparently Flight 93 has to wait in a line of about a dozen planes before it can take off. [[USA Today, 8/12/02](#)]

8:13 a.m. The last routine communication between ground control and the pilots of Flight 11. The pilot responds when told to turn right. But almost immediately afterwards he fails to respond to a command to climb. [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), 8:13:31, [New York Times, 10/16/01](#)]

(8:13 a.m.) Flight 11 is hijacked around this time. One flight controller says the plane is hijacked over Gardner, Massachusetts, less than 50 miles west of Boston. [[Nashua Telegraph, 9/13/01](#)] *Does the hijacking involve all of the hijackers from the beginning, or only one hijacker who is already in the cockpit when the hijacking begins, with the*

rest joining in later? The storming of the cockpit doesn't appear to happen until after 8:21, yet communication with ground control stops now. Fifteen minutes after takeoff, [Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#), "A few minutes into the flight," [ABC News, 7/18/02](#)] As the [Boston Globe](#) put it, "It appears that the hijackers' entry was surprising enough that the pilots did not have a chance to broadcast a traditional distress call," a button that would have taken only a few seconds to press. [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)]

(After 8:13 a.m.) Shortly after flight controllers ask Flight 11 to climb to 35,000 feet, the transponder stops transmitting. The transponder is the electronic device that identifies the jet on the controller's screen, gives its exact location and altitude, and also allows a four-digit emergency hijack code to be sent. Air traffic manager Glenn Michael says later, "We considered it at that time to be a possible hijacking." ["When given permission to climb to 35,000 feet," [AP, 8/12/02](#), "8:13:47 — 46R: AAL11, now climb maintain FL350," [New York Times, 10/16/01](#), shortly after trying emergency frequencies, [Christian Science Monitor, 9/13/01](#)] "Just moments" after radio contact is lost (which is discussed by flight controllers at 8:15), the transponder is turned off. [[MSNBC, 9/15/01](#)] NORAD officially says it is not notified the plane is hijacked until 8:40 - 27 minutes later, though one NORAD employee contradicts this. [[NORAD, 9/18/01](#)] Colonel Robert Marr, head of NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector, later claims the transponder is turned off some time after 8:30. [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)]

(After 8:14 a.m.) At some point after the hijacking begins, the pilot of Flight 11, John Ogonowski, activates the talk-back button, enabling Boston flight controllers to hear what is being said in the cockpit. A controller says, "The button was being pushed intermittently most of the way to New York." An article later notes that "his ability to do so also indicates that he was in the driver's seat much of the way" to the WTC. Such transmissions continue until about 8:38. [[Christian Science Monitor, 9/13/01](#), [MSNBC, 9/15/01](#)]

8:14 a.m. Flight 175 takes off from Boston's Logan Airport, 16 minutes after the scheduled departure time. [[CNN, 9/17/01](#), [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), [AP, 8/19/02](#), [Newsday, 9/10/02](#)]

(8:15 a.m.) Boston flight control tries but fails to contact the pilots of Flight 11, even using emergency frequencies. [8:14, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#)] A Boston flight controller states of Flight 11, "He won't answer you. He's nordo roger thanks". Nordo means "no radio." [8:15, [New York Times, 10/16/01](#), "over the Hudson river," [CNN, 9/17/01](#)]

8:20 a.m. Flight 11 stops transmitting its IFF (identify friend or foe) beacon signal. [[CNN, 9/17/01](#)]

(8:20 a.m.) Flight 11 starts to veer dramatically off course around this time. [[USA Today flight path image](#), on this page] Recall that if a plane goes two miles off course, it should be considered an emergency situation. [[MSNBC, 9/12/01](#)]

(8:20 a.m.) Boston flight control decides that Flight 11 has probably been hijacked, but apparently it doesn't notify other flight control centers for another five minutes, and don't notify NORAD for about another 20 minutes. ["About 8:20," [Newsday, 9/23/01](#), "about 8:20," [New York Times, 9/15/01](#)] ABC News will later say, "There doesn't seem to have been alarm bells going off, traffic controllers getting on with law enforcement or the military. There's a gap there that will have to be investigated." [[ABC News, 9/14/01](#)]

(8:20 a.m.) Flight 77 departs Dulles International Airport near Washington, ten minutes after the scheduled departure time. [8:20, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 8:20, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 8:20, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:21, [AP, 8/19/02](#)]

(Before 8:21 a.m.) Four hijackers get up from their seats and stab or shoot passenger Daniel Lewin, who once belonged to the Israel Defense Force, Sayeret Matkal, a top-secret counter-terrorist unit. He was sitting in front of one of the three hijackers in business class. *This could have happened even before 8:13, but logically seems to have come not much before 8:21.* A very preliminary FAA memo says Lewin is shot by Satam Al Suqami at 9:20. Clearly the time is a typo; perhaps 8:20 is meant? [[ABC News, 7/18/02](#), [UPI, 3/6/02](#), [Washington Post, 3/2/02](#)]

(8:21 a.m.) Inside Flight 11 and near the back of the plane, flight attendant Betty Ong calls Vanessa Minter at American Airlines reservations in North Carolina, using a seatback GTE Airfone. She begins relaying information to manager Craig Marquis at American Airlines' operations center in Fort Worth, but she can't transfer the call. Another supervisor named Nydia Gonzales also listens in from 8:27. Ong talks for 25 minutes, until the plane crashes. The FBI says that only the first four minutes were recorded, but won't release the tape. Other flight attendants relay information about what is happening in the front. She says the hijackers sprayed something in the first-class cabin to keep people out of the front of the plane. It burns her eyes and she is having trouble breathing. In hushed tones, she tells of a passenger dead (presumably Daniel Lewin) and a crew member dying. ["25 minute phone call until crash," [ABC News, 7/18/02](#), [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), [USA Today, 8/13/02](#)]

(8:21 a.m.) Another Flight 11 attendant, Amy Sweeney, calls American Airlines ground manager Michael Woodward and speaks calmly to him for 25 minutes until the plane crashes. Supposedly the call is not recorded but Woodward took notes. [[ABC News, 7/18/02](#)] However, the Boston Globe says it has a transcript of the call. [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)] Her first comment is, "Listen, and listen to me very carefully. I'm on Flight 11. The airplane has been hijacked." She identifies four hijackers (not the five said to be on the plane) and gives the seat numbers for them. Even before the plane crashes, staff are able to determine the names, phone numbers, addresses, and credit card information for these four hijackers, including Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari. She reports that two flight attendants have been stabbed and a passenger has had his throat slashed. She says the hijackers seem to be of Middle Eastern descent. ["Over the next 25 minutes," [ABC News, 7/18/02](#), [AP, 10/5/01](#)]

(After 8:21 a.m.) While flight attendant Amy Sweeney is relating details on the phone about the hijackers, the men are storming the front of the plane. She says they "just gained access to the cockpit." It's probable she calls just after the storming begins, and it is during this struggle when the hijackers stab the two first-class flight attendants nearest to the cockpit, Barbara Arestegui and Karen Martin. Sweeney says the hijackers have a bomb with yellow wires attached. [[ABC News, 7/18/02](#), [Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#)] *Could it be that one of the hijackers was posing as a pilot passenger and thus had been able to be in the cockpit as an observer, as happened on some of the hijacker's test run flights?* If so, he would have begun the hijack around 8:13, but would only received reinforcements and had Mohamed Atta take over the flying of the plane around now. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01](#), [AP, 10/5/01](#), [ABC News, 7/18/02](#)] *This would explain why Sweeney reported four hijackers, not five.*

(8:24 a.m.) The pilot of Flight 11, John Ogonowski, activates the talk-back button, enabling Boston flight controllers to hear a hijacker on Flight 11 say to the passengers: "We have some planes. Just stay quiet and you will be OK. We are returning to the airport." A controller responds, "Who's trying to call me?" The hijacker continues, "Everything will be OK. If you try to make any moves you'll endanger yourself and the airplane. Just stay quiet." [8:24:38, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:24:38, [New York Times, 10/16/01](#), 8:24, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), 8:28, [New York Times,](#)

9/12/01, before 8:28, Channel 4 News, 9/13/01 Immediately after hearing this voice, the controller "knew right then that he was working a hijack." [Village Voice, 9/13/01] Ben Sliney, the FAA's National Operations Manager, soon hears of the message "We have some planes" and later says the phrase haunts him all morning. [USA Today, 8/13/02]

8:25 a.m. Boston flight controllers notify other flight control centers of the Flight 11 hijacking, but supposedly they don't notify (NORAD for another 6 or 15 minutes. [8:25:00, Guardian, 10/17/01] *Why isn't NORAD also notified at this time?* Note that this means the controllers working Flights 77 and Flight 93 would have been aware of Flight 11's hijacking from this time. [Village Voice, 9/13/01]

8:28 a.m. Boston flight control radar sees Flight 11 making an unplanned 100-degree turn to the south (they're already way off-course). Flight controllers say they never lost sight of the flight, though they could no longer determine altitude once the transponder was turned off. [Christian Science Monitor, 9/13/01] Before this turn, the FAA had tagged Flight 11's radar dot for easy visibility, and at American Airlines headquarters at least, "All eyes watched as the plane headed south. On the screen, the plane showed a squiggly line after its turn near Albany, then it straightened." [Wall Street Journal, 10/15/01] "Boston Center could still track it on primary radar...." [Newhouse News, 1/25/02] Boston flight controller Mark Hodgkins later says, "I watched the target of American 11 the whole way down." [ABC, 9/6/02] Clearly, an early report stating, "Boston airport officials said they did not spot the plane's course until it had crashed, and said the control tower had no unusual communication with the pilots or any crew members" [Washington Post, 9/12/01], is incorrect, as is another account that says flight controllers only find Flight 11 at 8:42. [Newsday, 9/10/02] But apparently NEADS, part of NORAD, has different radar, and even at 8:40 they cannot find Flight 11. Boston has to periodically update NEADS on Flight 11's position by telephone until NEADS finally finds it a few minutes before it crashes into the WTC. [Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02, ABC News, 9/11/02, Newhouse News, 1/25/02]

(Around 8:30 a.m.) Just prior to learning about the 9/11 attacks, many of the US's leaders are scattered across the US and overseas. Vice President Cheney and National Security Advisor Rice are at their offices in the White House. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld is at his office in the Pentagon, meeting with a delegation from Capitol Hill. Secretary of State Powell is in Lima, Peru. CIA Director Tenet is at breakfast with his old friend and mentor, former senator David Boren (D), at the St. Regis Hotel, three blocks from the White House. General Henry Shelton, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is flying across the Atlantic on the way to Europe. Attorney General Ashcroft is flying to Milwaukee. FBI Director Mueller is in his office at FBI headquarters on Pennsylvania Avenue. [Washington Post, 1/27/02] Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta is at his office at the Department of Transportation. [Senate Commerce Committee, 9/20/01] Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Joe Allbaugh is at a conference in Montana. [ABC, 9/14/02 (B)] George Bush Sr. is supposedly on a flight from Washington to St. Paul, Minnesota, and has his plane diverted to Milwaukee when the air ban begins. [Time, 9/24/01]

8:31 a.m. NORAD employee Lt. Colonel Dawne Deskins later says that Boston flight control notifies NORAD of Flight 77's hijacking at this time, not at 8:40 as has been widely reported, even by Deskins previously. [ABC News, 9/11/02] Another later report states, "Shortly after 8:30 a.m., behind the scenes, word of a possible hijacking [reaches] various stations of NORAD." [ABC News, 9/14/02]

8:33 a.m. Flight controllers hear a hijacker on Flight 11 say to the passengers: "Nobody move, please, we are going back to the airport. Don't try to make any stupid moves." [8:33, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), 8:33:59, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:33:59, [New York Times, 10/16/01](#)]

(8:35 a.m.) Bush's motorcade leaves for Emma E. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Florida. [8:30, [Washington Post, 1/27/02](#), 8:35, [Sarasota Magazine, 9/19/01](#), 8:39, [Washington Times, 10/7/02](#)] He said farewell to the management at the Colony Beach and Tennis Resort at 8:20. [[Telegraph, 12/16/01](#)]

(8:36 a.m.) On Flight 11, flight attendant Betty Ong reports that the plane tilts all the way on one side and then becomes horizontal again. Flight attendant Amy Sweeney then reports on her phone that the plane has begun a rapid descent. ["About 15 minutes" after the calls began, [ABC News, 7/18/02](#)]

8:37 a.m. Flight controllers ask the Flight 175 pilots to look for a lost American Airlines plane 10 miles to the south - a reference to Flight 11. They respond that they can see it. They are told to keep away from it. [8:37:08, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:37, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), the incident is not included in New York Times flight controller transcript of [New York Times, 10/16/01](#)]

(8:38 a.m.) Flight 11 pilot John Ogonowski's periodic activation of the talk-back button, begun around 8:14, stops around this time. It is suggested that means this is when the hijackers replace him as pilot. [[Christian Science Monitor, 9/13/01](#), [MSNBC, 9/15/01](#)]

(8:40 a.m.) Boston flight control supposedly notifies NORAD that Flight 11 has been hijacked (another account says it happens earlier. [8:38, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 8:38, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 8:40, [NORAD, 9/18/01](#), 8:40, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 8:40, [Newsday, 9/10/02](#)] Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Powell, a member of the Air National Guard at NEADS, part of NORAD, takes the call from Boston Center. [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#), [Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] He gives the phone to Lt. Colonel Dawne Deskins, regional Mission Crew Chief for the Vigilant Guardian exercise: "I picked up the line and I identified myself to the Boston Center controller, and he said, we have a hijacked aircraft and I need to get you some sort of fighters out here to help us out." Deskins then tells Colonel Robert Marr, head of NEADS, "I have FAA on the phone, the shout line, Boston Center. They said they have a hijacked aircraft." Marr then calls Major General Larry Arnold at NORAD's command Center in Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, and says, "Boss, I need to scramble [fighters at] Otis [Air National Guard Base]." Arnold later says, "I said go ahead and scramble them, and we'll get the authorities later." [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] Deskins later says that initially she and "everybody" else at NEADS thought the call was part of the Vigilant Guardian exercise. After the phone call she had to clarify to everyone that it was not a drill. [[Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] NORAD commander Major General Larry Arnold in Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, also says that when he hears of the hijacking at this time, "The first thing that went through my mind was, is this part of the exercise? Is this some kind of a screw-up?" [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)]

(8:40 a.m.) Major Daniel Nash (codenamed Nasty) and Lt. Col. Timothy Duffy (codenamed Duff) are the two F-15 pilots who would scramble after Flight 11 and then Flight 175. Nash says that at this time, a colleague at the Otis Air National Guard Base tells him that a flight out of Boston has been hijacked, and to be on alert. [[Cape Cod Times, 8/21/02](#)] NEADS senior technician Jeremy Powell also later says that he telephones Otis Air Base and tells it to upgrade its "readiness posture." [[Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] Duffy also says he is told in advance about the hijacking by the FAA in Boston. [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#)] Nash and Duffy put on their

flight gear and get ready. [[Cape Cod Times, 8/21/02](#)] They are already halfway to their jets when "battle stations" are sounded. Duffy briefs Nash on what he knows, and, "About 4-5 minutes later, we [get] the scramble order and [take] off." [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#)]

8:41 a.m. The pilots of Flight 175 tell ground control about Flight 11, "We figured we'd wait to go to your center. We heard a suspicious transmission on our departure out of Boston. Someone keyed the mike and said: 'Everyone stay in your seats.' It cut out." [8:41, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:41, [Newsday, 9/10/02](#), 8:41:32, [New York Times, 10/16/01](#)] An alternate version: "We heard a suspicious transmission on our departure from B-O-S [Boston's airport code]. Sounds like someone keyed the mike and said, 'Everyone, stay in your seats.'" [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)] The last transmission from Flight 175, still discussing this message, comes a few seconds before 8:42. [[New York Times, 10/16/01](#)] *Presumably Flight 175 is hijacked within the next minute.*

(8:42 a.m.) Flight 93 takes off from Newark International Airport, bound for San Francisco. It leaves 41 minutes late because of heavy runway traffic. [[MSNBC, 9/3/02](#)] [8:41, [Newsweek, 9/22/01](#), 8:41, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 8:42, [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#), 8:42, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 8:42, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#)]

8:42 a.m. Flight 175 veers from its official course. [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)] (An early CNN reports says the deviation happens at 8:50, but that's probably when the plane, already off-course, makes a complete U-turn north.) [[CNN, 9/17/01](#)]

8:42 a.m. A flight controller says of Flight 175, "... looks like he's heading southbound but there's no transponder no nothing and no one's talking to him." [[New York Times, 10/16/01](#)]

(Before 8:43 a.m.) At some unknown time period, businessman Peter Burton Hanson calls his father from Flight 175 and says, "Oh, my God! They just stabbed the airline hostess. I think the airline is being hijacked." Despite being cut off twice, he manages to report how men armed with knives are stabbing flight attendants, apparently in an attempt to force crew to unlock the doors to the cockpit. He calls again and says good-bye just before the plane crashes. [[Toronto Sun, 9/16/01](#), [BBC, 9/13/01](#)]

8:43 a.m. NORAD is notified that Flight 175 has been hijacked. [8:43, [NORAD, 9/18/01](#), 8:43, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 8:43, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 8:43, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 8:43, [Newsday, 9/10/02](#)] Apparently NORAD doesn't need to be notified, because by this time NEADS technicians have their headsets linked to the FAA in Boston to hear about Flight 11, and so NORAD learns instantly about Flight 175. [[Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] *Note that this means the controllers working Flight 77 and Flight 93 would have been aware of both Flight 175 and Flight 11's hijacking from this time.*

8:44 a.m. The pilot of US Airlines Flight 583 tells flight control, regarding Flight 175, "I just picked up an ELT [emergency locator transmitter] on 121.5 it was brief but it went off." The controller responds, "O.K. they said it's confirmed believe it or not as a thing, we're not sure yet..." [[New York Times, 10/16/01](#)] *This appears to have been the only plane in which the emergency signal is triggered by the pilot.*

(8:45 a.m.) Just prior to the crash of Flight 11, flight attendant Amy Sweeney is asked on the phone if she can recognize where she is. She says, "I see the water. I see the buildings. I see buildings," then after a pause, a quiet "Oh, my God!" Mere seconds later the line goes dead. Meanwhile, flight attendant Betty Ong ends her call repeating the phrase "Pray for us" over and over. Apparently there is quiet instead of screaming in the background. [[ABC News, 7/18/02](#)]

(8:46 a.m.) Two F-15 fighters are ordered to scramble from Otis Air National Guard Base in Massachusetts to find Flight 11, approximately 190 miles from the known location of the plane and 188 miles from New York City. Fighters in nearer bases are not scrambled. *This is six to fifteen minutes after NORAD has been told the plane was hijacked (see 8:31 a.m. and 8:40 a.m.), 29 minutes after losing contact with the plane.* [8:39, [Channel 4 News, 9/13/01, 8:44](#), [CNN, 9/17/01, 8:44](#), [Washington Post, 9/15/01, 8:44](#), [Los Angeles Times, 9/17/01, 8:46](#), [NORAD, 9/18/01](#)] Supposedly, the scramble order comes after only one phone call - the decision is made to act first and get clearances later. [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#)] According to the two pilots, Major Daniel Nash and Lt. Col. Timothy Duffy, they are geared up and walking toward their planes when this alarm to scramble sounds. As soon as they strap in, the green light to launch goes on, and they're up even before their jets' radar kicks in. [[Cape Cod Times, 8/21/02](#)]

8:46 a.m. Flight 11 slams into the north tower, 1 World Trade Center. Investigators believe it still had about 10,000 gallons of fuel and was traveling 470 mph. [[New York Times, 9/11/02](#)] Approximately 2662 people are killed on the ground between this crash and the crash of Flight 175. [[AP, 8/19/02](#)] [8:45, [CNN, 9/12/01, 8:45](#), [New York Times, 9/12/01, 8:46](#) (based on seismic data), [New York Times, 9/12/01, 8:46](#), [CNN, 9/17/01, 8:46](#), [NORAD, 9/18/01, 8:46](#), [Washington Post, 9/12/01, 8:46](#), [AP, 8/19/02, 8:46](#), [USA Today, 9/3/02, 8:46](#), [USA Today, 8/13/02, 8:46](#), [Newsday, 9/10/02, 8:47:00](#), [Guardian, 10/17/01, 8:48](#), [MSNBC, 9/22/01, 8:46:26](#), [New York Times, 9/11/02, 8:46:26](#), [seismic records](#)]

(8:46 a.m.) Flight 175 stops transmitting its transponder signal, according to some reports. It is 50 miles north of New York City, headed toward Baltimore. [8:46:18, [Guardian, 10/17/01, "about the same time" as Flight 11 crash, Newsday, 9/10/02](#)] *Another lie?* Note that at 8:42, a flight controller said, "There's no transponder no nothing." [[New York Times, 10/16/01](#)] However, the transponder is turned off for only about 30 seconds, then changed to a signal that is not designated for any plane on that day. [[Newsday, 9/10/02](#)] This "allow[s] controllers to track the intruder easily, though they couldn't identify it." [[Washington Post, 9/17/01](#)]

8:46 a.m. At the time of the first WTC crash, three F-16s assigned to Andrews Air Force Base 10 miles from Washington are flying an air-to-ground training mission on a range in North Carolina, 207 miles away. Eventually they are recalled to Andrews and land there at some point after Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon. [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 9/9/02](#)]

(8:46 a.m.) Flight 77 from Washington goes severely off course. It heads due north for a while, then flies due south and gets back on course. It is off course by around 15 miles, and stays off course for about five minutes, judging from flight path maps. [See USA Today's [Flight 77 flight path](#)]

Between 8:46 - 9:03 a.m.) As soon as Boston flight controllers hear news that a plane might have hit the WTC, they know it was Flight 11. They have been tracking it continually since it began behaving erratically. It takes "several minutes" for Boston to report to NORAD that Flight 11 is responsible. [[New York Times, 9/13/01 \(F\)](#), [Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] However, flight controllers in New York City complain that they aren't given a conclusive report of what happened to Flight 11 until just before Flight 175 crashes at 9:03. "We had 90 to 120 seconds; it wasn't any 18 minutes," says one controller, referring to the actual elapsed time between the two crashes. Another controller says: "They dove into the airspace. By the time anybody saw anything, it was over." [[New York Times, 9/13/01 \(F\)](#)]

8:50 a.m. The last radio contact with Flight 77 is made when the pilots ask for clearance to fly higher. But then they fail to respond to a routine instruction. [[Guardian, 10/17/01](#), [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), 8:50:51, [New York Times, 10/16/01](#)] *Note that normal communication continues with Flight 77 about four minutes after the plane had gone significantly off course, suggesting the original pilot continues to fly the plane for at least a while after it was hijacked.*

After 8:50 a.m.) "During the hour or so that American Airlines Flight 77 [is] under the control of hijackers, up to the moment it struck the west side of the Pentagon, military officials in [the Pentagon's National Military Command Center [are] urgently talking to law enforcement and air traffic control officials about what to do." [[New York Times, 9/15/01](#)]

(8:50 a.m.) Rich "Doc" Miles, manager of United's Chicago system operations center, receives a call from a mechanic at an airline maintenance center in San Francisco that takes in-flight calls from flight attendants about broken items. The mechanic says a female flight attendant from Flight 175 just called and said, "Oh my God. The crew has been killed, a flight attendant has been stabbed. We've been hijacked." Then the line went dead. A dispatcher monitoring the flight then sends messages to the plane's cockpit computer but gets no response. [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)]

8:52 a.m. Two F-15s take off from Otis ANG Base, six minutes after being ordered to go after Flight 11, which has already crashed. [8:52, [NORAD, 9/18/01](#), 8:52, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 8:53, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 8:52, [Washington Post, 9/15/01](#), 8:52, [ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] This is 38 minutes after flight controllers lost contact with the plane. They go after Flight 175 instead. According to Lt. Col. Timothy Duffy, one of the pilots, before takeoff, a fellow officer had told him "This looks like the real thing." He says, "It just seemed wrong. I just wanted to get there. I was in full-blower all the way." A NORAD commander has said the planes were stocked with extra fuel as well. [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#)] *Full-blower is very rare - it means the fighters are going as fast as they can go.* An F-15 can travel over 1875 mph. [[Air Force News, 7/30/97](#)] Duffy later says, "As we're climbing out, we go supersonic on the way, which is kind of nonstandard for us." He says his target destination is over Kennedy airport in New York City. [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] According to Major Gen. Paul Weaver, director of the Air National Guard, "The pilots [fly] 'like a scalded ape,' topping 500 mph but [are] unable to catch up to the airliner." [[Dallas Morning News, 9/16/01](#)] ABC News later says, "The fighters are hurtling toward New York at mach 1.2, nearly 900 miles per hour." [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] NORAD commander Major General Larry Arnold says they head straight for New York City at about 1100 to 1200 mph. [[MSNBC, 9/23/01 \(C\)](#), [Slate, 1/16/02](#)] "An F-15 departing from Otis can reach New York City in 10 to 12 minutes, according to an Otis spokeswoman." [[Cape Cod Times, 9/16/01](#)] At an average speed of 1125 mph, they would reach the city in 10 minutes - 9:02. So if NORAD commander Arnold's speed is correct, these fighters should reach Flight 175 just before it crashes. *Yet according to the NORAD timeline [[NORAD, 9/18/01](#)], these planes take about 19 minutes to reach New York City, traveling less than 600 mph.*

8:53 a.m. A flight controller says to other airplanes in the sky regarding Flight 175, "We may have a hijack. We have some problems over here right now." [[Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:53:23, [New York Times, 10/16/01](#)]

(8:55 a.m.) Bush's motorcade arrives at Booker Elementary School. [8:46, [ABC News, 9/11/02](#), 8:55, [Washington Times, 10/7/02](#), 8:55, [Sarasota Magazine, 9/19/01](#), "just before 9:00," [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), "shortly before 9:00," [Sarasota Herald-Tribune, 9/10/02](#), "just before 9:00," [New York Times, 9/16/01 \(B\)](#), 9:00, [Albuquerque Tribune, 9/10/02](#)] The trip is said to take 20 minutes, which confirms he arrives

around 8:55, if it is true he left around 8:35. [[New York Times, 9/16/01 \(B\)](#), [St. Petersburg Times, 9/8/02 \(B\)](#), [MSNBC, 10/29/02](#)]

(8:55 a.m.) A public announcement is broadcast inside the WTC South Tower, saying that the building is secure and people can return to their offices. [[New York Times, 9/11/02](#), click on interactive popup] Such announcements continue until a few minutes before the building is hit, and "may [lead] to the deaths of hundreds of people." No one knows exactly what is said (though many later recall the phrase "the building is secure") or who gives the authority to say it. [[USA Today, 9/3/02](#)]

Between 8:55 - 9:00 a.m.) Just after Bush arrives at Booker Elementary School and is briefly told of the WTC crash, he is whisked into a holding room and updated on the situation via telephone by National Security Advisor Rice. [[Christian Science Monitor, 9/17/01](#), [Time, 9/12/01](#)] Rice later claims, "He said, what a terrible, it sounds like a terrible accident. Keep me informed." [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] School principal Gwen Tose-Rigell is then summoned to a room to talk with the President: "He said a commercial plane has hit the World Trade Center, and we're going to go ahead and go on, we're going on to do the reading thing anyway." [[AP, 8/19/02 \(D\)](#)] One local reporter notes that at this point, "He could and arguably should have left Emma E. Booker Elementary School immediately, gotten onto Air Force One and left Sarasota without a moment's delay."

