

# Burning Questions

## What Really Happened at the Pentagon on 9/11?

Analysis © by G. Edward Griffin

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**Synopsis:** The unusual circumstances that led me to the creation of this analysis; My error in not publishing a disclaimer for the video, *In Plane Site*; Clarification that I do NOT endorse the theory that something other than American Airlines Flight 77 struck the Pentagon; My critique of those who unquestioningly accept the official version of 9/11; My critique of those on both sides of this controversy who tend to present only facts that support their point of view while ignoring those that contradict it; An analysis of facts on both sides; The final conclusion that Flight 77 did strike the Pentagon but that the government is concealing evidence. This suggests that it is hiding something that would tarnish its image if the truth were known. The case is far from closed. There are many "burning questions" that must yet be answered.

### WHAT AN EXPERIENCE THIS HAS BEEN!

Life used to be so simple. All I had to do was save the world. The battle lines were clearly drawn between those of us who adhere to the principles of individualism and those who, knowingly or unknowingly were supporting the growth of collectivism. Totalitarian government was our only foe, and all of us on the side of individualism felt solidarity in our common cause.

All that started to change on August 16, 2004, when I was interviewed on a radio program called The Power Hour, hosted by Dave vonKleist and Joyce Riley. This show originates from WHRI, a short-wave radio station in South Bend, Indiana. It is carried by AM and FM stations in Tennessee, Missouri, Rhode Island, and New York, and also is broadcast over the Internet.



VonKleist had just produced a video documentary called *911 In Plane Site* that challenges the official version of the 9/11 terrorist attack. He had sent me a copy and requested that I view it before the broadcast so we could discuss it on the air, which I did. I was fairly familiar with the photos on the Internet showing a surprising absence of aircraft debris at the Pentagon site of impact and also was familiar with the belief held by many that something other than Flight 77 had struck the building, something smaller than a Boeing 757. My own opinion was that the evidence for such a view was impressive but far short of conclusive. I had refrained

from adding my voice to the din because I felt there are more important issues surrounding 9/11 that tend to get obscured or ignored altogether by a debate on this topic.

During the interview, vonKleist asked my opinion of the video. Although I was impressed by the quality of the production and felt that it raised important questions – questions that will be addressed further along in this report – I certainly did not endorse the view that something other than Flight 77 struck the Pentagon. What I *did* say – and this was the main thrust of the interview – was that the facts surrounding 9/11 strongly suggest that those at the highest levels of government had ample warning of the attacks and consciously chose not to interfere. I said that it is difficult for most people to consider even the *possibility* that this is true because they cannot imagine what the *motive* would be. Why would American leaders want to do such a thing? Without an answer to that question, there is no amount of evidence that would be convincing.

## **A MOTIVE FOR THE WAR ON TERRORISM**

I said that I believe their motive was to use the threat of terrorism and an endless war *on* terrorism to condition public opinion to support four objectives: (1) the creation of an American hegemony in the Middle East – what CFR planners call a *Pax Americana*; (2) the use of military power to deliver control of the vast oil resources in that region into the hands of multinational oil companies; (3) an acceleration of the evolution of the UN into a world government based on the model of collectivism; and (4) to convince Americans that it is necessary to abandon their privacy and freedom in exchange for homeland security. This last objective is essential if the United States is to be comfortably merged into a collectivist world government.

I explained that the ideology of collectivism is based on the concept that individuals must be sacrificed, if necessary, for the greater good of the greater number, and that there have been several times in our history – such as World War I and World War II – when our leaders deliberately allowed enemy attacks against American citizens to create popular support for those wars. They believed that U.S. participation would guarantee an outcome that would be for the greater good of mankind. Therefore, what most people would consider to be treachery or treason was viewed by them as an act of great statesmanship.<sup>1</sup>

Likewise, present leaders believe that future generations will sing their praise for having the wisdom and courage to use a War on Terrorism as the great motivator

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of this history, see *The Future Is Calling*, in the Issues section of the Freedom Force web site, <http://www.freedomforceinternational.org/freedom.cfm?fuseaction=issues>.

to compel the reluctant masses to abandon their individualism and sovereignty in exchange for a glorious world government based on the model of collectivism.

The point I have always emphasized in discussions of 9/11 is that, even if there were no questions about the true identities of the hijackers, or how they flew with such precision, or why the Twin Towers collapsed as though by controlled demolition, or why the building wreckage was disposed in such a way as to prevent analysis, or what happened to the aircraft debris at the Pentagon, or why the government is withholding vital evidence from public inspection – even if none of these questions existed, we still would be faced with the incontrovertible fact that our highest leaders knew about the 9/11 attack in advance and did nothing to prevent it – an exact repeat of what happened at Pearl Harbor in 1941.<sup>1</sup> That fact alone is horrendous enough. Whether a person actively perpetrates a crime or merely encourages it and then stands idly by while it is committed makes little difference. We do not need to waste time arguing with each other over the merits or demerits of additional levels of involvement. What we already know is serious enough to jolt us out of complacency.

That was my message. When the radio program was over, Dave vonKleist asked if I would allow him to use a phrase or two taken directly from my interview to post to his web site. I agreed, and what follows is what he chose. Please note that it does not address the issue of the fate of Flight 77. It speaks only to the need for understanding the motives of our collectivist leaders.

Without understanding what the motive could be, an implausible – if not impossible story – is incapable of comprehension. People need to understand the historical perspective of such events and the motives of those in high places for this to make a certain sense.

After sharing the video with my family and a few friends, it was evident that there was a great deal of interest in the controversy surrounding the fate of Flight 77, so I decided to add the program to our Reality Zone web site. On September 1, I sent the following announcement to our subscribers.

This video documentary presents evidence that the World Trade Towers were not struck by commercial airliners, as we have been told, but by military tankers flown by remote control – and that the Pentagon was not struck by a Boeing 757 but by a guided missile or drone. When we first heard that assertion, we thought it was nonsense, but after seeing the evidence, we can no longer rule out the possibility. The DVD contains a bonus section revealing that there were three bombs in the Murrah Federal building in Oklahoma City, two of which failed to detonate, but this fact was covered up by federal authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> This, too, is documented in *The Future Is Calling*, previously cited.

It all fits together and points to one of the most brazen conspiracies in world history. Is it fact or fantasy? See the evidence and judge for yourself.

In retrospect, the wording of this announcement was a mistake. It is natural for our subscribers to assume that I fully agree with every book or video we carry – unless a disclaimer is included within the description. We have done that with several products in the past where I felt the overall merit outweighed the points of disagreement. We should have done that with this video, also. The revised description that now appears on our web site makes it clear that I do not endorse the view that something other than Flight 77 impacted the Pentagon, but that the program raises important questions that cry out for answers. I have similar views regarding the attack at the Twin Towers, but that is not the topic of this analysis.

### **“THIS IS ABSURD”**

When the original announcement went out it did not have this explanation, and that’s when things began to get exciting. Many of our subscribers wanted to do exactly what we suggested: see the evidence and judge for themselves. Others asked logical questions about what could have happened to the passengers. Some, however, assumed that I fully endorsed the producer’s conclusions and they became angry. One gentleman said this was an insane concept and wrote: “Are you just another outlet for disgruntled Americans and a growing list for authorities to keep track of? This article is absurd. Please take me off your list.”



Although I didn’t know it at the time of our September announcement, an excellent article on this topic had appeared a few days earlier in the August 23 edition of *The New American* magazine. It was entitled “Getting the Facts Straight,” written by Dennis Behreandt.<sup>1</sup> Basically, it was a defense of the official version of the attack at the Pentagon. Several emails arrived asking how I could possibly disagree with it. Actually, I did not disagree with it at all, but I did take exception to the way in which the material was presented. My critique is that it omitted or downplayed much of the evidence that runs contrary to the official version. It also included a psychoanalysis of those who do not evaluate evidence logically. The implication was that those who question the official version have no rational basis for doing so and, therefore, are intellectually backward. As a consequence of this stance, the article failed to ask the “burning questions” that are the focus of this analysis, and I fear that it needlessly offended many good people who should be united with us in this important issue. You don’t win friends or enlighten them by telling them they are stupid.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.thenewamerican.com/tna/2004/08-23-2004/facts.htm>.

I had no desire to be drawn into a debate over the merits or demerits of the many speculations about 9/11 when there is no need to go beyond established facts to prove our point. But after introducing our subscribers to this video and suddenly finding myself in the crossfire, I had no choice but to do my own independent research and come to clearly stated conclusions. It was no longer enough to say: “judge for yourself.” I had to form my own opinion and be prepared to defend it. That’s what I have been doing for the past three weeks. What follows is the result of that effort.