(8:56 a.m.) Flight 77's transponder signal is turned off. [8:56, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 8:56, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), "six minutes before" Flight 175 hits WTC, [Newsday, 9/23/01](#)] Just prior to this, Flight 77 turns around over northeastern Kentucky, and starts heading back toward Washington. [[Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), [Newsday, 9/23/01](#)] For some minutes the plane is missing because flight controllers are looking for the radar signal toward the west and don't realize the plane is headed east. Rumors circulate that the plane might have exploded in midair. [[Newsday, 9/23/01](#)]

8:58 a.m. Brian Sweeney on Flight 175 tries to call his wife but can only leave a message. "We've been hijacked, and it doesn't look too good." He calls his mother and tells her what's happening onboard. [[Hyannis News, 9/13/01](#), [Washington Post, 9/21/01](#)]

9:00 a.m. The Pentagon moves its alert status up one notch from normal to Alpha. It stays on Alpha until after Flight 77 hits, and then goes up two more notches to Charlie later on in the day. [[USA Today, 9/16/01](#)]

(After 9:00 a.m.) United warns all of its aircraft of the potential for cockpit intrusion and to take precautions to barricade cockpit doors. Flight 93 pilots acknowledge the message. ["Just after 9:00," [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#)] *However, they're not told why, what happened at the WTC, or that another plane is missing.*

(Between 9:01 - 9:03 a.m.) Flight 175 is an unmarked blip to flight controllers in New York City. One controller stands up in horror. "No, he's not going to land. He's going in!" "Oh, my God! He's headed for the city," another controller shouts. "Oh, my God! He's headed for Manhattan!" [[Washington Post, 9/21/01](#)]

(9:03 a.m.) Flight 175 hits the south tower, 2 World Trade Center. Millions watch the crash live on television. Approximately 2662 people are killed on the ground between this crash and the crash of Flight 11. [[AP, 8/19/02](#)] F-15 fighter jets from Otis Air National Guard Base are still 71 miles or eight minutes away. [9:02, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 9:02, [NORAD, 9/18/01](#), 9:02, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 9:03, [New York Times, 9/12/01](#), 9:03 (based on seismic data), [New York Times, 9/12/01](#), 9:03, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 9:03, [CNN, 9/12/01](#), 9:03, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 9:03, [Newsday, 9/10/02](#), 9:03, [USA](#)

Today, 9/3/02, 9:03, USA Today, 8/13/02, 9:05, MSNBC, 9/22/01, 9:05, Washington Post, 1/27/02, 9:02:54, New York Times, 9/11/02, 9:02:54, seismic records] *The Otis Air National Guard Base is 188 miles from New York City. According to NORAD's timeline, fighters left Otis 11 minutes earlier. If they were still 70 miles away, then that means they must have been traveling about 650 mph*

(9:03 a.m. and After) The minute Flight 175 hits the south tower, F-15 pilot Maj. Daniel Nash says that clear visibility allows him to see smoke pour out of Manhattan, even though NORAD says he is 71 miles away. However, he says he can't recall actually being told of the Flight 11 hit. [Cape Cod Times, 8/21/02] He isn't told about the danger of Flight 175 until after it too has crashed and he is 60 miles away. [ABC, 9/14/02] And instead of being ordered to New York City, the two F-15s are ordered to hover in a 150-mile chunk of air space off the coast of Long Island. Nash states, "Neither the civilian controller or the military controller knew what they wanted us to do." But then a few minutes later, they receive orders to head to Manhattan for combat air patrol, and they do that for the next four hours. At no point are these pilots given permission to shoot down any airliners. Nash points out that even if he had reached New York City before Flight 175, he couldn't have shot it down because only the President could make that decision and he was indisposed at a public event. [Cape Cod Times, 8/21/02] The pilot of the other fighter, Lt. Col. Timothy Duffy, says that after Flight 175 has crashed, "at that point they [say] the second aircraft just hit the World Trade Center. That was news to me. I thought we were still chasing American 11." [ABC News, 9/11/02]

(9:03 - 9:06 a.m.) Bush enters Sandra Kay Daniels' second-grade class for a photo-op to promote Bush's education policies. [Daily Mail, 9/8/02] Numerous reporters who travel with the president, as well as members of the local media, watch from the back of the room. [AP, 8/19/02 (D)] Altogether there about 150 people in the room, 16 of them the children in the class. He is introduced to the children and poses for a number of staged pictures. The teacher then leads the students through some reading exercises (video footage shows this lasts about three minutes). [Salon, 9/12/01 (B)] Bush later claims that while he is doing this lesson, he is thinking what he will say about the WTC crash. "I was concentrating on the program at this point, thinking about what I was going to say. Obviously, I felt it was an accident. I was concerned about it, but there were no alarm bells." [Washington Times, 10/7/02] The children are just getting their books from under their seats to read a story together when Chief of Staff Andrew Card comes in to tell Bush of the second WTC crash. [Daily Mail, 9/8/02] [9:02, Washington Times, 10/8/02, 9:03, Telegraph, 12/16/01, 9:04, Daily Mail, 9/8/02, according to photographer Eric Draper, who is in the room] Note that Card comes in at the conclusion of the first half of the planned lesson, and "[seizes] a pause in the reading drill to walk up to Mr. Bush's seat." [Washington Times, 10/7/02, Washington Times, 10/8/02]

(9:03 - 9:08 a.m.) In a series of stages, flight control managers ban aircraft from flying near the cities used by the hijackers. First, takeoffs and landings in New York City are stopped within a minute of the Flight 175 crash, without asking for permission from Washington. Boston and Newark follow suit in the next few minutes. Around 9:08, departures nationwide heading to or through New York and Boston airspace are canceled. [AP, 8/12/02, Newsday, 9/10/02, AP, 8/19/02, USA Today, 8/13/02] Also "a few minutes" after the Flight 175 crash into the WTC at 9:03, all takeoffs from Washington are stopped. [USA Today, 8/12/02, USA Today, 8/13/02]

(After 9:03 a.m.) Controllers at the New York traffic center are briefed by their supervisors to watch for airplanes whose speed indicated that they are jets, but which either are not responding to commands or have disabled their transponders.

"Controllers in Washington [get] a similar briefing, which [help] them pick out hijacked planes more quickly." [[New York Times, 9/13/01 \(F\)](#)]

(After 9:03 a.m.) Secret Service agents burst into Vice President Cheney's White House office. They carry him under his arms - nearly lifting him off the ground - and propel him down the steps into the White House basement and through a long tunnel toward an underground bunker. ["Just after 9:00," [ABC, 9/14/02 \(B\)](#), around 9:06 when Bush is being told of the second WTC hit, [New York Times, 9/16/01 \(B\)](#), same time Bush is being told, [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), shortly after Bush's speech at 9:30, [CBS, 9/11/02](#), 9:32, [Washington Post, 1/27/02](#)] At about the same time, National Security Adviser Rice is told to go to the bunker as well. [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] Accounts of when this happens vary widely, from around 9:03 to 9:32. But since ABC News claims Cheney is in the bunker when he is told Flight 77 is 50 miles away from Washington, accounts of this taking place after 9:27 appear to be incorrect. The one eyewitness account, David Bohrer, a White House photographer, says it takes place just after 9:00. [[ABC, 9/14/02 \(B\)](#)]

(9:05 a.m.) West Virginia flight control notices a new eastbound plane entering its radar with no radio contact and no transponder identification. They are not sure it is Flight 77. Supposedly they wait another 19 minutes before notifying NORAD about it. ["About 9:05", [Newsday, 9/23/01](#)]

9:06 a.m. All air traffic facilities nationwide are notified that the Flight 11 crash into the WTC was probably a hijacking. [[House Committee, 9/21/01](#), [Newsday, 9/23/01](#)]

(9:06 a.m.) Bush is in a Booker Elementary School second-grader classroom. His chief of staff, Andrew Card, enters the room and whispers into his ear, "A second plane hit the other tower, and America's under attack." [[New York Times, 9/16/01 \(B\)](#)] [9:05, [New York Times, 9/16/01 \(B\)](#), 9:05, [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), 9:05, [Albuquerque Tribune, 9/10/02](#), 9:07, [Washington Times, 10/8/02](#), ABC News reporter Ann Compton, who is in the room, says she is struck "So much so that I [write] it down in my reporter's notebook, by my watch, 9:07 a.m.," [ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] Intelligence expert James Bamford describes Bush's reaction: "Immediately [after Card speaks to Bush] an expression of befuddlement passe[s] across the President's face. Then, having just been told that the country was under attack, the Commander in Chief appear[s] uninterested in further details. He never ask[s] if there had been any additional threats, where the attacks were coming from, how to best protect the country from further attacks.... Instead, in the middle of a modern-day Pearl Harbor, he simply turn[s] back to the matter at hand: the day's photo op." [[Body of Secrets](#), James Bamford, 4/02 edition, p. 633] Bush continues listening to the goat story. Then, in an event noticeable in its absence, as one newspaper put it, "For some reason, Secret Service agents [do] not bustle him away." [[Globe and Mail, 9/12/01](#)] Bush later says of the experience, "I am very aware of the cameras. I'm trying to absorb that knowledge. I have nobody to talk to. I'm sitting in the midst of a classroom with little kids, listening to a children's story and I realize I'm the Commander in Chief and the country has just come under attack." [[Telegraph, 12/16/01](#)] Bush continues to listen to the goat story for about ten more minutes. The reason given is that, "Without all the facts at hand, George Bush ha[s] no intention of upsetting the schoolchildren who had come to read for him." [[MSNBC, 10/29/02](#)]

9:09 a.m. Supposedly, NORAD orders F-16s at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, on battle stations alert. *Yet the order to scramble won't come till 9:27 or so, and they won't take off until 9:30.* Around this time, the FAA command center reports 11 aircraft either not in communication with FAA facilities, or flying unexpected routes. [[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#)]

9:15 a.m. American Airlines orders no new takeoffs in the US; United Airlines follows suit five minutes later. [[Wall Street Journal, 10/15/01](#)]

9:16 a.m. The FAA informs NORAD that Flight 93 may have been hijacked. No fighters are scrambled in specific response, now or later (there is the possibility some fighters sent after Flight 77 later head toward Flight 93). Although this is what CNN is told by NORAD, its not clear why NORAD claims the flight is hijacked at this time (and NORAD's own timeline inexplicably fails to say when the FAA told them about the hijack, the only flight for which they fail to provide this data). [[CNN, 9/17/01](#), [NORAD, 9/18/01](#)] However, there may be one explanation: Fox News later reports, "Investigators believe that on at least one flight, one of the hijackers was already inside the cockpit before takeoff." Cockpit voice recordings indicate that the pilots believed their guest was a colleague "and was thereby extended the typical airline courtesy of allowing any pilot from any airline to join a flight by sitting in the jumpseat, the folded over extra seat located inside the cockpit." [[Fox News, 9/24/01](#)] *Note that all witnesses on the plane later report seeing only three hijackers, not four.*

9:17 a.m. The FAA shuts down all New York City area airports. [[CNN, 9/12/01](#), [New York Times, 9/12/01](#)]

(9:16 a.m.) Bush leaves the Sarasota classroom where he has been since about 9:03. The children finish their lessons and put away their readers. [[Sarasota Magazine, 9/19/01](#)] Bush advises the children to stay in school and be good citizens. [[Tampa Tribune, 9/1/02](#), [St. Petersburg Times, 9/8/02 \(B\)](#)] He also tells the children, "Thank you all so very much for showing me your reading skills." [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] One student also asks Bush a question, and Bush gives a quick response on his education policy. [[New York Post, 9/12/02](#)] A reporter asks, "Mr. President, are you aware of the reports of the plane crash in New York? Is there any..." This question is interrupted by an aide who has come into the room, saying, "All right. Thank you. If everyone could please step outside." Bush then says, "We'll talk about it later." [[CBS, 9/11/02 \(B\)](#)] Bush then tells school principal Gwen Tose-Rigell, who is in the room, about the terror attacks and why he has to leave. [[Washington Times, 10/7/02](#)] He then goes into an empty classroom next door and meets with his staff there. [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] Bush's program with the children was supposed to start at 9:00 and end 20 minutes later. [[Sarasota Herald-Tribune, 9/16/01](#)]

9:21 a.m. The New York City Port Authority closes all bridges and tunnels in New York City. [[MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), [CNN, 9/12/01](#), [New York Times, 9/12/01](#), [AP, 8/19/02](#)]

9:24 a.m. The FAA notifies NORAD that Flight 77 "may" have been hijacked and appears to be headed toward Washington. [9:24, [NORAD, 9/18/01](#), 9:24, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 9:25, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 9:25, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 9:25, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#)] *This notification is 34 MINUTES after flight control lost contact with the plane and well after two planes have crashed*

CNN notes that "after the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) warned the military's air defense command that a hijacked airliner appeared to be headed toward Washington, the federal government failed to make any move to evacuate the White House, Capitol, State Department or the Pentagon." [[CNN, 9/16/01](#)] A Pentagon spokesman says, "The Pentagon was simply not aware that this aircraft was coming our way." Even Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and his top aides in the Pentagon remain unaware of any danger up to the moment of impact 14 minutes later. [[Newsday, 9/23/01](#)] Most senators and congresspeople are in the Capitol building, which is not evacuated until 9:48. Only Vice President Cheney, National Security Advisor Rice and possibly a few others, are evacuated to safety a few minutes after 9:03. Yet, since at least the Flight 11 crash, "military officials in a command center [the National Military Command Center] on the east side of the [Pentagon] [are]

urgently talking to law enforcement and air traffic control officials about what to do." [\[New York Times, 9/15/01\]](#)

(9:25 a.m.) A passenger on Flight 77, Barbara Olson, calls her husband, Theodore (Ted) Olson, who is Solicitor General at the Justice Department. Ted Olson is in his Justice Department office watching WTC news on television when his wife calls. A few days later, he says, "She told me that she had been herded to the back of the plane. She mentioned that they had used knives and box cutters to hijack the plane. She mentioned that the pilot had announced that the plane had been hijacked." [\[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)\]](#) He tells her that two planes have hit the WTC. [\[Telegraph, 3/5/02\]](#) She feels nobody is taking charge. [\[CNN, 9/12/01\]](#) He doesn't know if she was near the pilots, but at one point she asks, "What shall I tell the pilot? What can I tell the pilot to do?" [\[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)\]](#) Then she gets cut off without warning. [\[Newsweek, 9/29/01\]](#) Ted Olson's recollection of the call's timing is extremely vague, saying it "must have been 9:15 or 9:30. Someone would have to reconstruct the time for me." [\[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)\]](#) Other accounts place it around 9:25. [About 9:25, [Miami Herald, 9/14/01](#), about 9:25, [New York Times, 9/15/01 \(C\)](#), "by 9:25," [Washington Post, 9/21/01\]](#) The call is said to have lasted about a minute. [\[Washington Post, 9/12/01 \(B\)\]](#) By some accounts, his warning of that planes have hit the WTC comes later in a second phone call. [\[Washington Post, 9/21/01\]](#) In one account, Barbara Olson calls from inside a bathroom. [\[Evening Standard, 9/12/01\]](#) In another account, she is near a pilot, and in yet another she is near two pilots. [\[Boston Globe, 11/23/01\]](#) *Ted Olson's account of how the call is made is also strange and conflicting.* Three days after 9/11, he says, "I found out later that she was having, for some reason, to call collect and was having trouble getting through. You know how it is to get through to a government institution when you're calling collect." He says he doesn't know what kind of phone she used, but he has "assumed that it must have been on the airplane phone, and that she somehow didn't have access to her credit cards. Otherwise, she would have used her cell phone and called me." [\[Fox News, 9/14/01\]](#) But in another interview on the same day, he says that she used a cell phone and that she may have gotten cut off "because the signals from cell phones coming from airplanes don't work that well." [\[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)\]](#) Six months later, he claims she called collect "using the phone in the passengers' seats." [\[Telegraph, 3/5/02\]](#) *But it isn't possible to call on seatback phones without a credit card, which would render making a collect call moot.* Many other details are conflicting, and Olson faults his memory and says that he "tends to mix the two [calls] up because of the emotion of the events." [\[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)\]](#) The couple liked to joke that they were at the heart of what Hillary Clinton famously called a "vast, right-wing conspiracy." Ted Olson was a controversial choice as Solicitor General, since he argued on behalf of Bush before the Supreme Court in the 2000 presidential election controversy before being chosen. Barbara Olson was known for her extremely partisan attacks on President Clinton. For instance, a few weeks before 9/11 she had called Clinton's mother a "barfly" who let herself be used by men. [\[Telegraph, 3/5/02\]](#) Some have questioned if Ted Olson can be trusted in his account of the call, since he has stated that lying to the public is justifiable. [\[Sydney Morning Herald, 3/20/02\]](#)

(9:25 a.m.) The Flight 93 pilots check in with Cleveland flight control, uttering "good morning." [\[Newsweek, 11/25/01\]](#)

(9:26 a.m.) Jane Garvey, head of the FAA, "almost certainly after getting an okay from the White House, initiate[s] a national ground stop, which forbids takeoffs and requires planes in the air to get down as soon as reasonable. The order, which has never been implemented since flying was invented in 1903, applie[s] to virtually every single kind of machine that can takeoff — civilian, military, or law enforcement." Military and law enforcement flights are allowed to resume at 10:31 a.m. A limited number of military flights - the FAA won't reveal details - are allowed to fly during this

ban. [\[Time, 9/14/01\]](#) Garvey later calls it "a national ground stop ... that prevented any aircraft from taking off." [\[House Committee, 9/21/01\]](#) Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta also later says, "As soon as I was aware of the nature and scale of the attack, I called from the White House to order the air traffic system to land all aircraft, immediately and without exception." [\[State Department, 9/20/01\]](#) 4,452 planes are flying in the continental US at the time. A later account says Ben Sliney, the FAA's National Operations Manager, makes the decision without consulting his superiors, like Jane Garvey, first. It would be remarkable if Sliney was the one to make the decision, because 9/11 is Sliney's first day on the job as National Operations Manager, "the chess master of the air traffic system." [\[USA Today, 8/13/02\]](#) When he had accepted the job a couple of months earlier, he had asked, "What is the limit of my authority?" The man who had promoted him replied, "Unlimited." [\[USA Today, 8/13/02 \(B\)\]](#) About 500 planes land in the next 20 minutes, and then much more urgent orders to land are issued at 9:45 a.m. [\[USA Today, 8/13/02\]](#) [\[9:25, Time, 9/14/01, 9:25, USA Today, 8/13/02, 9:26, House Committee, 9/21/01, 9:26, Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02, 9:26, Newsday, 9/23/01, 9:26, AP, 8/19/02, 9:26, Newsday, 9/10/02\]](#)

(Before 9:27 a.m.) On Flight 93, at least three of the hijackers stand up and put red bandanas around their heads. Two of them force their way into the cockpit. One takes the loudspeaker microphone, apparently unaware it could also be heard by flight controllers, and announces that someone has a bomb onboard and the flight is returning to the airport. He tells them he is the pilot, but speaks with an accent. ["The best estimation is about 40 minutes into the flight" (9:22), [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/29/01](#), "about 40 minutes into its flight," [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), "about 9:28," [Among the Heroes](#), by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 208]

(9:27 a.m.) Vice President Cheney and National Security Advisor Rice, in their bunker below the White House, are told by an aide that an airplane is 50 miles outside Washington and headed toward it. The plane is Flight 77. Federal Aviation Deputy Chief Monty Belger says, "Well we're watching this target on the radar, but the transponder's been turned off. So we, have no identification." They are given further notices when the plane is 30 miles away, then 10 miles away, until it disappears from radar (time unknown, but the plane is said to be traveling about 500 mph and was 30 miles away at 9:30, so 50 miles would be about 3 minutes before that). [\[ABC News, 9/11/02\]](#) The Dulles tower flight controller who is said to first spot Flight 77's appearance near Washington, Danielle O'Brien, previously claims she doesn't find its radar blip until it is around 12 and 14 miles from Washington, and that Cheney is notified only after that. [\[ABC, 10/24/01, ABC, 10/24/01 \(B\)\]](#)

(9:27 a.m.) NORAD orders three F-16 fighters scrambled from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia to intercept Flight 77. Langley is 129 miles from Washington. Ready aircraft at Andrews Air Force Base, 15 miles away, are not scrambled. [\[Newsday, 9/23/01\]](#) [\[9:24, NORAD, 9/18/01, 9:27, CNN, 9/17/01, 9:25, Washington Post, 9/12/01, 9:35, CNN, 9/17/01, 9:35, Washington Post, 9/15/01\]](#) One of the three pilots, Major Dean Eckmann, later says he is told before scrambling that the WTC has been hit by a plane. [\[AP, 8/19/02 \(C\)\]](#)

(9:27 a.m.) Tom Burnett calls his wife Deena and says, "I'm on United Flight 93 from Newark to San Francisco. The plane has been hijacked. We are in the air. They've already knifed a guy. There is a bomb on board. Call the FBI." Deena connects to emergency 911. [\[9:27, "she scribbled down what Tom told her and noted the time," Among the Heroes](#), by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 107, [ABC News, 9/12/01](#), "within minutes" of 9:28, [MSNBC, 7/30/02](#), "She recalls it was around 6:20 a.m. -- 9:20 Eastern time," [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#), "shortly after" Jeremy Glick's call, [Toronto Sun, 9/16/01\]](#) His wife Deena wonders if the call might have been before the

cockpit was taken over, because he spoke quickly and quietly as if he was being watched. He also had a headset like phone operators use, so he could have made the call unnoticed. Note that original versions of this conversation appear to have been censored. The most recent account has the phone call ending with, "We are in the air. The plane has been hijacked. They already knifed a guy. One of them has a gun. They're saying there is a bomb onboard. Please call the authorities." [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 107] The major difference from earlier accounts, of course, is the mention of a gun. The call wasn't recorded, but Deena's call immediately afterwards to 911 was, and she states on that, "They just knifed a passenger and there are guns on the plane." [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 108] This is the first of over 30 additional phone calls by passengers inside the plane. [MSNBC, 7/30/02]

(9:28 a.m.) On Flight 93, "there are the first audible signs of problems, in background cockpit noise." Flight controllers hear the sound of screaming and scuffling over an open mike. They then hear hijackers speaking in Arabic to each other. Yet this is at least 12 minutes after at least one hijacker has taken over the cockpit and done something to cause the FAA to notify NORAD of a hijacking. [9:28, Guardian, 10/17/01, after 9:25, Newsweek, 11/25/01]

(9:28 a.m.) On Flight 93, flight controllers hear someone say, "Get out of here," through an open microphone in the cockpit. The mike goes off and comes back on. Scuffling is heard in the background. Somebody again yells, "Get out of here!" Eventually there are a total of four murky radio transmissions, which include lots of non-English phrases, "bomb on board" twice, "our demands" and "keep quiet." ["probably around the time the plane was taken over," Boston Globe, 11/23/01, 9:28, MSNBC, 7/30/02, 9:30, Observer, 12/2/01, 9:32: "90 minutes into the flight," Toronto Sun, 9/16/01] Newsweek repeats possibly the same story, but suggests it happened at 9:58: "The last transmission from the cockpit records someone, probably a hijacker, screaming 'Get out of here. Get out of here.' Then grunting, screaming and scuffling. Then silence." [Newsweek, 9/22/01]

(9:29 a.m. Still inside Booker Elementary School, Bush gives a brief speech in front of about 200 students, plus many teachers and reporters. [Daily Mail, 9/8/02] He says, "Today we've had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country"

9:30 a.m. United begins landing all of its flights inside the US. American Airlines follows suit five minutes later. [Wall Street Journal, 10/15/01] *Note all planes nationwide have been ordered down already but the urgency has not been specified - this apparently increases the urgency.*

9:30 a.m. Radar tracks Flight 77 as it closes to within 30 miles of Washington. [CBS News, 9/21/01]

9:30 a.m. The three F-16s scrambled toward Flight 77 get airborne. [9:30, NORAD, 9/18/01, 9:30, ABC News, 9/11/02, 9:35, Washington Post, 9/12/01] The pilots' names are Major Brad Derrig, Captain Craig Borgstrom, and Major Dean Eckmann, all from the North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Fighter Wing but stationed at Langley. [AP, 8/19/02 (C), ABC News, 9/11/02] *If the NORAD departure time is correct, the F-16s would have to travel slightly over 700 mph to reach Washington before Flight 77 does. The maximum speed of an F-16 is 1500 mph. [AP, 6/16/00] Even at traveling 1300 mph, these planes could have reached Washington in six minutes - well before any claim of when Flight 77 crashed.*

(9:30 a.m.) The FAA's emergency operations center gets up and running, five minutes after the FAA issued an order grounding all civilian, military, and law enforcement aircraft. [[Time, 9/14/01](#)]

(9:30 a.m.) Chris Stephenson, the flight controller in charge of the Washington airport tower, says that he is called by the Secret Service around this time. He is told an unidentified aircraft is speeding toward Washington. Stephenson looks at the radarscope and sees Flight 77 about five miles to the west. He looks out the tower window and sees the plane turning to the right and descending. He follows it until it disappears behind a building in nearby Crystal City, Virginia. [[USA Today, 8/12/02](#)] However, according to another account, just before 9:30 a.m., a controller in the same tower has an unidentified plane on radar, "heading toward Washington and without a transponder signal to identify it. It's flying fast, she says: almost 500 mph. And it's heading straight for the heart of the city. Could it be American Flight 77? The FAA warns the Secret Service." [[USA Today, 8/13/02](#)]

(9:30 a.m.) Flight controllers mistakenly suspect that Delta Flight 1989, flying west over Pennsylvania, has been hijacked. The controllers briefly suspect the sound of hijackers' voices in Flight 93 is coming from this plane, only a few miles away. The flight "joins a growing list of suspicious jets. Some of their flight numbers will be scrawled on a white dry-erase board throughout the morning" at FAA headquarters. Miscommunications lead to further suspicion of Flight 1989 even after the source of the hijacker's message is confirmed to come from Flight 93. The flight lands in Cleveland at 10:10. Eventually, about 11 flights will be suspected, with four of them actually hijacked. [[USA Today, 8/13/02 \(B\)](#)]

(9:30 a.m.) The transponder signal from Flight 93 ceases and radar contact is lost. [9:30, [MSNBC, 9/3/02](#), 9:40, [CNN, 9/17/01](#)] However, the plane can still be tracked, and is tracked at least at United headquarters until shortly before the final crash (the exact time is not mentioned). However, altitude can no longer be determined. The plane's speed begins to vary wildly, moving between 600 and 400 mph before eventually settling around 400 mph. [[Among the Heroes](#), by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 77, 214]

(9:30 a.m.) The hijackers make an announcement to the passengers on Flight 77, telling them to phone their families as they are "all going to die". They also tell the passengers that they are going to hit the White House. ["When they took over the controls," [Sunday Herald, 9/16/01](#), "around 9:30," [Cox News, 10/21/01](#)]

After 9:30 a.m.) About five minutes after Barbara Olson called her husband Ted Olson, the Justice Department's Solicitor General, she calls again (note the timing of both calls is extremely vague.) [About 9:30, five minutes after first call, [Miami Herald, 9/14/01](#)] A few days later, Ted Olson describes the conversation: "She said the plane had been high hijacked shortly after takeoff and they had been circling around, I think were the words she used. She reported to me that she could see houses. I asked her which direction the plane was going. She paused -- there was a pause there. I think she must have asked someone else. She said I think it's going northeast.... She told me that [the hijackers] did not know she was making this phone call." [[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)](#)] She doesn't mention the nationality, number, or other details of the hijackers. Then the phone goes dead, he doesn't know why. [[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)](#), [Washington Post, 9/12/01 \(B\)](#)] He also says that she said, "The pilot had announced that the plane had been hijacked. She said it had been hijacked shortly after takeoff." [[Fox News, 9/14/01](#)] Her last words before she was cut off were, "What do I tell the pilots to do?" [[BBC, 9/13/01](#)] She had asked this already in her first phone call. [[Washington Post, 9/12/01 \(B\)](#)] Then the phone goes dead supposedly "moments before" the plane crashes [[Newsweek, 9/29/01](#)], but actually Ted Olson's timing recall is so vague that it

isn't clear if this is when the call happens, and he says he doesn't know why the call ends (see [\[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)\]](#)). The call is originally said to last about a minute [\[Washington Post, 9/12/01 \(B\)\]](#), but Olson later says it could have lasted up to four minutes. [\[CNN, 9/14/01 \(C\)\]](#)

(After 9:31 a.m.) A few minutes after 9:31, a hijacker on board Flight 93 can be heard on the cockpit voice recording ordering a woman to sit down. A woman, presumably a flight attendant, implores, "Don't, don't." She pleads, "Please, I don't want to die." Patrick Welsh, the husband of flight attendant Debbie Welsh, is later told that a flight attendant was stabbed early in the takeover, and it is strongly implied it was his wife. She was a first-class attendant, and he says, "knowing Debby," she would have resisted. *[Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 207]*

9:32 a.m. The New York Stock Exchange closes. [\[MSNBC, 9/22/01\]](#)

9:33 a.m. According to the New York Times, Flight 77 becomes lost at 8:56 when it turns off its transponder, and stays lost until now. Washington flight controllers see a fast moving blip on their radar at this time and send a warning to Dulles Airport in Washington. [\[New York Times, 10/16/01\]](#) However, at 9:24 the FAA notifies NORAD Flight 77 is headed toward Washington, and Vice President Cheney is told around 9:27 that radar is tracking Flight 77 heading toward Washington

(9:33 - 9:38 a.m.) Radar data shows Flight 77 crossing the Capitol Beltway and headed toward the Pentagon. But the plane, flying more than 400 mph, is too high when it nears the Pentagon at 9:35, crossing the Pentagon at about 7,000 feet up. [\[CBS News, 9/21/01, Boston Globe, 11/23/01\]](#) The plane then makes a difficult high-speed descending turn. It makes a "downward spiral, turning almost a complete circle and dropping the last 7,000 feet in two-and-a-half minutes. The steep turn is so smooth, the sources say, it's clear there [is] no fight for control going on." [\[CBS News, 9/21/01\]](#) It gets very near the White House during this turn. "Sources say the hijacked jet ... [flies] several miles south of the restricted airspace around the White House." [\[CBS News, 9/21/01\]](#) The Telegraph later writes, "If the airliner had approached much nearer to the White House it might have been shot down by the Secret Service, who are believed to have a battery of ground-to-air Stinger missiles ready to defend the president's home. The Pentagon is not similarly defended." [\[Telegraph, 9/16/01\]](#) White House spokesman Ari Fleischer suggests the plane goes even closer to the White House, saying, "That is not the radar data that we have seen. The plane was headed toward the White House." [\[CBS News, 9/21/01\]](#) *If Flight 77 passed within a few miles of the White House, why couldn't it have been shot down by the weapons on the White House?*

(9:34 a.m.) Bush's motorcade leaves Booker Elementary School and heads toward Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport. [9:34, [Washington Times, 10/8/02](#), 9:35, [Telegraph, 12/16/01\]](#) A few days after 9/11, Sarasota's main newspaper reports, "Sarasota barely skirted its own disaster. As it turns out, terrorists targeted the president and Air Force One on Tuesday, maybe even while they were on the ground in Sarasota and certainly not long after. The Secret Service learned of the threat just minutes after Bush left Booker Elementary." [\[Sarasota Herald-Tribune, 9/16/01\]](#) A year later, Chief of Staff Andrew Card says, "As we were heading to Air Force One, we did hear about the Pentagon attack, and we also learned, what turned out to be a mistake, but we learned that the Air Force One package could in fact be a target." [\[MSNBC, 9/9/02\]](#)

(9:34 a.m.) A hijacker says over the radio to Flight 93's passengers: "Ladies and gentlemen, here it's the captain, please sit down. Keep remaining sitting. We have a bomb aboard." Apparently Cleveland flight controllers can understand about a minute

of screams, then a voice saying something about a "bomb on board." A hijacker says in broken English that they are returning to the airport. [9:32, [MSNBC, 9/3/02](#), 9:34, [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#), 9:35, [Newsweek, 9/22/01](#)]

9:34 a.m. Tom Burnett calls his wife Deena a second time. He says, "They're in the cockpit." He has checked the pulse of the man who was knifed (later identified as Mark Rothenberg, sitting next to him in seat 5B) and determined he is dead. She tells him about the hits on the WTC. He responds, "Oh my God, it's a suicide mission." As they continue to talk, he tells her the plane has turned back. By this time, Deena is in constant communication with the FBI and others, and a policeman is at her house. ["Again, Deena noted the time," *Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 110]

9:35 a.m. Flight 93 climbs without authorization. [[Guardian, 10/17/01](#), [USA Today, 8/13/02](#)]

(9:36 a.m.) Flight 93 files a new flight plan with a final destination of Washington, reverses course and heads toward Washington. [9:35, "turned around near Cleveland," [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#), "turns off course," 9:36:01, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 9:36, [MSNBC, 9/3/02](#), 9:36, "made an ominous turn," *Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 219] Radar shows the plane turning 180 degrees. [[CNN, 9/13/01](#)] The new flight plan schedules the plane to arrive in Washington at 10:28. [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 78]

9.36 a.m. The national airport instructs a military C-130 (Golfer 06) that has just departed Andrews Air Force Base to intercept Flight 77 and identify it. [[Guardian, 10/17/01](#), [New York Times, 10/16/01](#)] Remarkably, this C-130 is the same C-130 that is 17 miles from Flight 93 when it later crashes into the Pennsylvania countryside. [[Minneapolis Star Tribune, 9/11/02](#), [Pittsburgh Channel, 9/15/01](#)] The pilot, Lt. Col. Steve O'Brien, claims he took off around 9:30, planning to return to Minnesota after dropping supplies off in the Caribbean. He later describes his close encounter: "When air traffic control asked me if we had him [Flight 77] in sight, I told him that was an understatement - by then, he had pretty much filled our windscreen. Then he made a pretty aggressive turn so he was moving right in front of us, a mile and a half, two miles away. I said we had him in sight, then the controller asked me what kind of plane it was. That caught us up, because normally they have all that information. The controller didn't seem to know anything." O'Brien reports that the plane is either a 757 or 767 and its silver fuselage means it is probably an American Airlines plane. "They told us to turn and follow that aircraft - in 20-plus years of flying, I've never been asked to do something like that." [[Minneapolis Star Tribune, 9/11/02](#)]

(9:37 a.m.) The blip representing Flight 77 that radar technicians have been watching on their screens disappears. Its last known position is six miles from the Pentagon and four miles from the White House. [[CBS News, 9/21/01](#), [Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#), [ABC News, 9/11/02](#), [USA Today, 8/13/02](#)] Supposedly, just before radar contact is lost, FAA headquarters is told, "The aircraft is circling. It's turning away from the White House." The plane is said to be traveling 500 mph, or a mile every seven seconds. [[USA Today, 8/13/02](#)]

(9:37 a.m.) Jeremy Glick calls his wife Lyz from Flight 93. He describes the hijackers as Middle Eastern, Iranian looking. They put on red headbands and the three of them stood up and yelled and ran into the cockpit. He was sitting in the front of the coach section, but was sent to the back with most of the passengers. They claimed to have a bomb, which looked like a box with something red around it. He says the plane has turned around. Family members immediately call emergency 911 on another line. New York state police get patched in midway through the call. Glick finds out about the WTC towers. Two others onboard also learn about the WTC at about this time.

Glick's phone remains connected until the very end of the flight. [9:37, *Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 143, [MSNBC, 7/30/02](#), "just before 9:30," [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#), no time explanation, [Toronto Sun, 9/16/01](#)]

(9:38 a.m.) As fireman Alan Wallace is walking in front of the Pentagon, he looks up and sees Flight 77 coming straight at him. It is about 25 feet off the ground, no landing wheels visible, a few hundred yards away, and closing fast. He runs about 30 feet and dives under a nearby van. ["About 9:40," [Washington Post, 9/21/01](#)] The plane is traveling at about 460 mph, and flying so low that it clips the tops of street lights. [[CBS News, 9/21/01](#)]

9:38 a.m. Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon. Approximately 125 on the ground are later determined killed or missing. [9:37, [NORAD, 9/18/01](#), 9:37, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 9:38, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 9:38, [Guardian, 10/17/01](#), 9:38, [USA Today, 8/13/02](#), 9:38, [ABC News, 9/11/02](#), 9:38, [CBS, 9/11/02 \(B\)](#), 9:39, [Washington Post, 1/27/02](#), 9:40, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 9:43, [CNN, 9/12/01](#), 9:43, [MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), 9:43, [MSNBC, 9/3/02](#), 9:43, [New York Times, 9/12/01](#), 9:45, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#), At 9:39:02 on NBC News, reporter Jim Miklaszewski states that, "Moments ago, I felt an explosion here at the Pentagon," [Television Archive, WDCN 9:30](#)] Flight 77 strikes the only portion of the Pentagon that had been recently renovated. "It was the only area of the Pentagon with a sprinkler system, and it had been reconstructed with a web of steel columns and bars to withstand bomb blasts. The area struck by the plane also had blast-resistant windows - 2 inches thick and 2,500 pounds each - that stayed intact during the crash and fire. While perhaps 4,500 people normally would have been working in the hardest-hit areas, because of the renovation work only about 800 were there...." More than 25,000 people work at the Pentagon. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/16/01](#)]

9:38 a.m. NORAD states the fighters scrambled after Flight 77 took off from Langley at 9:30, 129 miles away, yet when Flight 77 crashes they are still 105 miles away. [[Newsday, 9/23/01](#), [NORAD, 9/18/01](#)] *If so, that means they must have flown north 24 miles in 8 minutes - an average of about 180 mph!* The F-16 pilot codenamed Honey later offers a different explanation of where the F-16s are at 9:38. He says they are flying toward New York, when they see a black column of smoke coming from Washington, about 30 or 40 miles to the west. He is then asked over the radio by the North East Air Defense Sector of NORAD if he can confirm the Pentagon is burning. He confirms it. The F-16s are then ordered to set up a defensive perimeter above Washington. [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 76] One of the three pilots, Major Brad Derrig later claims their target destination all along is Reagan National Airport, in Washington near the Pentagon. [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)] Another pilot, Major Dean Eckmann, also later claims their destination all along was Washington. [[AP, 8/13/02 \(C\)](#)] T. NORAD officer Major James Fox says he dispatches the jets without targets. "That would come later." [[Newhouse News, 1/25/02](#)] ! (Additionally, subtract 8-10 miles (Sidewinder missile) or 12-20 miles (Sparrow missile) from the flight distance required for the fighters. [[Slate, 1/16/02](#)]) *If Honey's account is true, it also would explain eyewitness claims of fighters over Washington only a couple of minutes after the Pentagon explosion, not at 9:56 when they supposedly arrive.*

9:38 a.m. A C-130 transport plane that has been sent to follow Flight 77 flies a short distance from Flight 77 as it crashes. This curious C-130 is the same C-130 that is 17 miles from Flight 93 when it later crashes into the Pennsylvania countryside. [[Minneapolis Star Tribune, 9/11/02](#), [Pittsburgh Channel, 9/15/01](#)] A number of people see this plane fly remarkably close to Flight 77:

1) Kelly Knowles says that seconds after seeing Flight 77 pass, she sees a "second plane that seemed to be chasing the first [pass] over at a slightly different angle."

[[Daily Press, 9/15/01](#)]

2) Keith Wheelhouse says the second plane was a C-130, two others aren't certain.

[Daily Press, 9/15/01] Wheelhouse "believes it flew directly above the American Airlines jet, as if to prevent two planes from appearing on radar while at the same time guiding the jet toward the Pentagon." As Flight 77 descends toward the Pentagon, the second plane veers off west. [Daily Press, 9/14/01]

3) USA Today reporter Vin Narayanan, who saw the Pentagon explosion, says, "I hopped out of my car after the jet exploded, nearly oblivious to a second jet hovering in the skies." [USA Today, 9/17/01]

4) USA Today Editor Joel Sucherman sees a second plane. [eWeek, 9/13/01]

5) Brian Kennedy, press secretary for a congressman, and others also see a second plane. [Sacramento Bee, 9/15/01]

6) An unnamed worker at Arlington national cemetery "said a mysterious second plane was circling the area when the first one attacked the Pentagon." [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 12/20/01]

7) John O'Keefe is driving a car when he sees the Pentagon crash. "The first thing I did was pull over onto the shoulder, and when I got out of the car I saw another plane flying over my head.... Then the plane -- it looked like a C-130 cargo plane -- started turning away from the Pentagon, it did a complete turnaround." [New York Law Journal, 9/12/01]

The pilot of the C-130, Lt. Col. Steve O'Brien, is later interviewed, but his account differs from the on-the-ground eyewitnesses. He claims that just before the explosion, "With all of the East Coast haze, I had a hard time picking him out," implying he is not nearby. He also says that just after the explosion, "I could see the outline of the Pentagon," again implying he is not nearby. He then asks "the controller whether [I] should set up a low orbit around the building," but he is told "to get out of the area as quickly as possible. 'I took the plane once through the plume of smoke and thought if this was a terrorist attack, it probably wasn't a good idea to be flying through that plume.'" [Minneapolis Star Tribune, 9/11/02] *Why does this C-130 get so close to Flight 77?*

(After 9:38 a.m.) A few minutes after Flight 77 crashes, the Secret Service commands fighters from Andrews Air Force Base, 10 miles from Washington, to "Get in the air now!" [Aviation Week and Space Technology, 9/9/02]

. Almost simultaneously, a call from someone else in the White House declares the Washington area "a free-fire zone." Says one pilot, "That meant we were given authority to use force, if the situation required it, in defense of the nation's capital, its property and people." Lt. Col. Marc H. (Sass) Sasseville and a pilot only known by the codename Lucky sprint to their waiting F-16s armed only with "hot" guns and 511 rounds of "TP" -- nonexplosive training rounds. The pilots later say that, had all else failed, they would have rammed into Flight 93. Meanwhile, the three F-16s flying on a training mission 207 miles away return to their home at Andrews Air Force Base. Major Billy Hutchison's fighter still has enough gas to take off again immediately; the other two need to refuel. He supposedly takes off with no weapons. "Hutchison was probably airborne shortly after the alert F-16s from Langley arrive over Washington, although 121st FS pilots admit their timeline-recall 'is fuzzy.'" This would mean Hutchison doesn't even leave Andrews until after 9:49. His is said to be the first fighter to reach Washington. [Aviation Week and Space Technology, 9/9/02] There are multiple reports of Andrews fighters at the Pentagon before and of the above fighters were reported to have taken off. For instance, "Within minutes of the [Pentagon] attack ... F-16s from Andrews Air Force Base were in the air over Washington DC." [Telegraph, 9/16/01] "A few moments [after the Pentagon attack] ... overhead, fighter jets scrambled from Andrews Air Force Base and other installations." [Denver Post, 9/11/01] A year later, ABC News reports, "High overhead [the Pentagon], jet fighters arrive. Just moments too late." [ABC News, 9/11/02] Yet other newspaper accounts deny fighters from Andrews were deployed [USA Today, 9/16/01], and some deny Andrews even had fighters at all! [USA Today, 9/16/01 (B)]

NORAD commander Major General Larry Arnold has said, "We [didn't] have any aircraft on alert at Andrews." [[MSNBC, 9/23/01 \(C\)](#)]

(9:39 a.m.) The hijackers probably inadvertently transmit over radio: "Hi, this is the captain. We'd like you all to remain seated. There is a bomb on board. And we are going to turn back to the airport. And they had our demands, so please remain quiet." [9:38, [MSNBC, 9/3/02](#), 9:39, *Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 209, no time marker, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)] *It isn't clear if this is a different account of a similar message a short while earlier or a different message.*

9:41 a.m. From Flight 93, Marion Birtton calls a friend. She tells him two people have been killed and the plane has been turned around. [[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#)]

9:42 a.m. From Flight 93 Mark Bingham calls his mother and says, "I'm on a flight from Newark to San Francisco and there are three guys who have taken over the plane and they say they have a bomb." [9:42, [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01](#)] In an alternate version, he says, "I'm in the air, I'm calling you on the Airphone. I'm calling you from the plane. We've been taken over. There are three men that say they have a bomb." ["Just before dawn in San Francisco," [Toronto Sun, 9/16/01](#), 9:42, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)]

9:43 a.m. Bush's motorcade arrives at Sarasota's airport and pulls up close to Air Force One. He learns a plane has hit the Pentagon as the motorcade gets near the airport. Bush immediately boards the plane. [[Washington Times, 10/8/02](#), [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#)] Security then does an extra-thorough search of all the baggage for the other passengers, delaying takeoff until 9:55. [[St. Petersburg Times, 9/8/02 \(B\)](#)]

(After 9:44 a.m.) According to F-16 pilot Honey's account, at some point after the F-16s had set up a defensive perimeter over Washington, the lead pilot receives a garbled message about Flight 93 that isn't heard by the other two pilots. "The message seemed to convey that the White House was an important asset to protect." Honey says he is later told the message is, "Something like, 'Be aware of where it is, and it could be a target.'" The other pilot, codenamed Lou, says the unnamed lead pilot tells him, "I think the Secret Service told me this." [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 76] Both Lou and Honey state they are never given orders to shoot down any plane that day. [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 222]

9:45 a.m. Tom Burnett calls his wife Deena for the third time. She tells him about the crash into the Pentagon. Tom speaks about the bomb he'd mentioned earlier, saying, "I don't think they have one. I think they're just telling us that." He says the hijackers are talking about crashing the plane into the ground. "We have to do something." He says that he and others are making a plan. "A group of us." [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 111] Even by his second call, the FBI was listening in. [[Toronto Sun, 9/16/01](#)]

9:45 a.m. After having some trouble with his phone, passenger Todd Beamer is able to speak to Verizon phone representative Lisa Jefferson, with the FBI listening in. He talks for about 15 minutes. Beamer says he has been herded to the back of the plane along with nine other passengers and five flight attendants. A hijacker who says he has a bomb strapped to his body is guarding them. 27 passengers are being guarded by a hijacker in first class, which is separated by a curtain. One hijacker has gone into the cockpit. One passenger is dead (that leaves one passenger unaccounted for - presumably the man who made a call from the bathroom). The two pilots are apparently dead. [[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/16/01](#), [Newsweek, 9/22/01](#), [Pittsburgh](#)

Post-Gazette, 10/28/01] (A conflicting version [Boston Globe, 11/23/01] states that 27 were in the back, and that he saw four hijackers

(9:45 a.m.) The White House begins a general evacuation. This is 21 minutes after the FAA warned a hijacked plane appeared to be headed toward Washington and about 40 minutes after Vice President Cheney has been evacuated from the White House. [9:43, New York Times, 9/12/01, 9:45, MSNBC, 9/22/01, 9:45, Washington Post, 1/27/02, 9:45, Telegraph, 12/16/01, 9:45, CNN, 9/12/01, 9:48, Washington Post, 9/12/01, 9:48, AP, 8/19/02] Initially the evacuation is orderly, but soon the Secret Service agents are yelling that everyone should run. [ABC, 9/11/02]

(9:45 a.m.) Ben Sliney, FAA's National Operations Manager, orders the entire nationwide air traffic system shut down. All flights at US airports are stopped. 3,949 flights are still in the air at the time. Sliney makes the decision without consulting FAA head Jane Garvey, Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, or other bosses, but they quickly approve. [USA Today, 8/13/02, USA Today, 8/13/02 (B)] [9:40, MSNBC, 9/22/01, 9:40, CNN, 9/12/01, 9:40, New York Times, 9/12/01, 9:45, AP, 8/12/02, 9:45, AP, 8/19/02, 9:45, Newsday, 9/10/02, 9:45, USA Today, 8/13/02, 9:49, Washington Post, 9/12/01] 75 percent of the planes land within one hour of the order. [USA Today, 8/12/02 (C)] The Washington Post has reported that it was Mineta who told Monte Belger at the FAA: "Monte, bring all the planes down," even adding, "[Expletive] pilot discretion." [Washington Post, 1/27/02] However, it is later reported by a different Post reporter that Mineta didn't even know of the order until 15 minutes later. This reporter "says FAA officials had begged him to maintain the fiction." [Slate, 4/2/02]

(9:46 a.m.) According to the Flight 93 voice recording, around this time one hijacker in the cockpit says to another, "Let the guys in now." A vague instruction is given to bring the pilot back in. It's not clear if this is a reference to an original pilot or a hijacker pilot. Investigators aren't sure if the original pilots were killed or allowed to live. ["About midway", through a 31-minute recording that starts at 9:31, *Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 208] Also by this time, "everyone" in the United Airlines crisis center "now knew that a flight attendant on board had called the mechanics desk to report that one hijacker had a bomb strapped on and another was holding a knife on the crew." [Wall Street Journal, 10/15/01] *The presence of two hijackers in the cockpit talking to each other suggests that there were in fact four hijackers, and one was in the cockpit from before the hijacking began, since passengers only saw three, and two are known to have been guarding the passengers.*

(9:47 a.m.) On Flight 93, Jeremy Glick is still on the phone with his wife Lyz. He tells her that the passengers are taking a vote if they should try to take over the plane or not. [About the same time as a different phone call, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01] He later says that all the men on the plane have voted to attack the hijackers. [No time marker, Toronto Sun, 9/16/01] When asked about weapons, he says they don't have guns, just knives. *This appears to contradict an earlier mention of guns, but this may be the true account since no other calls mention guns, and the voice recorder doesn't record any gunshots.* His wife Lyz got the impression from him that the hijacker standing nearby claiming to hold the bomb would be easy to overwhelm. [*Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 153-154]

9:48 a.m. The Capitol building in Washington begins evacuation, 24 minutes after the FAA has warned a hijacked plane appeared to be headed toward Washington. [AP, 8/19/02] Senator Tom Daschle, majority leader of the Senate, later states, "Some capitol policemen broke into the room and said, we're under attack. I've got to take you out right away." Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, third in line of succession

to the presidency behind Vice President Cheney, is in the Capitol building with other congresspeople. Only after this time are Hastert and others in the line of succession moved to secure locations. Some point after this, Hastert and other leaders are flown by helicopter to secret bunkers. [\[ABC News, 9/11/02\]](#) *It is later reported that the target for Flight 93 was the Capitol building, so had that flight not been delayed 40 minutes before takeoff, it is possible most senators and congresspeople would have been killed.*

9:49 a.m. The FAA orders the Pittsburgh control tower evacuated. Shortly before, Cleveland flight controllers called Pittsburgh flight control and said a plane was heading toward Pittsburgh and refusing to communicate. [\[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/23/01 \(B\)\]](#)

(9:49 a.m.) Three F-16s scrambled from Langley 129 miles away at 9:30 reach the Pentagon. The planes, armed with heat-seeking, Sidewinder missiles, are authorized to knock down civilian aircraft. According to NORAD, they were flying at 650 mph. The official maximum speed for F-16s is 1500 mph. [9:49, [CNN, 9/17/01](#), 9:49, [NORAD, 9/18/01](#), 9:56: "15 minutes after Flight 77 hit the Pentagon," [New York Times, 9/15/01](#), "just before 10:00," [CBS, 9/14/01\]](#)

9:50 a.m. Sandra Bradshaw calls her husband from Flight 93. She says, "Have you heard what's going on? My flight has been hijacked. My flight has been hijacked with three guys with knives." [\[Boston Globe, 11/23/01\]](#) She tells him that they are in the rear galley filling pitchers with hot water to use against the hijackers. [\[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01\]](#)

(After 9:50 a.m.) Shortly after the Langley fighters arrive over Washington, three F-16s from Andrews also arrive. The first is probably piloted by Major Billy Hutchison. F-16s flown by Lt. Col. Marc H. (Sass) Sasseville and codename Lucky arrive shortly thereafter. Only Sasseville's plane has ammunition. Supposedly, these three fighters remain ignorant that three Langley F-16s are flying over Washington at the same time, at a higher altitude. [\[Aviation Week and Space Technology, 9/9/02\]](#)

9:53 a.m. The NSA reportedly intercepts a phone call from one of bin Laden's operatives in Afghanistan to a phone number in the Republic of Georgia. The caller says he has "heard good news" and that another target is still to come (presumably, Flight 93). Tenet tells Rumsfeld about the intercept two hours later. [\[CBS, 9/4/02\]](#) *How could someone in Afghanistan know so quickly that Flight 93 had been delayed 40 minutes before takeoff, was still in the air, and was controlled by hijackers? Do the hijackers call from the plane?*

9:53 a.m. The hijackers in the cockpit of Flight 93 grow concerned that the passengers might retaliate. One urges that the plane's fire ax be held up to the door's peephole to scare the passengers. [\[Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 209-210\]](#)

9:54 a.m. Tom Burnett calls his wife Deena for the fourth and last time. In early reports of this call, he says, "I know we're all going to die. There's three of us who are going to do something about it." [No time marker, [Toronto Sun, 9/16/01](#), no time marker, [Boston Globe, 11/23/01\]](#) However, in a later and much more complete account, he sounds much more upbeat. "It's up to us. I think we can do it." "Don't worry, we're going to do something." He specifically mentions they plan to regain control of the airplane over a rural area. [9:54, "again Deena noted the time," [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 118\]](#)

(9:56 a.m.) Bush departs from the Saratoga, Florida, airport on Air Force One. [9:54, Dallas Morning News, 8/28/02, 9:55, New York Times, 9/16/01 (B), 9:55, Daily Mail, 9/8/02, 9:55, Washington Post, 1/27/02, 9:55, Washington Post, 9/12/01, 9:55, AP, 9/12/01, 9:55, ABC News, 9/11/02, 9:57, CBS, 9/11/02 (B), 9:57, New York Times, 9/12/01, 9:57, CNN, 9/12/01, 9:57, Telegraph, 12/16/01] Amazingly, his plane takes off without any fighters protecting it. "The object seemed to be simply to get the President airborne and out of the way," says an administration official. [Telegraph, 12/16/01] There are still 3,520 planes in the air over the US. [USA Today, 8/13/02 (B)] About half of the planes in the region of Florida where Bush is are still in the air. [St. Petersburg Times, 9/7/02]

(After 9:56 a.m.) After flying off in Air Force One, Bush talks to Vice President Cheney on the phone. Cheney recommends that Bush authorize the military to shoot down any plane under control of the hijackers. "I said, 'You bet,'" Bush later recalls. "We had a little discussion, but not much." ["After Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon," Newsday, 9/23/01, time unknown, USA Today, 9/16/01, "Once airborne, Bush spoke again to Cheney," Washington Post, 1/27/02, after Bush is airborne, CBS, 9/11/02] Flight 93 is still in the air, and fighters are given orders to intercept it and possibly shoot it down. [ABC News, 9/11/02]

(After 9:56 a.m.) At some point after the F-16s are in the air, someone from the Secret Service gets on the radio and tells the pilots, "I want you to protect the White House at all costs." [New York Times, 10/16/01]

(9:56 - 10:40 a.m.) Air Force One takes off and quickly gains altitude. One passenger later says, "It was like a rocket. For a good 10 minutes, the plane was going almost straight up." [CBS, 9/11/02 (B)] Once the plane reaches cruising altitude, it flies in circles. Journalists on board sense this, because the television reception for a local station generally remains good. "Apparently Bush, Cheney and the Secret Service argue over the safety of Bush coming back to Washington. [Salon, 9/12/01, Telegraph, 12/16/01]

(After 9:56 - 10:06 a.m.) Inside his White House bunker, a military aide asks Vice President Cheney, "There is a plane 80 miles out. There is a fighter in the area. Should we engage?" Cheney immediately answers "Yes." [Washington Post, 1/27/02] An F-16 fighter near Washington heads in pursuit of Flight 93. [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01] However, a different explanation says, "The closest fighters are two F-16 pilots on a training mission from Selfridge Air National Guard Base near Detroit." These are ordered after Flight 93, even though but they supposedly aren't armed with any weapons. It is claimed they are supposed to crash into Flight 93 if they cannot persuade it to land. [ABC News, 8/30/02, ABC News, 9/11/02] In either case, as the fighter (or fighters) gets nearer to Flight 93, Cheney is asked twice more to confirm if the fighter should engage, and he responds yes both times. [Washington Post, 1/27/02] Montague Winfield, in charge of the Pentagon's command center, later says, "At some point, the closure time [between the fighter and Flight 93] came and went, and nothing happened, so you can imagine everything was very tense at the NMCC." [ABC, 9/15/02] Yet Major Gen. Paul Weaver, director of the Air National Guard, had previously claimed that no military planes were sent after Flight 93. [Seattle Times, 9/16/01] And the pilots flying over Washington that have spoken say that all of them didn't even learn about Flight 93 or any plane crashing in Pennsylvania until they returned to base in the afternoon. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 222]

9:57 a.m. One of the hijackers in the cockpit asks if anything is going on, apparently meaning outside the cockpit. "Fighting," the other one says. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 210] An analysis of the flight recorder suggests that the

passenger struggle actually started in the front of the plane (where Bingham and Burnett were sitting) about a minute before a struggle in the back of the plane (where Beamer was sitting). [Observer, 12/2/01] Officials later theorize that the Flight 93 passengers did actually reach the cockpit using a food cart as a battering ram and a shield. They claim that digital enhancement of the cockpit voice recorder reveals the sound of plates and glassware crashing around 9:57. [Newsweek, 11/25/01]

(9:57 a.m. and After) "In the cockpit! In the cockpit!" is heard. Hijackers are reportedly heard telling each other to hold the door. In English, someone outside shouts, "Let's get them." The hijackers are also praying "Allah o akbar" (God is great). One of the hijackers suggests shutting off the oxygen supply to the cabin (which apparently wouldn't have had an effect since the plane was already below 10,000 feet). A hijacker says, "Should we finish?" Another one says, "Not yet." The sounds of the passengers get clearer, and in unaccented English "Give it to me!" is heard. "I'm injured," someone says in English. Then something like "roll it up" and "lift it up" is heard. Passengers' relatives believe this sequence proves that the passengers did take control of the plane. [MSNBC, 7/30/02, Telegraph, 8/6/02, Newsweek, 11/25/01, Observer, 12/2/01, Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 270-271]

9:58 a.m. Todd Beamer ends his long phone call saying that they plan "to jump" the hijacker in the back who has the bomb. In the background, the phone operator already could hear an "awful commotion" of people shouting, and women screaming, "Oh my God," and "God help us." He lets go of the phone but leaves it connected. His famous last words are said to nearby passengers: "Are you ready guys? Let's roll" (alternate version: "You ready? Okay. Let's roll"). [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 204, Newsweek, 9/22/01, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01]

9:58 a.m. CeeCee Lyles says to her husband, "Aah, it feels like the plane's going down." Her husband Lorne says, "What's that?" She replies, "I think they're going to do it. They're forcing their way into the cockpit (an alternate version says, "They're getting ready to force their way into the cockpit"). A little later she screams, then says, "They're doing it! They're doing it! They're doing it!" Her husband hears more screaming in the background, then he hears a "whooshing sound, a sound like wind," then more screaming, and then the call breaks off. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 180, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01]

9:58 a.m. Sandy Bradshaw tells her husband, "Everyone's running to first class. I've got to go. Bye." She had been speaking with him since 9:50. [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01, Boston Globe, 11/23/01]

9:58 a.m. A man calls 911 from a bathroom on the plane, crying, "We're being hijacked, we're being hijacked!" [Toronto Sun, 9/16/01], then reports that "he heard some sort of explosion and saw white smoke coming from the plane and we lost contact with him." [ABC News, 9/11/01, AP, 9/12/01] One minute after the call began, the line goes dead. [Pittsburgh Channel, 12/6/01] Investigators believe this was Edward Felt, the only passenger not accounted for on phone calls. He was sitting in first class, so he probably was in the bathroom near the front of the plane. At one point he appears to have peeked out the bathroom door. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 193-194, 196] The mentions of smoke and explosions on the recording of his call are now denied. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 264] The person who took Felt's call is not allowed to speak to the media. [Mirror, 9/13/02]

9:59 a.m. The south tower of the World Trade Center collapses. It was hit by Flight 175 at 9:02. [9:50, Washington Post, 9/12/01, 9:59, MSNBC, 9/22/01, 9:59, AP,

8/19/02, 9:59, ABC News, 9/11/02, 9:59 (based on seismic data), New York Times, 9/12/01, 10:05, CNN, 9/12/01, 10:05, New York Times, 9/12/01, 9:59:39, US Army authorized seismic study, 9:59:04, seismic records]

(Before 10:00 a.m.) Defense officials initially say, "There were no military planes in the skies over Washington until 15 to 20 minutes after the Pentagon was hit" - 9:53 to 9:58. [Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 9/14/01] But several sources later report that fighters were above Washington within "minutes" or "moments" of the Pentagon explosion. [Denver Post, 9/11/01, Telegraph, 9/16/01, ABC News, 9/11/02] ABC News later reports that by 10:00, "Dozens of fighters are buzzing in the sky. F-16s scrambled at Andrews Air Force Base in nearby Maryland" (the exact time is not given, but the account is placed between 9:45 and 10:00 in a later ABC News chronology of 9/11). [ABC News, 9/11/02] Another account says the first two F-16s from Andrews that are armed with missiles arrive ten minutes after the three F-16s from Andrews arrived at 9:49 (see (9:49 a.m.)). [Aviation Week and Space Technology, 9/9/02] In contradiction to this, a few days after 9/11, the New York Times reports, "In the White House Situation Room and at the Pentagon, the response seemed agonizingly slow. One military official recalls hearing 'words to the effect of, "Where are the planes?"' The Pentagon insists it had air cover over its own building by 10 a.m., 15 minutes after the building was hit. But witnesses, including a reporter for The New York Times who was headed toward the building, did not see any until closer to 11." [New York Times, 9/16/01 (B)]

10:00 a.m. There are reports on television of a fire at the State Department. At 10:20 a.m. and apparently again at 10:33 a.m. it is reported this was caused by a car bomb. [Ottawa Citizen, 9/11/01, Telegraph, 12/16/01] Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage sees this on television, goes outside the building to see if it true, finds out it isn't, and calls his colleagues to inform them that the reports are false. [ABC, 9/15/02 (B)]

(10:00 a.m.) Elizabeth Wainio says to her stepmother, "Mom, they're rushing the cockpit. I've got to go. Bye," then hangs up. This may have been a delayed reaction to events, since her stepmother says that in their ten-minute call Elizabeth was in a trance-like state, appeared to have resigned herself to death, was breathing in a strange manner, and even said she felt she was leaving her body. ["Shortly after 10:00," MSNBC, 7/30/02, "sometime shortly before 10," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01]

(10:00 a.m.) Bill Wright is flying a small plane when a flight controller asks him to look around outside his window. He sees Flight 93 three miles away - close enough to see the United Airlines colors. Flight control asks him the plane's altitude, then commands him to get away from the plane and land immediately. Wright sees the plane rock back and forth three or four times before he flies from the area. He speculates that the hijackers were trying to throw off the attacking passengers. [Time unknown, Pittsburgh Channel, 9/19/01]

(Between 10:00-10:06 a.m.) During this time, there apparently are no calls from Flight 93. Several cell phones left on record only silence. For instance, Todd Beamer doesn't hang up, but nothing more is heard after he puts down the phone, suggesting things are quiet in the back of the plane. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 218] The only exception is Richard Makely, who is listening to the Jeremy Glick open phone line after Glick went to attack the hijackers. A reporter summarizes Makely explaining that, "The silence last[s] two minutes, then there [is] screaming. More silence, followed by more screams. Finally, there [is] a mechanical sound, followed by nothing." [San Francisco Chronicle, 9/17/01] The second silence lasts between 60 and 90 seconds. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 219]

Near the end of the cockpit voice recording, loud wind sounds can be heard. [CNN, 4/19/02, *Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 270-271] "Sources claim the last thing heard on the cockpit voice recorder is the sound of wind - suggesting the plane had been holed." [Mirror, 9/13/02] If the passengers had taken over the plane, there was at least one passenger, Don Greene, who was a professional pilot, who'd learned to fly at age 14, as well as Andrew Garcia, a former flight controller. [Newsweek, 9/22/01, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01, Telegraph, 8/6/02]

10:01 a.m. The FAA orders F-16 fighters to scramble from Toledo, Ohio. Although the base has no fighters on standby alert status, it manages to put fighters in the air 16 minutes later, a "phenomenal" response time - but still 10 minutes after the last hijacked plane has crashed. [Toledo Blade, 12/9/01] *One interesting aspect is that NORAD has explained that it didn't scramble fighters from bases nearer to the hijacked planes because they only used bases in the NORAD defensive network*

10:02 a.m. The Sears Tower in Chicago begins evacuation. Other prominent tall buildings and landmarks begin evacuating about an hour later. [Ottawa Citizen, 9/11/01]

10:03 a.m. According to the US government, Flight 93 crashes at 10:03. [NORAD, 9/18/01] The cockpit voice recording was recorded on a 30 minute reel, which means that as new tape was recorded the old tape was being erased. The government has let relatives listen to this tape, which begins at 9:31 and runs for 31 minutes. [CNN, 4/19/02, *Among the Heroes*, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 206-207] So it sounds like the recording ends a minute before the official crash time. However, a seismic study authorized by the US Army to determine when the plane crashed concludes the crash happens at 10:06:05. [US Army authorized seismic study] The discrepancy is so puzzling, the Philadelphia Daily News has an article on the issue, called "Three-Minute Discrepancy in Tape." It notes that leading seismologists agree that Flight 93 crashed last Sept. 11 at 10:06:05 a.m., give or take a couple of seconds, and government officials won't explain why they say the plane crashed at 10:03. [Philadelphia Daily News, 9/16/02]

(Before 10:06 a.m.) CBS television reports at some point before the crash that two F-16 fighters are tailing Flight 93. [Independent, 8/13/02] Shortly after 9/11, a flight controller in New Hampshire ignores a ban on controllers speaking to the media, and it is reported he claims "that an F-16 fighter closely pursued Flight 93... the F-16 made 360-degree turns to remain close to the commercial jet, the employee said. 'He must've seen the whole thing,' the employee said of the F-16 pilot's view of Flight 93's crash." [AP, 9/13/01, Nashua Telegraph, 9/13/01]

(Before 10:06 a.m.) In the tiny town of Boswell, about 10 miles north and slightly to the west of Flight 93's crash site, Rodney Peterson and Brandon Leventry notice a passenger jet lumbering through the sky at about 2,000 feet. They realize such a big plane flying so low in that area is odd. They see the plane dip its wings sharply to the left then to the right. The wings level off and the plane keeps flying south, continuing to slowly descend. Five minutes later they hear news that the plane has crashed. Other witnesses also later describe the plane flying east-southeast, low and wobbly. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 205-206, New York Times, 9/14/01] "Officials initially say that it looks like the plane was headed south when it hit the ground." [Cleveland Newschannel 5, 9/11/01]

(Before 10:06 a.m.) *Numerous eyewitnesses see and hear Flight 93 just before its crash:*

1) Terry Butler, at Stoystown: He sees the plane come out of the clouds, low to the ground. "It was moving like you wouldn't believe. Next thing I knew it makes a heck of

a sharp, right-hand turn." It banks to the right and appears to be trying to climb to clear one of the ridges, but it continues to turn to the right and then veers behind a ridge. About a second later it crashes. [[St. Petersburg Times, 9/12/01](#)]

2) Ernie Stuhl, the mayor of Shanksville: "I know of two people -- I will not mention names -- that heard a missile. They both live very close, within a couple of hundred yards... This one fellow's served in Vietnam and he says he's heard them, and he heard one that day." He adds that based on what he has learned, F-16s were "very, very close." [[Philadelphia Daily News, 11/15/01](#)]

Accounts of the plane making strange noises:

3) Laura Temyer of Hooversville: "I didn't see the plane but I heard the plane's engine. Then I heard a loud thump that echoed off the hills and then I heard the plane's engine. I heard two more loud thumps and didn't hear the plane's engine anymore after that." (She insists that people she knows in state law enforcement have privately told her the plane was shot down, and that decompression sucked objects from the aircraft, explaining why there was a wide debris field.) [[Philadelphia Daily News, 11/15/01](#)]

4) Charles Sturtz, a half mile from the crash site: The plane is heading southeast and has its engines running. No smoke can be seen. "It was really roaring, you know. Like it was trying to go someplace, I guess." [[WPXI Channel 11, 9/13/01](#)]

5) Michael Merringer, two miles from the crash site: "I heard the engine gun two different times and then I heard a loud bang..." [[AP, 9/12/01](#)]

6) Tim Lensbauer, 300 yards away: "I heard it for 10 or 15 seconds and it sounded like it was going full bore." [[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/12/01](#)]

Accounts of the plane flying upside down:

7) Rob Kimmel, several miles from the crash site: He sees it fly overhead, banking hard to the right. It is 200 feet or less off the ground as it crests a hill to the southeast. "I saw the top of the plane, not the bottom." [[Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 210-211](#)]

8) Eric Peterson of Lambertsville: He sees a plane flying overhead unusually low. The plane seemed to be turning end-over-end as it dropped out of sight behind a tree line. [[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/12/01](#)]

9) Bob Blair of Stoystown: He sees the plane spiraling and flying upside down before crashing. Its not much higher than the treetops. [[Daily American, 9/12/01](#)]

Accounts of a sudden plunge and more strange sounds:

10) An unnamed witness says he hears two loud bangs before watching the plane take a downward turn of nearly 90 degrees. [[Cleveland Newschannel 5, 9/11/01](#)]

11) Another unnamed witness sees the plane overhead. It makes a high-pitched, screeching sound. The plane then makes a sharp, 90-degree downward turn and crashes. [[Cleveland Newschannel 5, 9/11/01](#)]

12) Tom Fritz, about a quarter-mile from the crash site: He hears a sound that "wasn't quite right" and looks up in the sky. "It dropped all of a sudden, like a stone," going "so fast that you couldn't even make out what color it was." [[St. Petersburg Times, 9/12/01](#)]

13) Terry Butler, a few miles north of Lambertsville: "It dropped out of the clouds." The plane rose slightly, trying to gain altitude, then "it just went flip to the right and then straight down." [[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/12/01](#)]

14) Lee Purbaugh, 300 yards away: "There was an incredibly loud rumbling sound and there it was, right there, right above my head -- maybe 50 feet up.... I saw it rock from side to side then, suddenly, it dipped and dived, nose first, with a huge explosion, into the ground. I knew immediately that no one could possibly have survived." [[Independent, 8/13/02](#)]

Upside down and a sudden plunge:

15) Linda Shepley: She hears a loud bang and sees the plane bank to the side. [[ABC News, 9/11/01](#)] She sees the plane wobbling right and left, at a low altitude of roughly 2,500 feet, when suddenly the right wing dips straight down, and the plane plunges into the earth. She says she has an unobstructed view of Flight 93's final two minutes.

[Philadelphia Daily News, 11/15/01]

16) Kelly Leverknight in Stony Creek Township of Shanksville: "There was no smoke, it just went straight down. I saw the belly of the plane." It sounds like it is flying low, and it's heading east. [Daily American, 9/12/01, St. Petersburg Times, 9/12/01]

17) Tim Thornsberg, working in a nearby strip mine: "It came in low over the trees and started wobbling. Then it just rolled over and was flying upside down for a few seconds ... and then it kind of stalled and did a nose dive over the trees." [WPXI Channel 11, 9/13/01]

(Before 10:06 a.m.) Flight 93 apparently starts to break up before it crashes, because debris is found very far away from the crash site. [Philadelphia Daily News, 11/15/01] The plane is generally obliterated upon landing, except for one half-ton piece of engine found over a mile away. [Independent, 8/13/02] Smaller debris fields are also found two, three, and eight miles away from the main crash site. [CBS, 5/23/02] Eight miles away, local media quote residents speaking of a second plane in the area and burning debris falling from the sky. [Reuters, 9/13/01] Residents outside Shanksville reported "discovering clothing, books, papers and what appeared to be human remains. Some residents said they collected bags-full of items to be turned over to investigators. Others reported what appeared to be crash debris floating in Indian Lake, nearly six miles from the immediate crash scene. Workers at Indian Lake Marina said that they saw a cloud of confetti-like debris descend on the lake and nearby farms minutes after hearing the explosion...." [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/13/01] Moments after the crash, Carol Delasko initially thinks someone had blown up a boat on Indian Lake: "It just looked like confetti raining down all over the air above the lake." [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, 9/14/01] Investigators say that far-off wreckage "probably was spread by the cloud created when the plane crashed and dispersed by a 10 mph southeasterly wind." [Delaware News Journal, 9/16/01]

10:06 a.m. Flight 93 crashes just north of the Somerset County Airport, about 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, 124 miles or 15 minutes from Washington DC. [10:00, MSNBC, 9/22/01, 10:03, NORAD, 9/18/01, 10:06, Guardian, 10/17/01, 10:06, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 10/28/01, 10:06, MSNBC, 9/3/02, 10:06, Mirror, 9/13/02, 10:06, USA Today, 8/13/02, 10:07, AP, 8/19/02, 10:10, CNN, 9/12/01, 10:10, Washington Post, 9/12/01, 10:10, New York Times, 9/12/01, 10:10, Boston Globe, 11/23/01, 10:06:05, US Army authorized seismic study] Little information about the crash has been made public.

Before and After 10:06 a.m.) "At least half a dozen named individuals ... have reported seeing a second plane flying low and in erratic patterns, not much above treetop level, over the crash site within minutes of the United flight crashing. They describe the plane as a small, white jet with rear engines and no discernible markings." [Independent, 8/13/02]

1) Lee Purbaugh: "I didn't get a good look but it was white and it circled the area about twice and then it flew off over the horizon." [Mirror, 9/13/02]

2) Susan Mcelwain: Less than a minute before the Flight 93 crash rocked the countryside, she sees a small white jet with rear engines and no discernible markings swoop low over her minivan near an intersection and disappear over a hilltop, nearly clipping the tops of trees lining the ridge. [Bergen Record, 9/14/01] She later adds, "There's no way I imagined this plane - it was so low it was virtually on top of me. It was white with no markings but it was definitely military, it just had that look. It had two rear engines, a big fin on the back like a spoiler on the back of a car and with two upright fins at the side. I haven't found one like it on the internet. It definitely wasn't one of those executive jets. The FBI came and talked to me and said there was no plane around.... But I saw it and it was there before the crash and it was 40 feet above my head. They did not want my story - nobody here did." [Mirror, 9/13/02]

3 and 4) Dennis Decker and Rick Chaney, Decker speaking: "As soon as we looked

up [after hearing the Flight 93 crash], we saw a midsized jet flying low and fast. It appeared to make a loop or part of a circle, and then it turned fast and headed out." Decker and Chaney described the plane as a Learjet type, with engines mounted near the tail and painted white with no identifying markings. "It was a jet plane, and it had to be flying real close when that 757 went down. If I was the FBI, I'd find out who was driving that plane." [[Bergen Record, 9/14/01](#)]

5) Jim Brandt sees a small plane with no markings stay about one or two minutes over the crash site before leaving. [[Pittsburgh Channel, 9/12/01](#)]

6) Tom Spinelli: "I saw the white plane. It was flying around all over the place like it was looking for something. I saw it before and after the crash." [[Mirror, 9/13/02](#)]

The FBI later says this was a Fairchild Falcon 20 business jet, directed after the crash to fly from 37,000 feet to 5,000 feet and obtain the coordinates for the crash site to help rescuers. [[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/16/01](#), [Pittsburgh Channel, 9/15/01](#)] *Was the unmarked jet some kind of reconnaissance plane?* The FBI also says there was a C-130 military cargo aircraft flying at 24,000 feet about 17 miles away, but that plane wasn't armed and had no role in the crash. [[Pittsburgh Channel, 9/15/01](#), [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/16/01](#)] Note that this is the same C-130 that flies very close to Flight 77 right as that plane crashes into the Pentagon.

(After 10:06 a.m.) Just after Flight 93 crashes, "Up above, a fighter jet streak[s] by." [[ABC, 9/15/02](#)]

(After 10:06 a.m.) At some point after Flight 93 crashes, NORAD diverts "unarmed Michigan Air National Guard fighter jets that happened to be flying a training mission in northern Michigan since the time of the first attack." [[AP, 8/30/02](#)]

(10:08 a.m.) Bush is told of the crash of Flight 93 a few minutes later. Because of Cheney's earlier order, he asks, "Did we shoot it down or did it crash?" Several hours later, he is assured it crashed. [[Washington Post, 1/27/02](#)]

10:08 a.m. Armed agents deploy around the White House. [[CNN, 9/12/01](#)]

10:10 a.m. All US military forces are ordered to (FPCON) Defcon Delta, "The highest alert for the nuclear arsenal in 30 years." [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)]

10:15 a.m. The section of the Pentagon reportedly hit by the crash of Flight 77 collapses. [10:10, [CNN, 9/12/01](#), 10:10, [New York Times, 9/12/01](#), recorded live on WDCC-TV at 10:15, [Television Archive, WDCC 10:00](#)] A few minutes prior to its collapse, firefighters saw warning signs and sounded a general evacuation tone. No firefighters were injured. [[NFPA Journal, 11/1/01](#)]

(10:24 a.m.) Jane Garvey, head of the FAA, orders the diversion of all international flights to the U.S. Most flights are diverted to Canada. [10:41, [Time, 9/14/01](#), 10:24, [MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), 10:24, [CNN, 9/12/01](#), 10:24, [New York Times, 9/12/01](#)]

10:28 a.m. The World Trade Center's north tower collapses. It was hit by Flight 11 at 8:46. [10:28, [MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), 10:28, [CNN, 9/12/01](#), 10:28, [New York Times, 9/12/01](#), 10:28, [AP, 8/19/02](#), 10:28 (based on seismic data), [New York Times, 9/12/01](#), 10:29, [Washington Post, 9/12/01](#), 10:28:31, [seismic records](#)] The death toll could have been much worse - an estimated 15,000 people made it out of the WTC to safety. [[St. Petersburg Times, 9/8/02](#)]

(10:35 a.m.) Air Force One turns toward Louisiana. It has been decided Bush cannot go directly to Washington. [About 10:30, [CBS, 9/11/02 \(B\)](#), about 10:42, [Washington Post, 1/27/02](#)]

(10:42 a.m.) Roughly around this time, the FAA tells the White House that it still cannot account for three planes in addition to the four that have crashed. It takes the FAA another hour and a half to account for the three other aircraft. [[Time, 9/14/01](#)] Vice President Cheney later says, "That's what we started working off of, that list of six, and we could account for two of them in New York. The third one we didn't know what had happened to. It turned out it had hit the Pentagon, but the first reports on the Pentagon attack suggested a helicopter and then later a private jet." [[Los Angeles Times, 9/17/01](#)] Amongst false rumors during the day are reports of a bomb aboard a United Airlines jet that just landed in Rockford, Illinois. "Another plane disappears from radar and might have crashed in Kentucky. The reports are so serious that [FAA head Jane] Garvey notifies the White House that there has been another crash. Only later does she learn the reports are erroneous." [[USA Today, 8/13/02 \(B\)](#)]

11:45 a.m. Air Force One lands at Barksdale Air Force base near Shreveport, Louisiana. "The official reason for landing at Barksdale was that Bush felt it necessary to make a further statement, but it isn't unreasonable to assume that - as there was no agreement as to what the President's movements should be - it was felt he might as well be on the ground as in the air." [[Salon, 9/12/01](#), [New York Times, 9/16/01 \(B\)](#), [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), [CBS, 9/11/02](#)]

(12:00 Noon) Bush arrives at the Barksdale Air Force base headquarters in a Humvee escorted by armed outriders. Reporters and others are not allowed to say where they are. [[Telegraph, 12/16/01](#)]

(12:00 Noon) Sen. Orrin Hatch (R), a member of both the Senate Intelligence and Judiciary Committees, says he has just been "briefed by the highest levels of the FBI and of the intelligence community." He says, "They've come to the conclusion that this looks like the signature of Osama bin Laden, and that he may be the one behind this." [[Salon, 9/12/01](#)] At 12:05, CIA Director Tenet tells Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld that a message from a bin Laden agent celebrating the attacks was intercepted two hours earlier (see (9:53 a.m.)). Rumsfeld writes in his notes that the lead is "vague," that it "might not mean something," and that there is "no good basis for hanging hat." More evidence suggesting an al-Qaeda link comes several hours later. [[CBS, 9/4/02](#)]

12:15 p.m. The US closes some border crossings with Canada and Mexico. [[MSNBC, 9/22/01](#)]

12:16 p.m. US airspace is clear except for military and emergency flights. Only a few transoceanic flights were still landing in Canada. [[USA Today, 8/12/02 \(C\)](#)] At 12:30, the FAA reports about 50 flights still flying in US airspace, but none are reporting problems. [[CNN, 9/12/01](#), [New York Times, 9/12/01](#)]

12:36 p.m. Bush gives a short speech that is taped and played by the networks at 1:04 p.m. ["Just after 12:30," [Salon, 9/12/01](#), 12:36, [Washington Times, 10/8/02](#)] In a speech at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, President Bush announces that security measures are being taken and says: "Make no mistake, the United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts." [[MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), [CNN, 9/12/01](#), [New York Times, 9/12/01](#)] He also states, "Freedom itself was attacked this morning by a faceless coward. And freedom will be defended." [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)]

(12:58 p.m.) Bush spends most of his time at Barksdale Air Force base arguing on the phone with Cheney and others over where he should go next. "A few minutes before 1 p.m.," he agrees to fly to Nebraska. As earlier, there are rumors of a "credible terrorist threat" to Air Force One. [[Telegraph, 12/16/01](#)]

(1:02 p.m.) New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani orders an evacuation of Manhattan south of Canal Street. [1:02 PM, [MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), 11:00 AM, [AP, 8/19/02](#)]

1:27 p.m. A state of emergency is declared in Washington. [[CNN, 9/12/01](#), [New York Times, 9/12/01](#)]

(1:30 p.m.) President Bush leaves Barksdale Air Force Base for Nebraska's Offutt Air Force Base, home to the US Strategic Command. [1:15, [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), 1:31, [Salon, 9/12/01](#), 1:44, [MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), 1:48, [CNN, 9/12/01](#)] He travels with Chief of Staff Andrew Card, senior advisor Karl Rove, communications staffers Dan Bartlett, Ari Fleischer and Gordon Johndroe, and a reduced number of reporters. [[Salon, 9/12/01](#)]

1:44 p.m. The Navy dispatches aircraft carriers and guided missile destroyers to New York and Washington. Around the country, fighters, airborne radar, and refueling planes scramble. The North American Aerospace Defense Command go to its highest alert. [[MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), [CNN, 9/12/01](#)]

(2:00 p.m.) F-15 fighter pilot Major Daniel Nash returns to base around this time, after chasing Flight 175 and patrolling the skies over New York City. He says that when he got out of the plane, "he was told that a military F-16 had shot down a fourth airliner in Pennsylvania, a report that turned out to be incorrect." [About 1:30, [Cape Cod Times, 8/21/02](#), about 2:30, [Aviation Week and Space Technology, 6/3/02](#)]

(2:40 p.m.) By this time, the CIA determines from airplane passenger manifests that three of the hijackers were suspected al-Qaeda operatives. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld begins planning an attack against bin Laden. In his notes composed at this time (which are leaked almost one year later), he writes he wants the "best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. [Saddam Hussein] at same time. Not only UBL. [Usama bin Laden] Go massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not." [[CBS, 9/4/02](#)]

(2:50 p.m.) Air Force One lands at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, Nebraska. Bush stays on the plane for about 10 minutes before entering United States Strategic Command at 3:06. [[Salon, 9/12/01](#)] Bush is taken into an underground bunker designed to withstand a nuclear blast. There, he uses an advanced strategic command and communications center to teleconference directly with Vice President Cheney, National Security Advisor Rice, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and members of the National Security Council. The meeting ends at 4:15. [[Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), [Washington Times, 10/8/02](#)] [2:50, [Daily Mail, 9/8/02](#), 2:50, [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), 2:50, [Salon, 9/12/01](#), 3:07, [AP, 8/19/02](#)] Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, CIA Director Tenet, and Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta also participate in the teleconference. [[ABC News, 9/11/02](#)]

4:00 p.m. CNN reports that US officials say there are "good indications" that Saudi militant bin Laden, suspected of coordinating the bombings of two US embassies in 1998, is involved in the attacks, based on "new and specific" information developed since the attacks. [[CNN, 9/12/01](#)]

(4:33 p.m.) President Bush leaves Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska for Washington. [4:30, [MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), 4:30, [CNN, 9/12/01](#), 4:36, [Telegraph, 12/16/01](#), 4:36, [Washington Times, 10/8/02](#)]

5:20 p.m. Building 7 of the WTC complex, a 47-story tower, collapses from ancillary damage. No one is killed. [5:20, [MSNBC, 9/22/01](#), 5:20, [CNN, 9/12/01](#), 5:25,

Washington Post, 9/12/01, 5:25, AP, 8/19/02]

(6:54 p.m.) Bush arrives back at the White House, after exiting Air Force One at 6:42 and flying across Washington in a helicopter. [ABC News, 9/11/02] [6:34, Salon, 9/12/01, 6:54, Washington Times, 10/8/02, 6:54, CNN, 9/12/01, 6:54, Telegraph, 12/16/01, 7:00, AP, 8/19/02]

(7:00 p.m.) Secretary of State Powell returns to Washington from Lima, Peru. Ten hours after the attacks began, he is finally able to speak to Bush for the first time when they both arrive at the White House at about the same time. Powell later says of his flight, "And the worst part of it, is that because of the communications problems that existed during that day, I couldn't talk to anybody in Washington." [ABC News, 9/11/02] The Telegraph later theorizes, "Why so long? In the weeks before September 11 Washington was full of rumors that Powell was out of favor and had been quietly relegated to the sidelines..." [Telegraph, 12/16/01]

7:30 p.m. Bush addresses the nation on live TV. [CNN, 9/12/01] In what will later be called the Bush Doctrine, he states, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them." [Washington Post, 1/27/02]

9:00 p.m. Bush meets with his full National Security Council, followed roughly half an hour later by a meeting with a smaller group of key advisers. Bush and his advisors have already decided bin Laden is behind the attacks. CIA Director Tenet says that al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan are essentially one and the same. Bush says, tell the Taliban we're finished with them. [Washington Post, 1/27/02]

(11:30 p.m.) Before going to sleep, Bush writes in his diary, The Pearl Harbor of the 21st century took place today. ... We think it's Osama bin Laden." [Washington Post, 1/27/02]

Immediate Aftermath

September 11, 2001: At about 9:00 a.m., a strange incident occurs aboard United Airlines Flight 23, scheduled to fly from New York to Los Angeles. After boarding, the crew tells the passengers that the flight had been canceled. Three Middle Eastern men on board refuse to get off the plane. They argue with a member of the flight crew. Security is called, but before security arrives, the men escape. [CBS, 9/14/01] In June 2002, a Canadian general who is also deputy commander of NORAD refers to Flight 23 and states, "From our perception, we think our reaction on that day was sufficiently quick that we may well have precluded at least one other hijacking. We may not have. We don't know for sure." [Globe and Mail, 6/13/02] It may not be the only aborted hijacking that day.

September 11, 2001: Zacarias Moussaoui watches the 9/11 attack on TV inside a prison, where he is being held on immigration charges. He cheers the attacks. [BBC, 12/12/01] Within an hour of the attacks, the Minnesota FBI uses a memo written to FBI headquarters shortly after Moussaoui's arrest to ask permission from a judge for the search warrant they have been desperately seeking. Even after the attacks, FBI headquarters is still attempting to block the search of Moussaoui's computer, characterizing the WTC attacks as a mere coincidence with suspicions about Moussaoui (the person still trying to block the search is later promoted). [Time, 5/21/02] However, a federal judge approves the warrant that afternoon. [New Yorker, 9/30/02] Minnesota FBI agent Coleen Rowley notes that this very memo was previously deemed insufficient by FBI headquarters to get a search warrant, and the fact that they are immediately granted one when finally allowed to ask shows "the missing piece of probable cause was only the [FBI headquarters'] failure to appreciate

that such an event could occur." [Time, 5/21/02] The search uncovers information suggesting Moussaoui may have been planning an attack using crop dusters, but it doesn't turn up any direct connection to the 9/11 hijackers. However, they find some German telephone numbers and the name "Ahad Sabet." The numbers allow them to determine the name is an alias for Ramzi bin al-Shibh, Atta's former roommate, and they find he wired Moussaoui money. They also find a document connecting Moussaoui with the Malaysian Yazid Sufaat, a lead that could have led to hijackers Khalid Almihdhar and Nawaf Alhazmi. [New Yorker, 9/30/02, MSNBC, 12/11/01] Rowley later suggests that if they would have received the search warrant sooner, "There is at least some chance that ... may have limited the Sept. 11th attacks and resulting loss of life." [Time, 5/27/02]

September 11, 2001: Two men, Syed Gul Mohammad Shah (using the alias Ayub Ali Khan) and Mohammed Jaweed Azmath, are arrested on a train near Fort Worth, Texas, during a random drug check. They are found with \$20,000 in cash, hair dye, and box cutters similar to those used in the 9/11 attacks. They also both had flight training. They had boarded Flight 679 in Newark, New Jersey, at 6:10 a.m., bound for San Antonio. [Washington Post, 9/20/01, Village Voice, 9/25/02] The flight was diverted to St. Louis after the WTC was hit. Shah and Azmath then took an Amtrak train headed to San Antonio. The FBI says no one else on the flight manifest is believed to be a potential hijacker. It is speculated that they were planning to meet Dr. al-Badr Alhazmi, who lived in San Antonio and was also arrested that day. [Los Angeles Times, 9/20/01, Washington Post, 9/29/01] It is also known that a \$64,000 wire transfer by the two men to Pakistan in 1999 "has aroused authorities' suspicion." [Washington Post, 10/7/01] They appeared to be some of the most significant terrorists caught after 9/11. But on September 12, 2002, after nearly a year in solitary confinement, Azmath pleads guilty to one count of credit card fraud, and was released with time served. Shah is given a longer sentence for credit card fraud. [Village Voice, 9/25/02] Both are deported back to India around the end of 2002. [New York Times, 12/31/02, AP, 1/25/03] Both also claim to have been tortured, threatened, denied access to lawyers, and kept in solitary confinement for months. [AP, 1/25/03] Dr. Alhazmi is released after only two weeks. [San Antonio Express News, 10/1/01]

September 11, 2001: Two of Atta's bags from an early flight from Portland are not loaded onto Flight 11 and are discovered. They contain a handheld electronic flight computer, a simulator procedures manual for Boeing 757 and 767 aircraft, two videotapes relating to "air tours" of the Boeing 757 and 747 aircraft, a slide-rule flight calculator, a copy of the Koran, Atta's passport, his international driver's license, a religious cassette tape, airline uniforms, a letter of recommendation, "education related documentation", a note to other hijackers on how to mentally prepare for the hijacking, and Atta's will (written in 1996). [AP, 10/5/01, Sydney Morning Herald, 9/15/01, Boston Globe, 9/18/01, Independent, 9/29/01, (see also an FBI affidavit that omits certain items, like the uniforms and the how-to note)] A New Yorker reporter later writes, "many of the investigators believe that some of the initial clues that were uncovered about the terrorists' identities and preparations, such as flight manuals, were meant to be found. A former high-level intelligence official told me, 'Whatever trail was left was left deliberately—for the FBI to chase.'" [New Yorker, 10/1/01]

September 11, 2001: Later in the day, weapons are found planted on board three other US airplanes. A US official says of the hijackings: "These look like inside jobs." "Sources tell Time that US officials are investigating whether the hijackers had accomplices deep inside the airports' 'secure' areas." [Time, 9/22/01] Penetrating security doesn't appear to have been that difficult: Argenbright, the company in charge of security at all the airports used by the 9/11 hijackers, had virtually no security check on any of their employees, and even hired criminals and illegal

immigrants. Security appears to have particularly abysmal at Boston's Logan Airport, even after 9/11. [[CNN, 10/12/01](#), [Boston Globe, 10/1/01](#)]

September 11, 2001: An FAA memo written on the evening of 9/11 suggests a man on Flight 11 was shot and killed by a gun before the plane crashed into the WTC. [See the leaked [FAA memo](#), originally posted at [World Net Daily](#)] The "Executive Summary," based on information relayed by a flight attendant to the American Airlines Operation Center, stated "that a passenger located in seat 10B shot and killed a passenger in seat 9B at 9:20 A.M [since Flight 11 crashed at 8:46, the time must be a typo, probably meaning 8:20]. The passenger killed was Daniel Lewin, shot by passenger Satam Al Suqami." The FAA claims that the document is a "first draft" and declines to release the final draft, calling it "protected information." A report in Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz on September 17 identifies Lewin as a former member of the Israel Defense Force Sayeret Matkal, Israel's most successful special-operations unit [[UPI, 3/6/02](#)]. Sayeret Matkal is a deep-penetration unit that has been involved in assassinations, the theft of foreign signals-intelligence materials, and the theft and destruction of foreign nuclear weaponry. Sayeret Matkal is best known for the 1976 rescue of 106 passengers at Entebbe Airport in Uganda. [[New Yorker, 10/29/01](#)] Officials later deny the gun story and suggest that Lewin was probably stabbed to death instead (which would still be very interesting). [[UPI, 3/6/02](#), [Washington Post, 3/2/02](#)] Note that Lewin founded Akamai, a successful computer company, and his connections to Sayeret Mat'kal remained hidden until the gun story came to light. [[Guardian, 9/15/01](#)]

September 11-13, 2001: Investigators find a remarkable number of possessions left behind by the hijackers:

- 1) As previously mentioned, two of Mohamed Atta's bags are found on 9/11 containing a handheld electronic flight computer, a simulator procedures manual for Boeing 757 and 767 aircraft, two videotapes relating to "air tours" of the Boeing 757 and 747 aircraft, a slide-rule flight calculator, a copy of the Koran, Atta's passport, his will, his international driver's license, a religious cassette tape, airline uniforms, a letter of recommendation, "education related documentation" and a note to other hijackers on how to mentally prepare for the hijacking.
- 2) As previously mentioned, Marwan Alshehhi's rental car is discovered at Boston's Logan airport containing an Arabic language flight manual, a pass giving access to restricted areas at the airport, documents containing a name on the passenger list of one of the flights, and the names of other suspects. Huffman Aviation, the name of the flight school where Atta and Alshehhi studied, is also found in the car. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/13/01](#)]
- 3) A car registered to Nawaf Alhazmi is found in Washington's Dulles Airport on September 12. Inside is a copy of Atta's letter to the other hijackers, a cashier's check made out to a flight school in Phoenix, four drawings of the cockpit of a 757 jet, a box cutter-type knife, maps of Washington and New York, and a page with notes and phone numbers. [[Arizona Daily Star, 9/28/01](#), [Cox News, 10/21/01](#), [Die Zeit, 10/1/02](#)]
- 4) A rental car is found in a airport parking lot in Portland, Maine. Investigators are able to collect fingerprints and hair samples for DNA analysis. [[Portland Press Herald, 10/14/01](#)]
- 5) A Boston hotel room contains airplane and train schedules. [[Sydney Morning Herald, 9/15/01](#)]
- 6) FBI agents carry out numerous garbage bags of evidence from a Florida apartment where Saeed Alghamdi lived. [[CNN, 9/17/01](#)]
- 7) Two days before 9/11, a hotel owner in Deerfield Beach, Florida, finds a box cutter left in a hotel room used by Marwan Alshehhi and two unidentified men. The owner checks the nearby trash and finds a duffel bag containing Boeing 757 manuals, three illustrated martial arts books, an 8-inch stack of East Coast flight maps, a three-ring binder full of handwritten notes, an English-German dictionary, an airplane fuel tester, and a protractor. All the items are

seized by the FBI when they are notified on September 12 (except the binder of notes, which the owner apparently threw away). [[Miami Herald, 9/16/01](#), [AP, 9/16/01](#)]

8) In an apartment rented by Ziad Jarrah and Ahmed Alhaznawi, the FBI finds a notebook, videotape, and photocopies of their passports. [[Miami Herald, 9/15/01](#)]

9) In a bar the night before 9/11, after making predictions of a terrorist attack on America the next day, terrorists leave a business card and a copy of the Koran at the bar. The FBI also recovers the credit card receipts from when they paid for their drinks and lap dances. [[AP, 9/14/01](#)]

10) A September 13 security sweep of Boston airport's parking garage uncovers items left behind by the hijackers: a box cutter, a pamphlet written in Arabic and a credit card. [[Washington Post, 9/16/01](#)]

11) A few hours after the attacks, suicide notes that some of the hijackers wrote to their parents are found in New York. Credit card receipts showing that some of the hijackers paid for flight training in the US are also found. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/13/01](#)]

12) A FedEx bill is found in a trash can at the Comfort Inn in Portland, Maine, where Atta stayed the night before 9/11. The bill leads to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, allowing investigators to determine most of the funding for 9/11. [[Newsweek, 11/11/01](#), [London Times, 12/1/01](#)]

Their whereabouts can even be tracked by their pizza purchases. An expert points out: "Most people pay cash for pizza. These [hijackers] paid with a credit card. That was an odd thing." [[San Diego Union-Tribune, 9/3/02](#)] "In the end, they left a curiously obvious trail -- from martial arts manuals, maps, a Koran, Internet and credit card fingerprints. Maybe they were sloppy, maybe they didn't care, maybe it was a gesture of contempt of a culture they considered weak and corrupt." [[Miami Herald, 9/22/01](#)]

Note the New Yorker's quote of a former high-level intelligence official: "Whatever trail was left was left deliberately—for the FBI to chase." [[New Yorker, 10/1/01](#)]

September 11, 2001-January 2002: After probably completing last-minute financial transactions with some 9/11 hijackers, Saeed Sheikh flies to Pakistan. [[Knight Ridder, 10/7/01](#)] He meets with bin Laden in Afghanistan a few days later. [[Washington Post, 2/18/02](#), [London Times, 2/25/02](#), [Guardian, 7/16/02](#)] The US government claims Saeed fights for the Taliban in Afghanistan in September and October 2001. [[CNN, 3/14/02](#)] Some believe that after the defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Saeed acts as a go-between for the hiding bin Laden and the ISI. [[Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, 3/3/02](#)] He also helps produce a video of a bin Laden interview. [[Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, 3/3/02](#)] Sometime in October 2001 [[Guardian, 7/16/02](#)], he moves back to his home in Lahore, Pakistan, and lives there openly. He is frequently seen at local parties hosted by government leaders. In January 2002, he hosts a party to celebrate the birth of his newborn baby. [[USA Today, 2/25/02](#), [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, 3/3/02](#)] He stays in his well-known Lahore house with his new wife and baby until January 19, 2002 - four days before reporter Daniel Pearl is kidnapped. [[BBC, 7/16/02](#)] He is also actively involved in numerous other terrorist acts .

September 12, 2001: A New York firefighter tells of his rescue work inside the WTC: "On the last trip up a bomb went off. We think there was bombs set in the building." [[People, 9/12/01](#)] There are many other witnesses who describe bombs. For instance, Teresa Veliz, who escaped from the 47th floor of the North Tower: "The flashlight led us into Borders bookstore, up an escalator and out to Church Street. There were explosions going off everywhere. I was convinced that there were bombs planted all over the place and someone was sitting at a control panel pushing detonator buttons. I was afraid to go down Church Street toward Broadway, but I had to do it. I ended up on Vesey Street. There was another explosion. And another. I didn't know where to run." [*September 11: An Oral History*, Dean E. Murphy, 2002, pp. 9-15]

September 12, 2001: Billie Vincent, a former FAA security director, suggests the hijackers had inside help at the airports. "These people had to have the means to take control of the aircrafts. And that means they had to have weapons in order for those pilots to relinquish control. Think about it, they planned this thing out to the last detail for months. They are not going to take any risks at the front end. They knew they were going to be successful before they started... It's the only thing that really makes sense to me." [[Miami Herald, 9/12/01](#)] Since then, considerable evidence of inside help has emerged, including pre-planted weapons.

September 12, 2001: The passport of hijacker Satam Al Suqami is found a few blocks from the WTC. [[ABC News, 9/12/01](#), [AP, 9/16/01](#), [ABC News, 9/16/01](#)] The Guardian says, "the idea that Atta's passport had escaped from that inferno unsinged [tests] the credulity of the staunchest supporter of the FBI's crackdown on terrorism." [[Guardian, 3/19/02](#)] *Note the passport did not belong to Atta, as is sometimes claimed.*

September 13, 2001: A Pentagon official, when asked if the US shot down Flight 93 (the flight that crashed in Pennsylvania), says "We have not ruled out that." This is one of many quotes from officials in the first days that fail to rule out that 93 was shot down. [[ABC News, 9/13/01](#), [Pittsburgh Tribune Review, 9/14/01](#)] On the same day, a flight controller in Nashua claims an F-16 fighter closely pursued Flight 93 until it crashed in Pennsylvania. "Although controllers don't have complete details of the Air Force's chase of the Boeing 757, they have learned the F-16 made 360-degree turns to remain close to the commercial jet. 'He must've seen the whole thing,' the employee said of the F-16 pilot's view of Flight 93's crash" (Flight controllers have been ordered not to speak publicly about 9/11, but somehow this slipped out). [[AP, 9/13/01](#), [Nashua Telegraph, 9/13/01](#)] Cheney later tells the Washington Post that he had ordered a plane to shoot down Flight 93, and confirmed that order two more times as the distance between the fighter and the airliner grew closer. So, supposedly, when Flight 93 crashed, Bush had to ask, "Did we shoot it down or did it crash?" [[Washington Post, 1/27/02](#)]

September 13, 2001: The FBI says there were 18 hijackers, and releases their names. [[CNN, 9/13/01 \(C\)](#)] The next day, it is revealed there is one more hijacker - Hani Hanjour. [[CNN, 9/14/01](#), [AP, 9/14/01](#)] A few days later, it is reported that Hanjour's "name was not on the American Airlines manifest for [Flight 77] because he may not have had a ticket." [[Washington Post, 9/16/01](#)]

September 14, 2001: Officials deny that Flight 93 was shot down, but propose the theory that the hijackers had a bomb on board and blew up the plane. [[Pittsburgh Tribune Review, 9/14/01](#)] Later in the month, it is reported that the "FBI has determined from the on site investigation that no explosive was involved." [[AP, 9/25/01](#)]

September 14, 2001: The two "black boxes" for Flight 77 are found. [[PBS Newshour, 9/14/01](#)] FBI Director Mueller will later say that the boxes provided altitude, speed, headings and other information, but the voice recorder contained "nothing useful." [[CBS, 2/23/02](#)]

September 14, 2001: Officials admit that two planes were near Flight 93 when it crashed, which matches numerous eyewitness accounts. For instance, Dennis Decker says that immediately after hearing an explosion, "We looked up, we saw a midsized jet flying low and fast. It appeared to make a loop or part of a circle, and then it turned fast and headed out. If you were here to see it, you'd have no doubt. It was a jet plane, and it had to be flying real close when that 757 went down... If I was the FBI, I'd find out who was driving that plane." [[Bergen Record, 9/14/01](#)] Later the same day, the military says it can "neither confirm nor deny" the nearby planes. [[Pittsburgh Tribune Review, 9/14/01](#)] Then, two days later, they again claim there

were two planes near, but that they were a military cargo plane and business jet, and neither had anything to do with the crash. [[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/16/01](#)]
Supposedly, the business jet was requested to fly low over the crash site to help rescuers find the crash site, 25 minutes after all aircraft in the US had been ordered to land. But the story appears physically impossible since the FBI says this jet was at 37,000 feet and asked to descend to 5,000 feet. [[Pittsburgh Channel, 9/15/01](#)] That would have taken many minutes for that kind of plane, and witnesses report seeing the plane flying very low even before the crash. [[Bergen Record, 9/14/01](#)] Another explanation of a farmer's plane 45 minutes later is put forth, but that also doesn't fit the time at all. [[Pittsburgh Channel, 9/15/01](#)] Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz states: "We responded awfully quickly, I might say, on Tuesday [9/11], and, in fact, we were already tracking in on that plane that crashed in Pennsylvania. I think it was the heroism of the passengers on board that brought it down. But the Air Force was in a position to do so if we had had to." [[Department of Defense, 9/14/01](#)] The next day, the Director of the Air National Guard denies that any plane was scrambled after Flight 93. [[Seattle Times, 9/16/01](#)] That in turn contradicts what Vice President Cheney will say later. [[Washington Post, 1/27/02](#)]

September 14, 2001: Some gruesome remains are discovered in the WTC ruins. Investigators find a pair of severed hands bound together with plastic handcuffs on a nearby building. They are believed to have belonged to a stewardess. [[Newsday, 9/15/01](#)] There are reports of whole rows of seats with passengers in them being found, as well as much of the cockpit of one of the planes, complete with the body of one of the hijackers, and the body of another stewardess, whose hands were tied with wire. [[Ananova, 9/13/01](#), [New York Times, 9/15/01](#)] Yet, contradicting the claim that a hijacker's body was found, only in February 2003 are the remains of two hijackers identified. While all these bodies and plane parts are supposedly found, not one of the four black boxes for these two airplanes are ever found. A National Transportation Safety Board spokesman says: "It's extremely rare that we don't get the recorders back. I can't recall another domestic case in which we did not recover the recorders." [[CBS, 2/23/02](#)] The black boxes are considered "nearly indestructible," are placed in the safest parts of the aircraft, and are designed to survive impacts much greater than the WTC impact. They can withstand heat of up to 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit for one hour, and can withstand an impact of an incredible 3,400 G's. [[ABC News, 9/17/01](#)]

September 15, 2001): The first reports of seat assignments for the hijackers on Flight 11 appear. But unlike other flights, accounts of where the hijackers sat vary widely. The first report says Wail Alshehri was in seat 2A, Waleed Alshehri in 2B, Mohamed Atta in 8D, Abdulaziz Alomari in 8G, and Satam Al Suqami in 10B. [[ABC News, 9/15/01](#)] The next day, it is reported Atta was in 8A and Alomari was in 8B. [[Chicago Sun-Times, 9/16/01](#)] The same day, it is reported that all five hijackers sat in row 8. [[Portland Press Herald, 9/16/01](#)] Flight attendant Amy Sweeney apparently telephoned the seat numbers of four of the hijackers before the plane crashed, but the exact numbers she gave have not been released. However, it is known the "numbers she gave were different from those registered in the hijackers' names." [[BBC, 9/21/01](#)] Another account suggests she said the hijackers were sitting in rows 9 and 10. [[Portland Press Herald, 10/14/01](#)] Another flight attendant, Betty Ong, also telephoned seat numbers, saying there were hijackers in seats 2A, 2B, 9A, and 9B. This is "slightly different" from Sweeney's numbers - with two hijackers in the second row instead of the 10th. [[Boston Globe, 11/23/01](#)]

September 17, 2001): A confidential FBI bulletin states a "badly damaged" commercially manufactured cigarette lighter with a concealed knife blade has been recovered at the Flight 93 crash scene. The knife was about two and three-fourths inches long, with a knife blade of about two and a half inches. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/18/01](#)]

Foiled Follow-on??

September 19, 2001: The FBI claims that there were six hijacking teams on the morning of 9/11. [[New York Times, 9/19/01](#), [Guardian, 10/13/01](#)] A different report claims investigators are privately saying eight. [[Independent, 9/25/01](#)] But the reports below suggest there may have been as many as eight aborted flights, leading to a potential total of 12 hijackings:

1) Knives of the same type used in the successful hijackings were found taped to the backs of fold-down trays on a Continental Airlines flight from Newark. [[Guardian, 9/19/01](#)]

2) The FBI is investigating American Airlines Flight 43, which left Boston about 8:10 a.m. bound for Los Angeles and was canceled minutes before takeoff due to a mechanical problem. [[BBC, 9/18/01](#), [Chicago Tribune, 9/18/01](#), [Guardian, 9/19/01](#)] Another version claims the flight left from Newark and made it as far as Cincinnati before being grounded in the nationwide air ban. [[New York Times, 9/19/01](#)]

3 and 4) Knives and box cutters were found on two separate canceled Delta Airlines planes later that day, one leaving Atlanta for Brussels and the other leaving from Boston. [[Time, 9/22/01](#), [Independent, 9/25/01](#)]

5) On September 14, two knives were found on an Air Canada flight that would have flown to New York on 9/11 if not for the air ban. [[CNN, 10/15/01](#)]

6) Two men arrested on 9/11 may have lost their nerve on American Airlines Flight 1729 from Newark to San Antonio via Dallas that was scheduled to depart at 8:50, and was later forced to land in St. Louis. Alternately, they may have been planning an attack for September 15 [[New York Times, 9/19/01](#)]

7) There may have been an attempt to hijack United Airlines Flight 23 flying from Boston to Los Angeles around 9:00 a.m. Three Middle Eastern men angrily refused to get off the plane when it was canceled, then escaped security.

8) Knives were found stashed in the seats on a plane due to leave Boston that was delayed due to technical problems and then canceled. [[Guardian, 10/13/01](#)] *Note this might be the same as one of the Delta flights.*

9) A box cutter knife was found under a seat cushion on American Airlines Flight 160, a 767 that would have flown from San Diego to New York on the morning of 9/11 but for the air ban. [[Chicago Tribune, 9/23/01](#)]

The FBI is said to be seeking a number of passengers who failed to board the same, rescheduled flights when the grounding order on commercial planes in the US was lifted. [[BBC, 9/18/01](#)] The Independent points out suspicions have been fueled "that staff at US airports may have played an active role in the conspiracy and helped the hijackers to circumvent airport security." They also note, "It is possible that at least some of the flights that have come under scrutiny were used as decoys, or as fallback targets." [[Independent, 9/25/01](#)]

September 19, 2001-September 3, 2002: Nabil al-Marabh is arrested on September 19, 2001 at an Illinois convenience store. [[Los Angeles Times, 9/21/01](#)] He has an extensive history of criminal behavior and al-Qaeda connections, and was even being investigated for connections with two 9/11 hijackers before 9/11. In early 2002, Canadian authorities call him "a senior al-Qaeda planner and money man who may have played a direct role in the Sept. 11 attacks." [[Toronto Sun, 1/13/02](#)] FBI investigators claim al-Marabh helped the hijackers get false IDs, and helped launder money for al-Qaeda. [[ABC 7, 1/31/02](#)] But the Canadian investigation is closed down by the end of 2001, supposedly due to a lack of funding. [[Toronto Sun, 1/13/02](#)] The US also decides not to charge al-Marabh on any terrorism related charge. Instead, on September 3, 2002, Nabil al-Marabh pleads guilty to illegally entering the US, and is sentenced to 8 months in prison. [[Chicago Sun-Times, 9/5/02](#)] Federal prosecutors then drop a warrant against him, clearing him to be deported to Syria. [[AP, 1/29/03](#)] Canada also isn't attempting to extradite al-Marabh for jumping bail in July 2001. [[Southam Newspapers, 8/16/02](#)] Federal prosecutors claim that "at this time" there is

no evidence "of any involvement by [al-Marabh] in any terrorist organization," even though he has admitted to getting weapons training in Afghanistan. [[Washington Post, 9/4/02](#)] The judge says he cannot say "in good conscience" that he approves of the plea bargain worked out between the prosecution and defense, but he seems unable to stop it. He says, "Something about this case makes me feel uncomfortable. I just don't have a lot of information." The judge has a number of unanswered questions, such as how al-Marabh had \$22,000 in cash and \$25,000 worth of amber jewels on his possession when he was arrested, despite holding only a sporadic series of low-paying jobs. "These are the things that kind of bother me. It's kind of unusual, isn't it?" says the judge. [[National Post, 9/4/02](#)] The media fails to bring up all the previously reported connections between al-Marabh and al-Qaeda. It is instead suggested he is a victim of civil rights discrimination. [[Toronto Star, 9/9/02](#)]

September 24, 2001 (B): Fox News claims that up to 12 other Middle Eastern men dressed in pilot uniforms were on other flights scheduled to take off on the morning of 9/11. Hijackings on all these flights were foiled when an unexpected ban on new flights prevented them from taking off. An FBI source says they had been invited into the cockpits under the impression that they were guest pilots from other airlines. It is standard practice to give guest pilots the spare seat in the cockpit known as the jump seat. [[Fox News, 9/24/01](#)] Flight 93's cockpit voice recording has apparently shown that "one of the four hijackers had been invited into the cockpit area before the flight took off." Many pilot uniforms had gone missing prior to 9/11. Atta was given a guided tour of Boston's Logan Airport the week before 9/11 when he turned up in a pilot uniform saying he was with Saudi Airlines. [[Herald Sun, 9/25/01](#)]

October 11, 2001: "FBI investigators have officially concluded that 11 of the 19 terrorists who hijacked the aircraft on September 11 did not know they were on a suicide mission." "Unlike the eight 'lead' attackers, who were all trained pilots, they did not leave messages for friends and family indicating they knew their lives were over" nor did they have copies of Atta's final prayer note. Personal items found suggest the men thought they were taking part in a conventional hijacking and were preparing for the possibility of prison. [[Observer, 10/14/01](#)] This is later contradicted by video filmed in Afghanistan in March 2001 showing the 13 non-lead hijackers proclaiming their willingness to die on an upcoming suicide mission (see [March 2001](#)).

Indian Parliament Attack

December 13, 2001: The Indian Parliament building in New Delhi is attacked by terrorists. Fourteen people, including the five attackers, are killed. India blames the Pakistani terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammad for the attacks. Twelve days later, Maulana Masood Azhar, head of Jaish-e-Mohammad, is arrested by Pakistan and his group is banned. He is freed one year later. [[AFP, 12/25/01](#), [Christian Science Monitor, 12/16/02](#)] The Parliament attack leads to talk of war, even nuclear war, between Pakistan and India, until President Musharraf cracks down on terrorist groups in early January. [[Telegraph, 12/28/01](#), [Wall Street Journal, 1/3/02](#), [Guardian, 5/25/02](#)] It appears that Saeed Sheikh and Aftab Ansari, working with the ISI, are also behind the attacks. [[Vanity Fair, 8/02](#), [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, 3/3/02](#)]

A white governmental van broke through perimeter security of the Indian parliament, just before noon. One assailant triggered a suicidal explosive belt he was wearing (BBC reports it was detonated after he sustained gunshot wounds from security forces) and another one threw a grenade at the entrance for the MPs. A second grenade was then thrown at the entrance for the prime minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee. A 30-minute shootout with security forces ensued, resulting in the death of the remaining assailants. The gunmen did not make it all the way to the parliament building. All assailants were disguised as government commandos. The region is

tense because of the Afghanistan situation and continuing terrorist activities in the northern state of Kashmir, which India blames on its nuclear neighbor, Pakistan.

Shoe Bomber

December 22, 2001: British citizen Richard Reid is arrested for allegedly trying to blow up a Miami-bound jet using explosives hidden in his shoe. [[AP, 8/19/02](#)] He later pleads guilty to all charges, and declares himself a follower of bin Laden. [[CBS, 10/4/02](#)] He may have ties to Pakistan. [[Washington Post, 3/31/02](#)] It is later believed that Reid and others in the shoe bomb plot reported directly to 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed. [[CNN, 1/30/03](#)]

Daniel Pearl

January 23, 2002: Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl is kidnapped in Pakistan while researching stories threatening to the ISI. [[Guardian, 1/25/02](#), [BBC, 7/5/02](#)] He is later murdered. Saeed Sheikh is later convicted as the mastermind of the kidnap, and though it appears he lured Pearl into being kidnapped beginning January 11, the actual kidnapping and murder of Pearl is done by others who remain at large. [[Vanity Fair, 8/02](#), [Wall Street Journal, 1/23/03](#)] Both al-Qaeda and the ISI appear to be behind the kidnapping and. The overall mastermind behind the kidnapping seems to be Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, also mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. [[Time, 1/26/03](#), [CNN, 1/30/03](#)] If Saeed assisted Mohammed in the kidnapping, that would appear to repeat their cooperation in the 9/11 attacks, and strengthen the argument that Mohammed is connected to both al-Qaeda and the ISI.

January 28, 2002: The kidnapers of reporter Daniel Pearl e-mail the media a picture of Pearl and a list of very strange demands. [[BBC, 7/5/02](#)] The kidnapers call themselves "The National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty," a previously unheard of name. [[Vanity Fair, 8/02](#)] Their demands include the return of US-held Pakistani prisoners and the departure of US journalists from Pakistan. [[ABC News, 2/7/02](#)] Most unusually, they demand that the US sell F-16 fighters to Pakistan. No terrorist group had ever shown interest in the F-16's, but this demand and the others reflect the desires of Pakistan's military and the ISI. [[London Times, 4/21/02](#), [Guardian, 7/16/02](#)] On January 29, "a senior Pakistani official" presumably from the ISI leaks the fact that Pearl is Jewish to the Pakistani press. This may have been an attempt to ensure the kidnapers would want to murder him, which they do shortly thereafter. [[Vanity Fair, 8/02](#)] On the same day, it is reported that US intelligence believes the kidnapers are connected to the ISI. [[UPI, 1/29/02](#)] Secretary of State Powell will later say there is no connection between the kidnapers and the ISI.

January 31, 2002: Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl is murdered by his kidnapers in Pakistan. Pearl is reported dead on February 21; his body is found months later. Police investigators say "there were at least eight to ten people present on the scene" and at least 15 who participated in his kidnapping and murder. "Despite issuing a series of political demands shortly after Pearl's abduction four weeks ago, it now seems clear that the kidnapers planned to kill Pearl all along." [[Washington Post, 2/23/02](#)] Some captured participants later claim 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed is the one who cuts Pearl's throat.

February 5, 2002: Pakistani police, with the help of the FBI, determine Saeed Sheikh is behind the kidnapping of Daniel Pearl, but are unable to find him. They round up about ten of his relatives and threaten to harm them unless he turns himself in. Saeed Sheikh does turn himself in, but to Ijaz Shah, his former ISI boss. [[Boston Globe, 2/7/02](#), [Vanity Fair, 8/02](#)] The ISI holds Saeed for a week, but fails to tell Pakistani police or anyone else that they have him. This "missing week" is the cause of much speculation. The ISI never tells Pakistani police any details about this week. [[Newsweek, 3/11/02](#)] Saeed also later refuses to discuss the week or his connection

to the ISI, only saying, "I will not discuss this subject. I do not want my family to be killed." He adds, "I know people in the government and they know me and my work." [Newsweek, 3/13/02, Vanity Fair, 8/02] It is suggested Saeed is held for this week to make sure that Pearl was killed. Saeed later says that during this week he got a coded message from the kidnappers that Pearl had been murdered. Also, the time might have been spent working out a deal with the ISI over what Saeed would tell police and the public. [Newsweek, 3/11/02] Several others with both extensive ISI and al-Qaeda ties wanted for the kidnapping are arrested around this time. [Washington Post, 2/23/02, London Times, 2/25/02] One of these men, Khalid Khawaja, "has never hidden his links with Osama bin Laden. At one time he used to fly Osama's personal plane." [PakNews, 2/11/02]

February 12, 2002: Saeed Sheikh, already in ISI custody for a week, is handed over to Pakistani police. Shortly afterwards, he publicly confesses to his involvement in reporter Daniel Pearl's murder. Later he will recant this confession. It appears that initially he thought he would get a light sentence. Newsweek describes him initially "confident, even cocky," saying he would only serve three to four years if convicted, and would never be extradited. [Newsweek, 3/11/02] He is in fact sentenced to hang instead. Pakistani militants respond to his arrest with three suicide attacks that kill more than 30 people. [Guardian, 7/16/02]

July 15, 2002: Saeed Sheikh and three codefendants are judged guilty for the murder of reporter Daniel Pearl. Saeed, the supposed mastermind of the murder, is sentenced to death by hanging, and the others are given 25-year terms. Saeed threatens the judge with retribution

Islamabad Church

Mar 17, 2002 At least five people -- two Americans, one Pakistani, one Afghan and an unidentified person -- were killed and more than 40 wounded when unknown assailants hurled grenades into a church in the heavily guarded diplomatic enclave in Islamabad.

Islamabad police chief Nasir Durrani told reporters at the scene that the blasts happened at about 10:50 a.m. local time, when the Protestant International Church, located about a half-mile from the U.S. Embassy, was crowded with between 60 and 70 people. "So far five persons are dead and around 45 are injured," he said. "The church was used by foreigners of all nationalities." Witnesses said one or two men entered the back of the church as the service was ending and hurled grenades at the congregation of about 70 people. The Associated Press quoted an American citizen as saying, "I saw two men come into the back of the church into the main sanctuary and threw what looked like hand grenades." Police officials said that three of the dead were women or young girls.

Tunisia Synagogue

April 11, 2002: A truck bomb kills 19 people in a Djerba, Tunisia, synagogue, most of them German tourists. It is later claimed that al-Qaeda is behind the attack, and that the suspected bomber speaks with 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed by phone about three hours before the attack. [AP, 8/24/02]

Apr 11, 2002 A truck filled with natural gas crashed into a wall surrounding a historic synagogue on the Tunisian resort island of Djerba. Five people were reported killed in the blast and fourteen more people succumbed to injuries in hospital. At least sixteen German tourists were among the dead. The blast took place outside the famous Ghriba synagogue, a popular tourist site on Djerba. The Ghriba synagogue annually draws thousands of Jews from all over the world and is built on the foundations of one of the oldest synagogues in Africa. The site was open to visitors at the time of the blast.

The Tunisian government initially characterized the explosion as an accident. However, it is now believed that the crash was a suicide attack.

French Naval Project

May 8, 2002 A suspected suicide bomber killed at least 15 people outside a tourist hotel in Karachi, Pakistan. Eleven of the dead were French nationals working on a joint Pakistani-French naval project. The attack occurred at about 8:00 Wednesday morning, and targeted a Pakistani navy bus parked outside the Sheraton Hotel. The bus had picked up a group of French workers at another hotel, before making a routine stop at the Sheraton. Witnesses said the bomber pulled along side the shuttle bus, tires screeching. Seconds later a thunderous explosion split the air, ripping the bus to shreds, blowing out windows of nearby buildings and spreading shrapnel over a wide area. The bomber, the bus driver and a bystander died along with the Frenchmen. At least 23 others, including at least 12 French nationals, were hospitalized after the blast, according to Pakistani officials. Targeted attack or random terrorism? The French victims were engineers at France's state-owned naval construction service who were building an Agosta submarine, purchased by Pakistan from France. The engineers, mostly from Cherbourg in Normandy, were part of a team of 38 submarine engineers employed by the Defense Ministry. The French had already completed one submarine for Pakistan, and are working on two others, under a 1994 contract between the French Defense Ministry's Direction de Construction Navale and Pakistan. Only a few of the original team are expected remain in Pakistan. Security forces in Pakistan and France are now investigating whether the French engineers were the intended targets of the attack. Officials from France's Department of Defense said they had not received any threats against French citizens. Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf invited French authorities to assist in the investigation. French President Jacques Chirac condemned the attack and dispatched his newly appointed defense minister to Pakistan. "By attacking the French citizens working on defense projects, they attempted to weaken Pakistan's defense capabilities," Musharraf said. Pakistan's Interior Ministry said that anti-terrorism experts from the United States and Japan had also been asked to join the probe. Musharraf appealed for understanding of "our domestic environment resulting from our cooperation against international terrorism. ... Pakistan will do, and already is doing, all it can to combat international terrorism," he said. Possible al-Qaida link Although there has as yet been no claim of responsibility for the blast, security officials suspect it to be the work of internal Pakistani Islamists, possibly with ties to al-Qaida. A number of these groups have vowed revenge for Musharraf's decision to throw his weight behind the U.S.-led campaign against al-Qaida and its Taliban sponsors. While the Pakistani government had previously supported Islamic radical groups fighting in Kashmir and Afghanistan, since the start of the war in Afghanistan, Musharraf has outlawed five of the main militant groups. Organizations like Jaish Mohammed and Harakat ul-Mujahedin have strong ties to Osama bin Ladin's organization. A number of al-Qaida leaders are believed to have slipped across the porous Pakistani border to find shelter with supporters of Islamist radical groups. French armed forces chief of staff General Jean-Pierre Kelche said there was a "significant likelihood" that al-Qaida was responsible. He noted that the bombers had targeted the West in general and had specifically singled out countries participating in the U.S.-led multinational coalition fighting in Afghanistan. France has provided logistic assistance and contributed Mirage jets to the campaign. A U.S. official quoted by CNN said that while the bombing was "not necessarily" the work of al-Qaida, Pakistani radical groups typically have not used bus bombings as a method of attack. "There hasn't been a car or bus bombing in Pakistan in years," the official said, adding that Pakistani extremists usually use small arms, grenades or small explosives. He added that the size of the bomb, together with the fact that it was a suicide operation tended to differentiate it from the usual type of terrorism common in Karachi.

Dirty Bomber

June 10, 2002: Attorney General Ashcroft announces the arrest of Abdullah al-Mujahir, a.k.a. Jose Padilla. He claims that Padilla was part of an al-Qaeda plot to detonate a radioactive "dirty bomb" in a US city, and supposedly Padilla was scouting bomb targets when arrested. Padilla, a US citizen, is being held as an "enemy combatant," allowing him to be held indefinitely. [[Guardian 6/11/02](#), [PBS Newshour, 6/11/02](#)]

U.S. Consulate, Karachi

Jun 14, 2002 A powerful car bomb blast outside the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, Pakistan killed at least eleven people and wounded more than 40. Police said the bombing appeared to have been a suicide bombing, similar to the one that killed 14 people in Karachi last month. The bomb was believed to have been concealed in a white van, which drove up to the Consulate at 11:08 Friday morning. The driver crashed the vehicle into a police kiosk at the southern end of the consulate, then into a concrete security barrier meant to stop vehicular traffic from entering the compound. The resulting explosion destroyed part of the security wall around the consulate, shattered windows several blocks away, and left a large crater in the road. Witnesses said that parts of the vehicle, mixed with human remains were spread over a 200 meter radius. A police surgeon quoted by the Associated Press, said that ten fatalities had been identified by relatives or colleagues, and that the eleventh body was believed to be the bomber. The victims included four Pakistani police constables, a male passer-by, and four women, police said. Three of the women had just finished a driver's education course and were getting their licenses. A U.S. Embassy spokesman in Islamabad said that none of the American employees were killed, but that one U.S. Marine security guard and five Pakistani employees suffered minor injuries. The consulate was down to a skeleton staff, after the U.S. withdrew all nonessential personnel due to the threat of possible terrorist attacks. In the wake of Friday's attack, the U.S. government has temporarily closed its consular and cultural facilities in Pakistan.

Murree Christian School

Aug 5, 2002 A small band of Islamic gunmen broke into a boarding school for Christian children in the foothills of the Pakistani Himalayas, killing six people. None of the children were hurt in the attack, though three school employees and two security guards were among the dead. The assault on the Murree Christian School, in a mountain resort area some 50 kilometers North of Islamabad, was the third against Christians in Pakistan since last fall. It was also the sixth attack against a Western target in Pakistan since the beginning of the U.S. campaign in Afghanistan. The school, founded in 1956 to educate children of missionaries in South Asia, shut down soon after the Sept. 11 attacks but re-opened in February. Some 130 students from Australia, the U.S., and Europe live at the school. Recent security changes prevented a massacre "It's a miracle," said David Wood, a teacher from Scotland who lay on the floor of his classroom with a student and prayed during the assault, which lasted 10 to 15 minutes. He said that the school officials, concerned over the possibility of such an attack, had recently begun fortifying the school. The main gate had been strengthened and walls and doors reinforced. Students and teachers had even practised emergency drills, during which they barricaded classroom doors and took shelter under desks. Such precautions may have prevented a major tragedy Monday, when four to five gunmen shot their way into the school and launched a determined assault. Attackers attempted to break into school buildings. The assailants, clean-shaven and dressed in Western clothes approached the front gate, where one of the guards had just left his post to obtain an entry permit for a guest. The attackers pulled kalashnikov automatic rifles from their gym bags and gunned down the remaining guard and a bystander. Witnesses said the men then put scarves over their noses

and mouths, split into pairs and began slowly searching the campus. A receptionist coming out of a building was shot dead, and the mother of one of the students was wounded. Meanwhile students and staff barricaded themselves inside the buildings. According to David Wood, one of the intruders attempted to enter the high school building, where more than 80 students and a dozen teachers were hiding. Finding the door locked, the gunmen eventually gave up and went in search of other targets. Outside, after a brief exchange of fire, a school security guard was shot and killed. The intruders also attempted to enter a building housing preschoolers, but was baulked by the quick thinking of a school administrator, who had entered the building through a side door and locked the main entrance. That door too, held out against the attackers. Witnesses said that the gunmen, unable to enter the school buildings, walked around outside firing into windows before heading for the surrounding forest. There they came upon the two school employees --a cook and a carpenter -- hiding among the trees. Both were shot dead before the gunmen scaled the perimeter fence and disappeared into the forest. According to the school staff, Pakistani police officers and soldiers arrived after the gunmen had fled. Zia-ul-Hassan Butt, the head of the security firm protecting the school was quoted by the New York Times as saying that the intruders were "very professional" and "well trained" and appeared to have carried out surveillance. "They knew what they were looking for," said Butt, himself a former Pakistani Army officer. A bag found outside the school fence held an ammunition clip for an assault rifle. Elsewhere, police recovered grenades, knives and ammunition abandoned by the gunmen. Also found was a note warning that the militants intended to "do more in the future to avenge what is being done by infidels with Muslims all over the world." "It would appear that they had every intention of staying a lot longer and doing a lot more damage," school director Russell Morton told New Zealand's National Radio. On Tuesday, the school's board met in an emergency session to consider whether to close, but did not announce a decision. Meanwhile classes were suspended and some of the students sent home to their families.

Limberg Tanker "Accident"

Oct 6, 2002 At 09:15 A.M, an explosion detonated on the French tanker, Limburg, off the coast of Yemen. Yemeni officials at first called the incident an "accident," rather than an act of terrorism. The French included this possibility, although there were stronger suspicions as a terror attack as being the real cause for the blast. Amongst the 25 French and Bulgarian crew members, 17 were rescued and brought to a hospital. The captain of the Limburg said that a small boat had approached the tanker before the explosion occurred. The Bahrain-based Maritime Liaison Office had issued the month before warnings concerning tankers' safety in the region, against possible attacks connected to Bin Laden's group.

Bali

October 12, 2002: A car bomb detonates in front of a discotheque at Kuta Beach, on the Indonesian resort island of Bali, starting a fire that rages through a dozen buildings, killing 202 people. No group claims responsibility, but Jemmah Islamiyah, a radical Islamic organization in Indonesia, is suspected. [[New York Times, 10/13/02](#), [New York Times, 10/14/02](#), [BBC, 2/19/03](#)]

Oct 12, 2002 Carbomb targets popular nightclub The blasts targeted two popular nightclubs in the Kuta Beach tourist area, a destination popular with tourists. The majority of the casualties are reportedly international visitors. Results of an initial investigation indicate that at least one of the blasts originated in car bombs. Indonesian national police chief Gen. Da'i Bachtiar said the first bomb exploded in a Kijanj, a jeep-like vehicle. CNN quoted a reporter at the scene as saying that the first explosion tore through a crowded nightclub at about 23:00 local time, and then, as people fled the scene, another larger blast tore through the Sari Club, which is usually crowded with tourists. The damage was extensive; an entire city block was destroyed

by the blast and subsequent fire that swept through the area. Witnesses said that the flames spread quickly, engulfing a dozen nearby buildings and destroying parked cars. An official with the American Chamber of Commerce said the explosion rattled windows at least 10 km away. Another explosion occurred several minutes later near the U.S. consular office on Bali, but there were no reports of casualties. Identification of victims difficult Among the dead, injured and missing are nationals from Australia, Britain, France, Germany, New Zealand, Sweden and Indonesia. Identifying victims has proven difficult, with many bodies charred beyond recognition. Only three bodies have been identified. Bali is a popular holiday destination, particularly with Australians. Many of the tourists in Bali over the weekend were attending an international rugby tournament. Australian officials said that many Australians were believed to have been killed in the blasts, but that no numbers were available. "The place was packed, and it went up within a millisecond," Simon Quayle, the coach of an Australian rules football team, told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio. Quayle, whose team was visiting Bali and at the resort at the time of the blast, said he made it safely out of the building but eight of his 19 players were missing. The Australian air force sent emergency teams to Bali on Sunday to take some of the injured to hospitals in Australia, and an RAAF aircraft had left Richmond Air Base in New South Wales. Terror warnings preceded attack There have been no claims of responsibility, but officials are examining the possibility that the blasts were carried out by what they called "foreign operatives," a phrase usually referring to al-Qaida militants. The blasts came three days after the U.S. State Department issued a worldwide alert for terror attacks and highlighted fears by the United States and others that Indonesia — the most populous Muslim nation — is becoming a haven for terrorists linked to al-Qaida. Indonesian government has come under increasing criticism for failing to crack down on radical Muslim groups for fear of upsetting mainstream Muslims. Experts warn that key leaders of the Jemaah Islamiya group are operating freely in Indonesia. The organization, which has become a local arm of al-Qaida, was responsible for recent attempts to bomb Western interests in Singapore. On Thursday, the State Department warned American diplomatic facilities abroad about the possibility of a terrorist attack by al-Qaida network. The alert followed the release of an audiotape, believed to be the voice of Ayman al-Zawahiri, one of bin Laden's top lieutenants, warning of future attacks by al-Qaida. Intelligence officials had also warned of the possibility of al-Qaida attacks targeting Australian citizens, both in Australia and abroad.

Lawrence Foley Assassination

Oct 28, 2002 Lawrence Foley, who worked for the American Development Agency was shot dead eight times as he was walking out of his home to his car in a residential suburb of Amman.

Kenya Attacks

November 28, 2002: Three suicide bombers detonate their explosives outside a resort hotel in Mombasa, Kenya. Terrorists also fire shoulder-launched missiles unsuccessfully at a passenger jet. [[New York Times, 11/30/02](#)] The death toll reaches 16. [[CNN, 12/1/02](#)] Al-Qaeda purportedly claims responsibility a few days later. [[CNN, 12/2/02](#)]

Nov 28, 2002 An explosion occurred in the lobby of a hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, where many Israelis were staying. Israeli hotel guests said there were casualties, including wounded children. Officials said that 13 people are confirmed dead, including three Israelis and ten Kenyans. A Kenyan official interviewed on Israel Radio said that a Landrover with three men in it pulled up behind a bus carrying tourists. As the hotel guards opened the gate for the bus, the Landrover passed the bus and crashed into the front of the hotel and exploded. The Paradise hotel is Israeli-owned, and almost all of the guests were Israeli families vacationing in Kenya. Some of the wounded were taken to a nearby small hospital. Families of the injured said

that they were waiting for Israeli officials to evacuate the wounded to hospitals in Israel. An Israeli Foreign Ministry official said that Israeli rescue forces were already preparing to fly to Mombassa.

Two shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missile were fired at an Israeli passenger plane with more than 270 passengers and 10 crew members aboard. Crew members aboard the Arkia charter plane reported seeing a flash of light on the left side of the aircraft shortly after takeoff from the airport in Mombassa at 7:00 this morning. The aircraft belonging to the Arkia charter company was lightly damaged, but no one aboard was hurt, Israel TV's Channel Two said. The crew had initially prepared for an emergency landing in Nairobi, but then decided to continue to Israel after a systems check. Ground crews confirmed that what appeared to be missiles were fired from the ground. A Kenyan official said that authorities were searching for three men in a white Pajero SUV, who are believed to have fired the missiles. Israel's national airline, El Al has canceled all flights from foreign airports in light of the events in Kenya this morning, Israel Radio reported.

Operation Enduring Freedom

September 22, 2001-December 2001: Witnesses begin to report US military planes secretly landing at night in the Central Asian nations of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The US, Tajik, and Uzbek governments initially deny that any US troops have been sent there. [[Telegraph, 9/23/01](#), [AP, 9/25/01 \(D\)](#)] By October 5, witnesses say a "huge military buildup" has already occurred. [[Telegraph, 10/4/01](#)] On October 7, the US and Uzbekistan sign a secret agreement that reportedly is "a long-term commitment to advance security and regional stability." [[Financial Times, 10/13/01](#)] It is later reported that the US military bases here, "originally agreed as temporary and emergency expedients, are now permanent." [[Guardian, 1/16/02](#)] The US begins building a military base in the nearby country of Kyrgyzstan in December 2001. "There are no restrictions" in the agreement on what the US can do with this base, and it will be a "transportation hub" for the whole region. [[New York Times, 1/9/02](#)] The base is only 200 miles from China. [[Christian Science Monitor, 1/17/02](#)] The building of these bases is the culmination of efforts begun long before 9/11.

October 5, 2001 (B): 1,000 US soldiers are sent to the Central Asian nation of Uzbekistan, which borders Afghanistan. [[AP, 8/19/02](#)]

October 7, 2001 (B): The US begins bombing Afghanistan. [[MSNBC, 11/01](#)] Note that shortly after 9/11 former Pakistani Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik claimed that in July 2001 he was told by senior US officials that a military action to overthrow the Taliban in Afghanistan would "take place before the snows started falling in Afghanistan, by the middle of October at the latest".

October 19, 2001: US Special Forces begin ground attacks in Afghanistan. [[MSNBC, 11/01](#)] However, during the Afghanistan war, US ground soldiers are mainly employed as observers, liaisons, and spotters for air power to assist the Northern Alliance - not as direct combatants. [[Christian Science Monitor, 3/4/02](#)]

November 9, 2001: The Taliban abandon the strategic northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif, allowing the Northern Alliance to take control. [[AP, 8/19/02](#)] The rest of Northern Afghanistan is abandoned by the Taliban in the next few days, except the city of Kunduz, to which most of the Taliban flee. Kunduz falls on

November 25, but not before most of the thousands of fighters there are airlifted out. [[New Yorker, 1/21/02](#)]

November 13, 2001: Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, falls to the Northern Alliance. The Taliban abandon the rest of the country over the next few weeks. [[BBC, 11/13/01](#)] As

the New Yorker reports, "The initial American aim in Afghanistan had been not to eliminate the Taliban's presence there entirely but to undermine the regime and al-Qaeda while leaving intact so-called moderate Taliban elements that would play a role in a new postwar government. This would insure that Pakistan would not end up with a regime on its border dominated by the Northern Alliance." The surprisingly quick fall of Kabul ruins this plan. [[New Yorker, 1/21/02](#)]

November 14, 2001: The Northern Alliance capture the Afghan city of Jalalabad. [[Sydney Morning Herald, 11/14/01](#)] That night, a convoy of 1,000 or more al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters escape from Jalalabad and reach the fortress of Tora Bora after hours of driving and then walking. Bin Laden is believed to be with them, riding in one of "several hundred cars" in the convoy. The US bombs the nearby Jalalabad airport, but apparently not the convoy. [[Knight-Ridder, 10/20/02](#), [Christian Science Monitor, 3/4/02](#)]

November 25, 2001: US troops land near the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar, Afghanistan. [[AP, 8/19/02](#)] Apparently, as the noose tightens around Kandahar, new Afghanistan head Hamid Karzai makes a deal with the Taliban, giving them a general amnesty in return for surrender of the city. Taliban's leader Mullah Omar is allowed to escape "with dignity" as part of the deal. But the US says it won't abide by the deal and Karzai then says he won't let Omar go free after all. Taliban forces begin surrendering on December 7. [[Sydney Morning Herald, 12/8/01](#)] But Omar does escape.

Tora Bora

Early November 2001 (B): Starting in late October, US intelligence reports begin noting that al-Qaeda fighters and leaders are moving into and around the Afghanistan city of Jalalabad. By early November, bin Laden is there. Knight-Ridder newspapers report: "American intelligence analysts concluded that bin Laden and his retreating fighters were preparing to flee across the border. But the US Central Command, which was running the war, made no move to block their escape. 'It was obvious from at least early November that this area was to be the base for an exodus into Pakistan,' said one intelligence official, who spoke only on condition of anonymity. 'All of this was known, and frankly we were amazed that nothing was done to prepare for it.'" The vast majority of leaders and fighters are eventually able to escape into Pakistan. [[Knight-Ridder, 10/20/02](#)]

November 15, 2001 (B): Al-Qaeda leader Mohammed Atef is believed to have been killed in a US bombing raid on Afghanistan. Atef is considered al-Qaeda's military commander, and one of its top leaders. [[State Department, 11/16/01](#), [ABC News, 11/17/01](#)]

November 16, 2001 (B): According to Newsweek, approximately 600 al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters escape Afghanistan on this day. Many senior leaders are in the group. They had walked a long trek from bombing in the Tora Bora region. There are two main routes out of the Tora Bora cave complex to Pakistan. The US bombed only one route, so the 600 escaped unattacked using the other route. Hundreds continue to use the escape route for weeks, generally unbothered by US bombing or Pakistani border guards. US officials later privately admit they lost a golden opportunity to close a trap. [[Newsweek, 8/11/02](#)] On the same day, the media reports that the US is studying routes bin Laden might use to escape Tora Bora [[Los Angeles Times, 11/16/01](#)], but the one escape route isn't closed, and apparently bin Laden and others escape into Pakistan using this route weeks later. High-ranking British officers will later privately complain that "American commanders had vetoed a proposal to guard the high-altitude trails, arguing that the risks of a firefight, in deep snow, gusting winds and low-slung clouds, were too high." [[New York Times, 9/30/02](#)]

November 25, 2001 (B): It is believed bin Laden makes a speech before a crowd of about 1,000 followers in the village of Milawa, Afghanistan. This village is on the route from Tora Bora to the Pakistani border, about eight to 10 hours by walking. In his last known public appearance, bin Laden encourages the followers to leave Afghanistan, so they could regroup and fight again. [Knight-Ridder, 10/20/02] It is believed he leaves the country a few days later.. [Telegraph, 2/23/02]

December 17, 2001: Northern Alliance forces declare that the battle of Tora Bora, with a ground assault begun on December 5, has been won. However, in retrospect, the battle is considered a failure because most of the enemy escapes. The Afghan war ends with the elimination of the last major pocket of Taliban/al-Qaeda resistance. [Christian Science Monitor, 3/4/02]

Current Status of Leadership

USAMA BIN LADEN, Saudi, supreme leader: At large, on FBI Most Wanted Terrorists list.

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHRI, Egyptian, bin Laden's doctor, spiritual adviser: At large, on FBI Most Wanted Terrorist list.

MOHAMMED ATEF, Egyptian, military chief: Killed in U.S. airstrike.

KHALID SHAIKH MOHAMMED, Kuwaiti, suspected mastermind of Sept. 11 attacks: Captured.

ABU ZUBAYDAH, Palestinian-Saudi, terrorist coordinator: Captured.

SAIF AL-ADIL, Egyptian, bin Laden security chief: At large, on FBI Most Wanted Terrorist list.

SHAIKH SAIID AL-MASRI, Egyptian, bin Laden chief financier: At large.

ABD AL-RAHIM AL-NASHIRI, Saudi, Persian Gulf operations chief: Captured.

TAWFIQ ATTASH KHALLAD, Yemeni, operational leader, suspected mastermind of USS Cole bombing in October 2000: Captured.

QAED SALIM SINAN AL-HARETHI, Yemeni, Yemen operations chief: Killed in U.S. airstrike.

OMAR AL-FAROUQ, Kuwaiti, Southeast Asia operations chief: Captured.

IBN AL-SHAYKH AL-LIBI, Libyan, training camp commander: Captured.

SAAD BIN LADEN, Saudi, bin Laden's son: At large.

ABU MOHAMMAD AL-MASRI, Egyptian, training camp commander: At large, on FBI Most Wanted Terrorist list as Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah.

TARIQ ANWAR AL-SAYYID AHMAD, Egyptian, operational planner: Killed in U.S. airstrike.

MOHAMMED SALAH, Egyptian, operational planner: Killed in U.S. airstrike.

ABD AL-HADI AL-IRAQI, training camp commander: Captured.

ABU MUSAB ZARQAWI, Jordanian, operational planner: At large.

ABU ZUBAIR AL-HAILI, Saudi, operational planner: Captured.

ABU HAFS THE MAURITANIAN, operational and spiritual leader: At large.

SULAIMAN ABU GHAITH, Kuwaiti, al-Qaida spokesman: At large.

MOHAMMED OMAR ABDEL-RAHMAN, Egyptian, operational planner and trainer: At large.

MIDHAT MURSI, Egyptian, chemical and bioweapons researcher: At large.

MOHAMMED JAMAL KHALIFA, Saudi, financier: At large.

SAAD AL-SHARIF, Saudi, financier: At large.

MUSTAFA AHMED AL-HISAWI: Sept. 11 financier: At large.

HAMZA AL-QATARI, financier: Killed.

AHMAD SAID AL-KADR, Egyptian-Canadian, financier: At large.

ZAID KHAYR, operational leader: At large.

ABU SALAH AL-YEMENI: logistics, Killed.

ABU JAFAR AL-JAZIRI, aide to Abu Zubaydah: Killed.

ABU BASIR AL-YEMENI, Yemeni, aide to Osama bin Laden: At large.

ABD AL-AZIZ AL-JAMAL, aide to al-Zawahri: At large.
RAMZI BINALSHIBH, Yemeni, planner and organizer of Sept. 11 attacks: Captured.
ZACARIAS MOUSSAOUI, charged as conspirator with Sept. 11 hijackers: Captured.
ZAKARIYA ESSABAR, member of cell with chief Sept. 11 hijacker Mohamed Atta: At large.
SAID BAHAJI, member of cell with chief Sept. 11 hijacker Mohamed Atta: At large.

March 28, 2002: FBI agents and Pakistani police commandos raid a house in the city of Faisalabad, Pakistan, and capture al-Qaeda leader Abu Zubaida. He's shot three times but survives. [[New York Times, 4/14/02](#)] Many documents are found that lead to the indictment of 100 more people. [[Newsweek, 9/4/02](#)] US intelligence found his location by tracing his phone calls. [[New York Times, 4/14/02](#)] He has since given the US useful information on 9/11 and other al-Qaeda plans. [[Newsweek, 9/4/02](#)] Zubaida is considered one of the highest in al-Qaeda's leadership and the highest ranking prisoner captured by the US so far. [[New York Times, 4/14/02](#)] It is believed that 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed takes over Zubaida's tasks. [[Asia Times, 9/11/02](#)]

August 29, 2002: German authorities charge a Moroccan man named Mounir El Motassadeq with complicity in the 9/11 attacks. He is a Moroccan who was arrested in Germany two months after 9/11. He is only the second person in the world to be charged with any crime related to the 9/11 attacks, after Moussaoui. He is charged with helping finance Atta and others in the Hamburg terrorist cell (see [August 1998](#)). [[AFP, 8/29/02](#), [New York Times, 8/29/02](#)] His trial lasts three months, ending with a guilty verdict in February 2003 ([February 18, 2003](#)).

September 11, 2002: Would-be hijacker Ramzi bin al-Shibh is arrested after a huge gunfight in Karachi, Pakistan, involving thousands of police. [[Observer, 9/15/02](#)] He is considered "a high-ranking operative for al-Qaeda and one of the few people still alive who know the inside details of the 9/11 plot." [[New York Times, 9/13/02](#)] 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed called bin al-Shibh "the coordinator of the Holy Tuesday [9/11] operation" in an interview aired days before (see [September 8-11, 2002](#)). Captured with him are approximately nine associates, as well as numerous computers, phones and other evidence. [[Time, 9/15/02](#), [New York Times, 9/13/02](#)] There are conflicting claims that Mohammed is killed in the raid [[Christian Science Monitor, 10/29/02](#), [Asia Times, 10/30/02](#), [Daily Telegraph, 3/4/03](#), [Asia Times, 3/6/03](#)], shot while escaping [[Australian Broadcasting Corp., 3/2/03](#)], someone who looks like him is killed, leading to initial misidentification [[Time, 1/20/03](#)], someone matching his general appearance is captured [[AP, 9/16/02](#)], or that he narrowly escapes capture and his young children are captured. [[Los Angeles Times, 12/22/02](#)] It is widely reported that Mohammed is captured in March 2003, but some reporters and experts doubt this, suggesting he was captured earlier (see [March 1, 2003](#)).

February 18, 2003: Mounir El Motassadeq, an alleged member of Mohamed Atta's Hamburg al-Qaeda cell, is convicted in Germany of accessory to murder in the 9/11 attacks (see also [August 29, 2002](#)). His is given the maximum sentence of 15 years. [[AP, 2/19/03](#)] Motassadeq, admitted varying degrees of contact with Mohamed Atta, Marwan Alshehhi, Ramzi bin al-Shibh, Said Bahaji, Ziad Jarrah and Zakariya Essabar, admitted he had been given power of attorney over Alshehhi's bank account, and admitted attending an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan from May to August 2000, but he claimed he had nothing to do with 9/11 (see also [August 1998](#) and [Mid-June 1999](#)). [[New York Times, 10/24/02](#)] The conviction is the first related to 9/11, but as the Independent puts it, "there are doubts whether there will ever be a second." This is because intelligence agencies have been reluctant to turn over evidence, or give access to requested witnesses. In Motassadeq's case, his lawyers tried several times unsuccessfully to obtain testimony by two of his friends,

Ramzi Binalshibh and Mohammed Haydar Zammar - a lack of evidence that could be grounds for an appeal. German intelligence also failed to turn over evidence on those two, again, making an appeal likely. [[Independent, 2/20/03](#)]

March 1, 2003: 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed is reportedly arrested in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. [[AP, 3/1/03](#)] He is reported arrested in a late-night joint Pakistani and FBI raid that also captures Mustafa Ahmed Al-Hawsawi, said to be the main money man behind the 9/11 attacks. [[MSNBC, 3/3/03](#)] However, there are serious doubts that Mohammed or Al-Hawsawi (who might not even exist) were at the house when it was raided. Mohammed has previously been reported arrested or killed

The following report appeared in the winter 2002 edition of the journal "Terrorism and Political Violence." [1] It was authored by Dr. Nimrod Raphaeli, senior analyst of MEMRI's Middle East Economic Studies Program.

Few individuals have had a more central role in articulating and practicing terrorism than Ayman Al-Zawahiri.[2] Though born into the Egyptian aristocracy and trained as a surgeon, this gifted individual has always been attracted to the most extreme forms of Islam. In 1998 he brought his Egyptian Islamic Jihad organization into a union with the forces of Osama bin Laden, known as Al-Qa'ida (the base), in the effort to create a globalized network of terror whose capacities were demonstrated on September 11, 2001, as well as in the earlier destruction of the American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and in the damage inflicted on the USS Cole in the Gulf of Aden.

Introduction

Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri, a surgeon by profession, is the head of the Egyptian "Islamic Jihad" and second in command of the Al-Qa'ida organization. He is the intellectual and ideological force behind it and its leader, Osama bin Laden. Azzam Tamimi, director of the Institute of Islamic Political Thought in London, says Al-Zawahiri "is their ideologue... His ideas negate the existence of common ground with other Islamist groups." [3] Following the air attacks by the United States on the Al-Qa'ida bases in Afghanistan, and fearing that he might be killed, Al-Zawahiri was able to smuggle to England a short manuscript detailing the evolution and the travails of the Islamic Jihad and his association with the Islamist movements in Egypt and, ultimately, with bin Laden. The book, titled "Knights Under the Banner of the Prophet," with the subtitle "Reflections into the Jihad Movement," was serialized in the London-based, Saudi newspaper Al-Sharq Al-Awsat between December 2-12, 2001.[4] In addition, "a combination of happenstance and the opportunism of war" allowed a reporter of the Wall Street Journal to acquire for \$1100 in Kabul Al-Qa'ida computers left behind following the escape of their operators. The reporter was able to download hundreds of files regarding the organization, particularly concerning Al-Zawahiri's internal correspondence and mode of operation.[5]

A

I-Zawahiri - An Extremist Sui Generis

The Formative Years

Most rank-and-file members of the terrorist movement in Egypt, the Islamic Jihad, come from a peasant stock or from the slums of the Egypt's large cities, mired in poverty and driven by despair. Ayman Al-Zawahiri does not fall into a typical category of Egyptian extremists-- socially, economically or intellectually.[6] He comes from a distinguished family that seems never to have faced social or economic hardships; many of its members would be considered part of the elite in any society. Al-Zawahiri's family has its roots in the Harbi tribe from Zawahir, a small town in Saudi Arabia, located in the "Badr" area where the first battle between Prophet Muhammad and the infidels was fought and won by the Prophet.[7] Ayman Al-Zawahiri's great grandfather, Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Zawahiri came to Egypt in the 1860s and settled in the

city of Tanta in the Nile Delta where a mosque still bears his name. His grandfather, Sheikh Al-Ahmadi Al-Zawahiri was the Imam of Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo. His father, Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri was a professor of pharmacology at Ein Shams University who passed away in 1995. His maternal grandfather, Abd Al-Wahab Azzam, was a professor of oriental literature and president of Cairo University as well as the Egyptian ambassador to Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, and was so known for his piety that he was referred to as "the devout ambassador." His grandfather's brother, Abd Al-Rahman Azzam [pasha], became the first Secretary General of the Arab League. Ayman Al-Zawahiri was born on 1 June 1951, in Cairo's Al-Ma'adi neighborhood. After graduating in 1968 from the Al Ma'adi secondary school he enrolled in the medical college of Cairo University and graduated, cum laude, in 1974, with an MD degree. He received a master's degree in surgery in 1978 and was married in 1979 to Izzat Ahmad Nuwair who had graduated from Cairo University with a degree in philosophy but who met the criteria of "a devout wife." Al-Zawahiri's wife bore him one daughter in Cairo and at least three other daughters and a son elsewhere, but no information on his children is available.[8] He has two brothers -- Hassan, who studied engineering and lives outside Egypt, and Muhammad, who followed Ayman's path to Jihad and is reported to have vanished in Afghanistan.[9]

Becoming Islamist

At a young age, Al-Zawahiri began reading Islamist literature by such authors as Sayyid Qutb, abu Alaa Al Mawdudi and Hassan Al Nadwya. Sayyid Qutb was one of the spiritual leaders of Islamic religious groups, especially the violent Jihad groups. While other Islamists at the time, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, were looking to change their societies from within, Qutb was an influence on Zawahiri and others like him, "to launch something wider." [10] But like most Islamists before him and after, Qutb's world views, defined in his book "Ma'alim 'Ala Al-Tariq (Signposts on the Road), published in 1957, was predicated on a perfect dichotomy between believers and infidels, between Shari'a (Islamic law) and the law of the infidels, between tradition and decadence and between violent change and sham legitimacy. To quote Qutb himself, "In the world there is only one party, the party of Allah; all of the others are parties of Satan and rebellion. Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of rebellion." In his book, Al-Zawahiri asserts that the Jihad movement had begun its march against the government in the mid-1960s when the Nasserite regime confined to prison 17,000 members of the Muslim Brotherhood and hanged Sayyid Qutb, the leading thinker of the movement at the time. At the age 15, Zawahiri joined "Jam'iyat Ansar al-Sunnah Al-Muhammadiyah," (The Association of the Followers of Muhammad's Path); [11] a "Salafi" (Islamic fundamentalist) movement led by Sheikh Mustafa Al-Fiqqi, but soon left it to join the Jihad movement. By the age of 16, he was an active member of a Jihad cell headed by Sa'id Tantawi. Tantawi trained Al-Zawahiri to assemble explosives and to use guns. In 1974, the group split because the group declared Tantawi's brother as kafir (infidel) because he fought under the banner of kuffar or infidels which characterized the Egyptian army. In 1975, after the split, Tantawi went to Germany (and is said to have disappeared) and Ayman took over the leadership of the cell. He immediately organized a military wing under Issam Al-Qamari, an active officer in the Egyptian army at the time (Al-Qamari became Al-Zawahiri's closest friend and ally. In his book, Al-Zawahiri as I Knew Him, lawyer Muntasir Al-Zayyat maintains that under torture of the Egyptian police, following his arrest in connection with the murder of President Sadat, Al-Zawahiri revealed the hiding place of Al-Qamari which led to his arrest and eventual execution). Al-Zawahiri's extreme caution and secretive nature spared him the attention of police. To aid their secrecy the group avoided growing beards like most Islamists, and hence they were known as "the shaven beards."

The Radicalization of Al-Zawahiri

The defeat of Egypt in the Six-Day War of 1967 has further radicalized Al-Zawahiri and his generation. As he points out in his memoirs: "The most important event that influenced the Jihad movement in Egypt was the "Naksa" (or "the Setback") of 1967. The idol, Gamal Abd Al-Nasser, fell. His followers tried to portray him to the people as if he was the eternal leader who could never be defeated. The tyrant leader who used to threaten and pledge in his speeches to wipe out his enemies turned into a winded man chasing a peaceful solution to save at least a little face." Abd Al-Nasser was consumed by termites and he fell on his face amid the panic of his followers. The Jihad movement got stronger, realizing that the enemy was nothing but an idol created by the propaganda machine and the tyrannical campaigns against innocent people. The Nasserist movement was knocked out when Gamal Abd Al-Nasser died three years after "the Setback" and after the destruction of the legend about the Arab nationalist leader who will throw Israel into the sea. Abd Al-Nasser's crowded funeral was nothing but evidence of the coma that the Egyptian people were living through. It was the farewell for a leader that the Egyptians soon replaced with a new leader who took them to another direction and started to sell them a new illusion.[12] At the age of 24, Al-Zawahiri's intellectual development was greatly enhanced by Dr. Abdallah Azzam, a Palestinian, who came to Egypt to study at Al-Azhar University. His studies at Al-Azhar convinced Azzam of the role of Islamic Jihad as the solution to social and political problems. Azzam would become the spiritual leader of the movement of Arab and Muslim volunteers to the Jihad in Afghanistan, and the spiritual father of Osama bin Laden. (Azzam was blown up with his two sons in their car in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1989, and their murder has remained unsolved).[13] Al-Zawahiri's advancement in the Jihad movement was relatively rapid. In a recent book by Muhammad Salah on *The Afghani Arab Journey to Jihad*, the author considers Al-Zawahiri as a distinctive phenomenon. Not only was Zawahiri's background different from most radical Islamists but also his rapid rise to the top and his "heavy-weight impact on the thoughts of the various Islamic movements, in general, and on the Jihad Movement, in particular, was phenomenal." [14] Indeed, by the early 1970s, barely 20 years old, Al-Zawahiri had obtained the rank of "amir" (or leader of a group or front) when he was implicated in the murder of President Anwar al-Sadat.[15]

Sadat's Legacy and the Rise of Religious Extremism

When Anwar Al-Sadat had become President of Egypt upon the death of Gamal Abd Al-Nasser in September 1970, he envisioned Egypt as "The State of Science and Faith." After years of suppression by Nasser, Muslim organizations, in general, and the Muslim Brotherhood, in particular, were permitted, indeed encouraged, by Sadat to operate openly. In the words of Al-Zawahiri, "Sadat let the genie [the Jihad movement] out of the bottle." This was also "a time of political change from the Russian era to the American era" in the political life of Egypt.[16] Sadat himself was either a former member or sympathizer of the Muslim Brotherhood, and he had a soft spot for them. In fact, during the Sadat reign, Egypt underwent a process of clericalization, as measured by the number of hours devoted to religious programs in the official Egyptian media, particularly Egyptian television. In 1963, religious programming on television did not exceed 2.3% of televised time but it rapidly increased to 8.97% in 1973 and to 9.54% in 1980. In terms of programming hours, televised religious programs increased from 528 hours in 1973 to 754 hours in 1980/81 or to an average of about two hours a day. On Sadat's orders, the five daily Muslim prayers were televised live.[17] By the time the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood began emerging from long imprisonments imposed by the Nasser regime, many of them were now in their 50s and had lost touch with the Egyptian street, particularly with its young generation. In fact, the younger Islamists had already been drawn to the writings of Sayyid Qutb, whose book, *Ma'alim 'ala Al-Tariq* (referred to earlier), which was outlawed in Egypt, has become a primer for all radical Islamic movements. Sadat, who considered the Nasserites and the leftists as his

principal enemies, overlooked the looming danger from the Islamic extremist movements that were advocating the violent overthrow of the regime and the establishment of a new regime founded on fundamental Islamic principles. These radical Islamic movements, operating under Sadat's benevolence, would soon consume him. The Islamist movement itself lived to regret the assassination of Sadat which unleashed a severe reprisal against them. In the words of Al-Zawahiri: "After Sadat's assassination the torture started again, to write a new bloody chapter of the history of the Islamic movement in Egypt. The torture was brutal this time. Bones were broken, skin was removed, bodies were electrocuted and souls were killed, and they were so despicable in their methods. They used to arrest women, make sexual assaults, call men with women's names, withhold food and water and ban visits. And still this wheel is still turning until today... The Egyptian army turned its back toward Israel and directed its weapon against its people." [18] Although not directly involved in the planning for the assassination of Sadat (whom he characterizes as an American agent) Al-Zawahiri alleges that the attempt on Sadat's life was part of a larger plot to liquidate as many of Egyptian leaders as possible. In reality, no one but Sadat was assassinated. Al-Zawahiri also relates the attempt to assassinate President Husni Mubarak on his way to perform the Eid prayers in a mosque. The presidential motorcade took a different route and the attempt had failed. [19]

Al-Zawahiri Shifts His Vision and Activity Abroad

Al-Zawahiri's association with Afghanistan, which eventually led to his alliance with bin Laden, started a little over a year before his arrest in connection with the assassination of Sadat. While holding a temporary job in Al Sayyeda Zaynab clinic, operated by the Muslim Brotherhood in one of Cairo's poor areas, Al-Zawahiri was asked about going to Afghanistan to take part in a relief project. He found the request "a golden opportunity to get to know closely the field of Jihad, which could be a base for Jihad in Egypt and the Arab world, the heart of the Islamic world where real battle for Islam exists." [20] He spent the next 4 months in Peshawar, Pakistan. For him, this experience was providential because it opened his eyes to the wealth of opportunities for Jihad action in Afghanistan. His previous attempt to find a base for a Jihad movement in Egypt was not successful because, he says, "the Nile Valley falls between two vast deserts without vegetation or water which renders the area unsuitable for guerilla warfare, and which also made the Egyptian people submit to the central authority." Al-Zawahiri completed his prison term at the end of 1984. In his memoirs he writes that for personal reason he was unable to leave Egypt until 1986 to rejoin the jihad in Afghanistan. Thus, in 1986, he left Egypt for Saudi Arabia under a contract with Ibn Al-Nafis Hospital. However, he would soon depart to Pakistan to join the thousands of so-called Arab Afghans who flocked to Peshawar to help the Afghan Mujahedeen fight the war against the Soviet Union. In his second trip to Peshawar, he worked as a surgeon in the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Hospital. Eventually, he would go to the war zone for three months at a time to perform surgeries on wounded fighters, often with primitive tools and rudimentary medicines. At the same time, he opened the "Islamic Jihad" bureau in Peshawar to serve both as a liaison point for new Mujahedeen and a recruitment agency. Peshawar itself was both a gateway city and staging ground for the Mujahedeen. In Afghanistan, Al-Zawahiri would find the perfect place for his Jihad movement to gain "operational, military, political and organizational" experience. In Afghanistan, Muslim youth fought a war "to liberate a Muslim country under purely Muslim banners." For him, this was a significant matter because everywhere else wars were fought under "nationalist banners mingled with Islam and sometimes even with leftist and communist banners." The case of Palestine, he says, is a good example where banners got mingled and where the nationalists allied themselves with the devil and lost Palestine. For Al-Zawahiri, when wars are fought not under pure Islamic banners but rather under mixed banners, the boundaries between the loyalists and the enemies get confused in the eyes of the Muslim youth. Is it, he asks, the external enemy who occupies the

land of Islam or the internal enemy who prevents the rule of Islam and "spreads debauchery and decay under the banner of progress, freedom, nationalism and liberation?" In Afghanistan, the picture was very clear: "a Muslim people fighting [a Jihad] under the banner of Islam against an infidel external enemy supported by corrupt internal system." He went on to write: The most important thing about the battle in Afghanistan was that it destroyed the illusion of the superpower in the minds of the young Muslim Mujahedeen. The Soviet Union, the power with the largest land forces in the world, was destroyed and scattered, running away from Afghanistan before the eyes of the Muslim youth. This Jihad was a training course for Muslim youth for the future battle anticipated with the superpower which is the sole leader in the world now, America.[21]

The Struggle with Competing Islamist Groups

In 1988, three leaders of the Al-Jama'a Al-Islamiyya, which was in disagreement with Al-Zawahiri's Islamic Jihad, arrived in Peshawar from Egypt, headed by Muhammad Shawqi Al-Islambuli, the brother of Sadat's assassin, Khaled Al-Islambuli, to challenge Al-Zawahiri. The Al-Islambuli's group was funded by Saudi Arabia. Soon conflict erupted between these two extremist groups, the Jama'a and the Islamic Jihad, particularly with the publication of a magazine called "Al-Murabitoon" by Al-Jama'a, and another magazine, Al-Fath by Al-Zawahiri. Al-Murabitoon accused Al-Zawahiri of depositing in his Swiss bank account money he had collected to support the Mujahedeen. He was also accused of selling arms provided by bin Laden and using the proceeds to buy gold nuggets. In the face of these accusations, some relief agencies decided to cut off their aid to Al-Zawahiri, and the need for funds forced him to seek assistance from Iran. This move further alienated the Gulf countries, particularly, Saudi Arabia which henceforth channeled all its aid to Al-Jama'a. By the time the Soviet Union started pulling out of Afghanistan in 1992 the conflict between the two groups reached the stage of mutual accusation of Takfir, or apostasy, and individual acts of assassination. Al-Zawahiri emerged the winner from this conflict, largely because of bin Laden's support and because of the murder of Abdallah Azzam, the spiritual leader of bin Laden.

Militant Jihad: the New Paramount Ideology

In Peshawar, Al-Zawahiri drew a strict distinction between his movement, the Islamic Jihad, and other competing Islamist movements; for example, Al-Jama'a Al-Islamiyya and, to a lesser extent, the Muslim Brotherhood movement. In his book, Al-Hisad Al-Murr (The Bitter Harvest) Al-Zawahiri articulates his violence-driven and inherently anti-democratic instincts. He sees democracy as a new religion that must be destroyed by war. He accuses the Muslim Brotherhood of sacrificing Allah's ultimate authority by accepting the notion that the people are the ultimate source of authority. He condemns the Brotherhood for renouncing Jihad as a means to establish the Islamic State. He is equally virulent in his criticism of the Al-Jama'a Al-Islamiyya for renouncing violence and for upholding the concept of constitutional authority. He condemns the Jama'a for taking advantage of the Muslim youth's enthusiasm which "it keeps in its refrigerators as soon as the young people have joined its movement or seek to direct them toward conferences and elections (rather than toward Jihad)."[22] Al-Zawahiri takes his criticism a step further by characterizing the Muslim Brotherhood as "kuffar" (infidels.) Their adherence to democracy to achieve their political goals means giving the legislature rights that belong to Allah. Thus, he who supports democracy is, by definition, infidel. "For he who legislates anything for human beings," writes Al-Zawahiri, "would establish himself as their god." Since democracy is founded on the principle of political sovereignty, which becomes the ultimate arbiter of right and wrong, whoever accepts democracy is an infidel. He deplores the Muslim Brotherhood for mobilizing the masses of youth "to the ballot box" instead of mobilizing them to the ranks of Jihad. He criticizes the Brotherhood for extending bridges of understanding to the authorities that rule them. These bridges

become part of a package or a quid pro quo: the rulers allow the Brotherhood a degree of freedom to spread their beliefs and the Brotherhood acknowledges the legitimacy of the regime. For him, those who have been endorsing this philosophy cannot be trusted even if they were to split from the Brotherhood. Their minds are forever polluted and set in stone. Al-Zawahiri draws attention to the enormous financial wealth of the Muslim Brotherhood movement. This "material prosperity," he argues, is the result of the Brotherhood's leaders who escaped Nasser's oppression and took over regional and international banks and businesses. Joining the Brotherhood, says Al-Zawahiri, guarantees the young recruits the means of making a living and, hence, their activities are driven more by materialistic than spiritual considerations.[23] In his memoirs, "Knights under the Banner of the Prophet" Al-Zawahiri responds to the criticism leveled against him for his strident condemnation of the Muslim Brotherhood. While he concedes that, as a human being, he may have erred in some details, he still considers the Muslim Brotherhood to be a movement that grows organizationally but commits suicide ideologically and politically. One of the most visible aspects in the political suicide is their support of the election of President Mubarak in 1987. He goes on to use a medical metaphor to make his point: It is not expected of the physician to tell the patient that your brain is healthy and your heart is healthy and your kidneys are healthy and your other body parts are in good shape except your stomach which has a cancer. It is incumbent on the physician to tell the patient that his life is in danger from a serious disease and it is incumbent on the patient to start treatment quickly or he will face ruin.[24]

The Merger of the Jihad and Al-Qa'ida

While the ideological war with Al-Zawahiri's rivals was ongoing, the relationship between him, as the head of the Egyptian Jihad organization, and bin Laden, as the head of the Al-Qa'ida, strengthened. The two have agreed that the Islamic Jihad should retain its identity as an essentially Egyptian organization while the Al-Qa'ida was to remain a multi-national organization and, in time, it became the melting pot of the "Afghan Arabs", or volunteers to the Mujahedeen ranks. At the end of this war in 1990, Al-Zawahiri may have preferred to stay in Afghanistan but the new mujahedeen government in Kabul, under Burhan Al-Din Rabbani, sought to get rid of the "Afghan Arabs," Al-Zawahiri thus looked for a reliable base to reorganize and, thus, he followed bin Laden to Sudan. Always security-conscious and secretive, to throw up a false trail he announced on his way to Sudan, that he was granted political asylum in Switzerland and when he returned to Afghanistan after three years in Sudan, he announced that he had selected Bulgaria as the country of asylum.

The New Base in Sudan

In 1989, a new Islamic Front, led by Dr. Hassan Turabi, took over power in Sudan and instituted a new Islamist regime which favored Islamic fundamentalist movements everywhere. It was a perfect environment for bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri to establish bases in the country. Farms were purchased and converted into military training basis for four years, between 1992 and 1996.[25] Bin Laden invested heavily in Sudan which was undergoing a severe economic crisis. His investments bought him and Al-Zawahiri a secure refuge and a number of their key followers. Al-Zawahiri had become concerned that Sudan, under international pressure, might betray them for financial gains as it did in the case of Carlos (the Venezuelan Marxist terrorist). The two of them looked for a new base of operation and found themselves welcomed only by the new Taliban government in Afghanistan. However, Al-Zawahiri first went to Yemen where he established three boot camps-Badr, Al-Qadisiyya, and Maraqesha-which attracted volunteers from Egypt, Sudan, Afghanistan and even from some sub-Saharan African countries. The volunteers who were called "Tal'ai' Al-Fath" (the Vanguard of Victory) received training in guerilla warfare, including sabotage activities. From Yemen Al-Zawahiri was involved in a number of terrorist initiatives. In 1994, he organized an attempt to murder the Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sidqi in

Cairo, but the attempt failed. He followed that attempt with another one to blow up a bus carrying Israeli tourists to the famous old bazaar in Cairo, Khan al-Khalili, at the height of the tourist season. This attempt also failed but resulted in the arrest of 107 suspects. Al-Zawahiri was successful, however, in blowing up the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, for allegedly gathering information on the Jihad Movement. In his memoirs, Al-Zawahiri explains this event: "We had to react to the Egyptian government's expansion of its campaign against Egyptian fundamentalists outside the country. So we decided to target a painful goal for all the parties of this evil alliance. After studying the situation we decided to assign a group to react to this and we assigned their targets, first bombing the American embassy in Islamabad and if that wasn't easy, then one of the American targets in Islamabad. If that didn't work, then the target should be bombing a Western embassy famous for its historic hatred for Muslims, and if not that, then the Egyptian embassy. Our extensive and detailed surveillance found that targeting the American Embassy was beyond the abilities of the assigned group, so we decided to study one of the American targets in Islamabad, and we discovered it has few American employees and most of the victims would be Pakistani. We also discovered that targeting the other Western embassies was beyond the abilities of the assigned group, so we settled on targeting the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad, which was not only running a campaign for chasing Arabs in Pakistan but also spying on the Arab Mujahedeen...later, Pakistani security found in the ruins of the embassy evidence revealing the cooperation between India and Egypt in espionage." "A short time before the bombing the embassy the assigned group asked our permission. They told us they could strike both the Egyptian and American Embassies if we gave them extra money. We had already provided them with all that we had and we couldn't collect more money. So the group focused on bombing the Egyptian embassy. The rubble of the embassy left a clear message to the Egyptian government." [26]

Terrorism Against American Embassies in East Africa

Al-Zawahiri's biggest success was sending his and Al-Qaida's volunteers to Somalia to fight the American presence in that country and eventually causing the U.S. to withdraw. His volunteers fought under the command of a young Egyptian man, Ali Al-Rashidi, also known as Abu-Ubaida Al-Banshiri. From Somalia, Al-Banshiri was sent to Kenya to establish a base of operations for terrorist activities against the United States in East Africa. Al-Banshiri drowned in an alleged accident in Lake Victoria. After a period of uncertainty, Al-Banshiri was replaced by another Egyptian, Subhi Abu Sitta, also known as Abu Hafas Al-Masri who was responsible for organizing the bombing of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar-Es-Salaam. In a final incarnation, Subhi Abu Sitta became Muhammad Atef, who was to become the field commander of Al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan. One of Abu Sitta's daughters married bin Laden's son, Muhammad, in January 2001. An American bomb killed Abu Sitta/Atef in Kabul in November 2001. Toward the end of 1994 and early 1995 attempts were made by Al-Zawahiri, under the guidance of bin Laden, to coordinate the activities of the various Islamic terrorist movements to carry out sabotage activities against the United States in order to break its 'hegemony' in the Middle East. Meetings were held in Tehran, Khartoum and Cyprus (city unknown) with the participation of Imad Fadhia al-Mughniyah (of Hezbollah, wanted by the U.S. for murdering an American passenger on a commercial airliner and dumping his body on Beirut airport's tarmac), Fathi Al-Shiqaqi (of Palestinian Islamic Jihad), Musa Abu Marzuq (of Hamas), in addition to Sheikh Abd Al-Majid Al-Zindani from Yemen as well as representatives from the Nahdha Movement in Tunisia, and Al-Jama'a Al-Islamiyya of Pakistan. In the last meeting, held in Khartoum in April 1995, Al-Zawahiri laid down three fundamental directions for the next stage of the struggle: first, increase the effectiveness of the Islamic networks in London and New York, particularly in Brooklyn; second, increase the effectiveness of the Islamic militias in the Balkans; and third, provide greater support to the armed Islamic groups in Somalia and Ethiopia. The conferees agreed

to establish a high-level coordinating body of the armed Islamic movements comprising Al-Zawahiri, Imad Fadhia Al-Mughniyah and Ahmad Salem. In less than a month, this body met in Cyprus and agreed to increase the number of volunteers to Bosnia and to ask Al-Zawahiri to visit the U.S. to see first hand the modus operandi of the Islamic networks there. Al-Zawahiri visited the U.S. in 1996 and helped raise a considerable amount of money for "the widows and orphans" of Afghanistan.[27] Upon reestablishing themselves in Afghanistan in 1996, the two leaders bin Laden and Zawahiri began articulating the position of Al-Qa'ida vis-à-vis the United States. They concluded that America was the Number One enemy of Muslims everywhere and that its support of some Arab regimes, mainly Saudi Arabia and Egypt, has been responsible for the failed efforts to topple those regimes. It was at the end of 1997 that bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri declared war on Americans everywhere, after an initial statement of war in 1996 against the American presence in the region only. Afterwards, the objectives were expanded. On 23 February 1998 bin Laden issued a declaration announcing the creation of "The World Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and the Crusaders [Christians]." A Fatwa (edict) accompanied the declaration by bin Laden that "the killing of Americans -military and civilians-and the looting of their properties is a duty for Muslims everywhere." In addition to bin Laden, the declaration was signed by Al-Zawahiri as leader of Jama'at al-Jihad and by Rifa'i Taha, the man in charge of the Advisory Council of the Islamic Movement in Egypt. From this union between Al-Qa'ida and the Egyptian Jihad group "grew an apocalyptic vision that in many ways resonates more of Al-Zawahiri's than of bin Laden's"[28] Soon after that, the group would establish a travel office in Egypt to facilitate the transport of volunteers to join the Al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan. The travel office was headed by Ismail Nasser Al-Din, who had spent 15 years in prison for terrorist activities in Egypt. His new title would become "Muhandis Tasfeer" or travel agent/facilitator. Egypt was only too happy to see her Islamic fundamentalists leave for the war in Afghanistan, hoping that they would be killed or at least would not return to Egypt. Many of these volunteers were trapped in places like Kunduz, Mazar Al-Sharif, and Tora Bora, not to be heard from again.

Trip to Chechnya and Prison in Russia

The looting of Al-Zawahiri's computer after his escape from Kabul and its subsequent sale to a reporter of the Wall Street Journal have added enormously to our knowledge about Al-Zawahiri's previously unknown activities. One such activity was his attempt to smuggle himself into Chechnya, his arrest by the Russian security police, his trial and subsequent release. This story is revealing and worth telling. In the early morning hours of 1 December 1996, Al-Zawahiri, disguised as Mr. Amin with two operatives on fake Sudanese passports and a Chechen guide tried to cross the Chechen boarder in an attempt to establish a base in that territory. He was arrested at the boarder with his advanced communications equipment and a large sum of money in different denominations. During his trial in April, 1997, "he lied fluently and prayed frequently." The judge had to call several recesses because of the "defendants' disruptive piety." When asked about the purpose of his visit he responded that "they wanted to find out the price for leather, medicine and other goods." The Russian security policy which confiscated Al-Zawahiri's computer at the time of his arrest had failed to read its Arabic content. Lacking other evidence, the Russian judge let them go free. Documents found on Al-Zawahiri by the Russians included "a visa application for Taiwan; a bank card from Hong Kong; details of a bank account in Guangdong, China; a receipt for a computer modem bought in Dubai; a copy of a Malaysian company's registration certificate that listed Dr. Zawahiri under an alias, as a director; and details of an account in a bank in St. Louis, Mo." [29]

Al-Zawahiri Summarizes His Achievements

In the introduction to his autobiography, *Knights under the Banner of the Prophet*, Al-Zawahiri writes: "I wrote this book to convey the message to our generation and the

generations to come. Due to these worrying circumstances and unsettled conditions I may not be able to write later. And I expect it will not be published by a publisher and distributed by a distributor. This book is an attempt to revive the consciousness of the Islamic nation, to tell them about their duties and how important these duties are and how the new crusaders hate Muslims and the importance of understanding the difference between our enemies and our friends." "This book is a warning for the evil powers targeting our nation that your defeat draws nearer daily and we are taking step after step to retaliate against you and that your fight with the [Islamic] nation is doomed to defeat and all your efforts will come to nothing but merely postpone the inevitable victory of our nation." "The battle has become international after all the powers of blasphemy united against the Mujahideen. I wanted to show in this book some of the details of this epic and to warn readers of this book that hidden enemies and their wolves and foxes are on the road and you should be wary of them." [30] In the book, Al-Zawahiri provides his version of the political situation in Egypt today. He says that there are two competing powers in the country - an official power and a popular power. The first is supported by America, the West, Israel and the majority of the Arab rulers. The second depends on Allah alone. It is spreading widely and is allying with the Jihad movements from Chechnya in the north to Somalia in the south and from Turkmenistan in the East to Morocco in the West. The hostility between the two powers arises from the attempt by the first power "to drive Islam out of all spheres of life by force, tyranny and forged elections." But despite all of this, Al-Zawahiri lists "the harvest" of the Jihad movement in the years between 1966 and 2000:

- oThe spread of the movement, particularly among the youth.
- oThe confrontation with the enemies of Islam "to the last drop of its blood".
- oThe continuing sacrifice of tens of thousands of Muslims-- injured, arrested and killed.
- oThe internationalization of the struggle against Islam after America has become convinced that the Egyptian regime cannot, by itself, stand up to the fundamentalist movement.
- oThe continuation of the battle. The Islamist movement is either in an attack mode or in the preparation for an attack.
- oThe Islamist movement has been able to articulate its principles based on the Koran and the religious scholars. On the negative side, Al-Zawahiri lists the following difficulties:
 - oPoor planning and preparation for Jihad activities. Despite successes, such as the assassination of Sadat, the movement should avoid randomized actions.
 - oThe lack of populist sermons... Most sermons are directed at the educated people.
- Given the restrictions on spreading the call for the Jihad it is particularly important to address the masses.
- oThe reluctance of some movement leaders to continue armed confrontation. As an example, Al-Zawahiri mentions the decision by the Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyyah in Egypt in 1997 to suspend all armed action against the regime. On balance, Al-Zawahiri concedes that the movement has failed to establish an Islamic regime in Egypt.

Suicide Operations - The Most Effective Way of Harming the Opponent

In the last chapter of his book, Al-Zawahiri examines the future of the Islamic movement in the world, in general, and in Egypt, in particular, and reaches the following conclusions: The internationalization of the battle: The enemies of Islam have mastered the following instrument to fight it: (1) the United Nations; (2) the loyal rulers of the Islamic peoples; (3) the multinational corporations; (4) the international communications networks; (5) the international news agencies and media networks; and (6) the international relief agencies which are used for "spying, proselytizing, planning coups and transferring weapons." Against this alliance, stands the Islamist alliance comprising of the Islamist movements in the entire Islamic world. These movements are growing outside the new world order, under the banner of Jihad for the sake of Allah, freed from Western imperialist domination and from the apostate countries of America, Russia and Israel. Also, against this alliance, stands the

Islamist alliance of Jihad movements in the various Islamic countries and in the two countries that were "liberated in the name of Jihad for the sake of Allah (Afghanistan and Chechnya.)" This alliance, while "still in its infancy," is growing rapidly and multiplying. It is a new force "outside the new international order, and liberated from the domineering Western enslavement": [There is] No solution but through the Jihad. This awareness is spreading amongst the new community of Islamists. What stand behind this spread of the new awareness is the viciousness "of the new crusade and Jewish war which treats the Islamic nation at utmost contempt." Al-Zawahiri calls on the Islamic movement to acquire the qualities of steadfastness, perseverance, patience and adherence to principles. The leadership must serve as an example. Al-Zawahiri warns that "the victory of the struggle of the Islamic movement against the international alliance will not be accomplished without acquiring an Islamist base in the heart of the Islamic world." He acknowledges that the creation of an Islamic state in the heart of the Islamic world is not an easy target to be achieved, or soon. However, it is the aspiration of the Islamic community to restore the caliphate and renew its vanished glory. Al-Zawahiri is prepared, however, to sacrifice his call for perseverance and steadfastness in favor of self-preservation. What happens, he asks, if the movement's membership or its plans were discovered and its existence was in danger, and what if its resources were confiscated? "The answer in my view," asserts Al-Zawahiri, "is that for the movement to withdraw as much as it can to a safe place and carry the war against the Americans and the Jews in their homes and against their bodies." When that occurs, "the masters in Washington and Tel-Aviv" will blame their agent-regimes for their failure to deter these attacks and force them to wage a war against the Muslims which would turn the war into a war against the infidels. He concludes with a vision of conflict on a world scale: "The Crusader-Jewish alliance under the leadership of America will not permit any Muslim power to govern in any of the Islamic countries. It will mobilize all its resources to strike at the (Islamic power) in order to remove it from governing...The alliance will wage a war worldwide...We have to prepare ourselves for a battle not only in one region but a battle that will include both the internal enemy [ruling government] and the external Crusader-Jewish enemy."[31]

Bin Laden Talks about September 11th

After the events of 11 September, Al-Qa'ida jumped on the Palestinian bandwagon to appeal to the Arab masses. In a video statement on Al-Jazeera television, bin Laden, with Zawahiri at his side, all but admitted his responsibility for the terrorist attacks on September 11th by praising the perpetrators as martyrs. After claiming that "Here is America struck by Allah the Almighty in one of her vital organs," he went on to state that "Allah has blessed a group of vanguard Muslims, the forefront of Islam, to destroy America. May Allah bless them and allot them a supreme place in heaven..." Palestine was next. In bin Laden's words: "In these days, Israeli tanks rampage across Palestine, in Ramallah, Rafah, and Beit Jala and many other parts of the land of Islam, and we do not hear anyone raising his voice or reacting. But when the sword fell upon America after 80 years, hypocrisy raised its head up high bemoaning those killers who toyed with the blood, honor and sanctities of Muslims." [32] Next, it was Al-Zawahiri's turn to speak on al-Jazeera T.V. On November 9, 2001, he had this to say: "Bush lies to his people when he claims to have destroyed the Al-Qa'ida group and broken the ranks of the Taliban. The whole world laughs at his lies." He went on to assert that "our Jihad, with the help of Allah, will continue until we liberate our holy places from the American-Jewish aggression in Palestine and the rest of the Arab world." He concluded his speech by promising more blows to America.[33] In a recent interview with the Pakistani newspaper "Jang" Al-Zawahiri is quoted as saying that "Tel-Aviv is our next target." [34]

Islamists Respond to Al-Zawahiri's Memoir

Taking issue with Al-Zawahiri's criticism of personalities and events associated with

this movement, the lawyer for the Islamic movement in Egypt, Muntasir Al-Zayyat, wrote a rebuttal in a book titled "Al-Zawahiri as I Knew Him" which was serialized in the other London-based, Saudi newspaper, Al-Hayat, from January 10-17, 2002. Although his response is mostly polemical, Al-Zayyat provides considerable insights on three issues: first, the primary motivation for Zawahiri's departure for Afghanistan; second, operational failures; and, third, the influence of the bin Laden-Al-Zawahiri alliance on the Islamic movement in Egypt in particular and on Islam, in general.

The Departure for Afghanistan

In his memoirs, Al-Zawahiri maintains that his departure for Afghanistan was entirely driven by his desire to take advantage of a situation which offered a great opportunity for Jihad. While Al-Zayyat does not fully challenge this assertion he argues strongly that one reason for Al-Zawahiri's desire for a quick exit from Egypt had to do with the information he had given to the police which led to the arrest of his close friend, Issam Al-Qamari. The police investigation minutes, quoted by Al-Zayyat, suggest that Al-Zawahiri arranged to meet his friend at a location surrounded by security personnel so that Al-Qamari could be arrested without bloodshed. By contrast, in his memoirs Al-Zawahiri draws a fantastic picture of great heroism shown by Al-Qamari and a small group of his comrades who were hiding in a workshop. When the police tried to break into the hiding place Al-Qamari, according to Al-Zawahiri, lobbed hand grenades and opened fire from automatic weapons causing a lot of fatalities and confusion among the police. Al-Qamari was chased by the police in the narrow lanes of the poor Cairo neighborhood lobbing hand grenades at his pursuers. The battle went on for hours until Al-Qamari's ammunition was exhausted. Al-Zawahiri's story sounds like a sheer fantasy.[35] Al-Zayyat suggests that Al-Zawahiri has failed in most of his undertakings. The following are some illustrations: Complete Military/Operational Failure. All the operations against "the symbols of the Egyptian government had failed." Al-Zayyat mentions the failed attempts on the lives of the Minister of Interior, Hassan Al-Alfi, and the former Prime Minister Atef Sidqi. The last attempt was a public relations disaster because it resulted in the death of a young schoolgirl who happened to be in the vicinity where the attempted assassination was to take place. The murder of the little girl was a public relations disaster for the Islamist movement in Egypt and resulted in the arrest of many of its members. In his own memoirs Al-Zawahiri admits to the murder of the little girl and adopts a legalistic stand. According to the Shari'a [Islamic law], he says, when a Muslim kills another Muslim inadvertently the family of the victim is entitled to a form of compensation and the girl's family was compensated accordingly. Serious Organizational Dysfunction. The worst manifestation of organizational dysfunction was the arrest of a group of activists who tried to steal a military truck to be used in the transportation of weapons and explosives. The operation failed but resulted in the arrest of 800 of the Jihad's members. Al-Zayyat also refers to the stationing of the Islamic Jihad members in Yemen and Sudan and Al-Zawahiri's failure to find the resources to sustain their families. The Arrest of Leadership Elements of the Islamic Jihad. This was the result of the arrest of one of Al-Zawahiri's closest aides with a computer disc listing all the members of the Islamic Jihad worldwide. It resulted in the arrest and sentencing by the military tribunal of 108 members of the organization. The Implications of Al-Zawahiri's alliance with bin Laden. The friendship between Al-Zawahiri and bin Laden affected the thinking of the two men. Al-Zawahiri was able to convince bin Laden to discard relief efforts in favor of Jihad against the oppressive rulers, primarily in Saudi Arabia and Egypt and to turn the evacuation of American forces from Saudi Arabia into a cardinal objective of the struggle against the infidels. Bin Laden was able to convince Al-Zawahiri to discontinue the military operations inside Egypt and, instead, focus on the common enemies America and Israel. This required a shift in ideological priorities in Al-Zawahiri's agenda from fighting the immediate enemy to fighting the distant enemy. An even more lethal criticism of Al-Zawahiri was recently made by Al-Azhar University in Cairo. It refers to Al-Zawahiri group's efforts to turn Egypt into "an

Islamic base through which they exercise control over the Arab and Muslim world." Al-Azhar decried Al-Zawahiri's attempt to create a new Khalifate similar to the one they created in Afghanistan (Mulla Omar, the leader of Taliban, was referred to as Khalif Omar). Looking at the groups bloody past, Al-Azhar refers to the murder of tourists, terrorizing the people and killing a child." Al-Zawahiri's group, in short, is "a misguided group outside the book of Allah and his messenger." [36]

* Dr. Nimrod Raphaeli is Senior Analyst of MEMRI's Middle East Economic Studies Program.

NOTE: Student checks.

SECTION IV. SUMMARY

Method of Instruction: <u>Conference / Discussion</u>
Instructor to Student Ratio is: <u>1:25</u>
Time of Instruction: <u>5 mins</u>
Media: <u>Large Group Instruction</u>

Check on Learning

Determine if the students have learned the material presented by soliciting student questions and explanations. Ask the students questions and correct misunderstandings.

Review / Summarize Lesson

This concludes your overview of the origins and history of al Qaeda

SECTION V. STUDENT EVALUATION

**Testing
Requirements**

NOTE: Describe how the student must demonstrate accomplishment of the TLO. Refer student to the Student Evaluation Plan.

student checks; Test

**Feedback
Requirements**

NOTE: Feedback is essential to effective learning. Schedule and provide feedback on the evaluation and any information to help answer students' questions about the test. Provide remedial training as needed.

Test review and class evaluation survey

Appendix A - Viewgraph Masters (N/A)

Appendix B - Test(s) and Test Solution(s) (N/A)

Appendix C - Practical Exercises and Solutions (N/A)

Appendix D - Student Handouts (N/A)