**Some observers believe that the Pentagon was struck by a Global Hawk, a remote-controlled military drone. On the right is an artist’s conception of what it might have looked like if painted to resemble an American Airlines passenger jet.**

## **WHOM CAN WE TRUST?**

One of the reasons there is so much emotion in this debate is that people have different opinions about the reliability of government data. One group believes that, at the very least, those high in government encouraged 9/11 while doing nothing to prevent it. If that is correct, then looking to the government for answers is like asking a murderer to investigate his own crime and produce the evidence. Those with this view, naturally, are suspicious of any data coming from government sources. The other group believes that our leaders have no hidden agendas and are dedicated public servants valiantly protecting the American people against terrorism. If that view is correct, then there is no reason to challenge the official investigation or any aspect of the evidence.

One of the first decisions I had to make is which stance to take. Frankly, I am convinced that many of those in high positions would not hesitate to deceive us if there were political or personal advantages to do so. When it relates to our freedom, I question everything they say. However, this attitude isn’t very popular on Main Street. I decided that, if we are to build a case that doesn’t drive good people away before

they even hear it, we have no choice but to accept the official government version – *except* in those cases where there is clear, unambiguous evidence to the contrary.

### **WHAT DID WITNESSES SEE AND HEAR?**

We are all familiar with the phenomenon of multiple witnesses to an accident or crime. If there are five witnesses, we likely will have five versions of what happened. This is to be expected in situations where emotions run high and the adrenaline is flowing. Witnesses to horrific events often are in a daze immediately afterward and only later do they begin to construct coherent memories from the bits and dabs of overwhelming images and sounds. This is certainly true of the witnesses at the Pentagon on 9/11.

Most of them remember hearing a thunderous roar as the jet passed by. They also recall hearing the engines rev up and become even louder in the final seconds, indicating impact at full power. Other witnesses describe the sound as a high-pitched whine or scream. Some said it sounded like a missile. Others described it as a whoosh. Still others said it was surprisingly quiet, or that they heard nothing at all. *Navy Times* reporter, Christopher Munsey, saw the incoming plane on his way to work and said that he saw: “A silver, twin-engine American Airlines jetliner sliding almost noiselessly over the Navy Annex.”<sup>1</sup> Penny Elgas said: “In my adrenaline-filled state of mind ... my visual senses took over completely and I did not hear or feel anything – not the roar of the plane, or wind force, or impact sounds.”<sup>2</sup>

There are over a hundred published accounts of witnesses who saw the plane as it approached at treetop level, and scores of reports from those who saw it at the instant of impact. Almost all of them are certain it was a large commercial airliner. Many of them said they saw the American Airlines logo on the tail and the familiar red, white, and blue color on the side, although a few thought the darker color was orange. Most observers described the background color as silver, but some described it as white. Several witnesses said they saw windows on the plane. Two people claimed to have seen passengers inside. Two others said the shades were drawn. Most observers did not mention seeing windows – nor did they mention *not* seeing them.

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<sup>1</sup> “The Plane ... exploded,” *Navy Times*, Sept. 11, 2001, <http://www.navytimes.com/story.php?f=1-292925-467181.php>.

<sup>2</sup> “Statement from Penny Elgas,” <http://americanhistory.si.edu/september11/collection/supporting.asp?ID=30>.

One can only wonder to what extent the lasting impressions of these witnesses were conditioned by news reports that American Airlines Flight 77 had impacted the Pentagon. It is well known that, especially in moments of crisis, we tend to remember what we *expect* to remember.



**The incoming aircraft was so low, it knocked down light posts in its path.**

Running contrary to these observations are numerous witnesses who claim that what they saw was *not* a large jetliner at all. Mrs. D.S. Khavkin described it as “a small commercial aircraft.”<sup>1</sup> A witness told Paul Begala that a helicopter had exploded.<sup>2</sup> Rodriguez Meseidy told reporters “it was a mid size plane.”<sup>3</sup> Don Wright said: “It looked like a commuter plane.”<sup>4</sup> The September 11, 2001 edition of the *Washington Post* reported:

Steve Patterson, who lives in Pentagon City, said it appeared to him that a commuter jet swooped over Arlington National Cemetery and headed for the Pentagon... He said the plane, which sounded like the high-pitched squeal of a fighter jet... appeared to hold about eight to twelve people...<sup>5</sup>

Witnesses are about evenly divided between those who said the plane came in on a steady course and those who said it was wobbly. Most agree that the landing gear was up, but Noel Sepulveda said it was down. Most witness saw the plane plow into the Pentagon just a few feet above the ground, but some said it hit the ground first. Sepulveda said that one of the wheels struck a light pole causing the plane to fly at an

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<sup>1</sup> “More Eyewitness Accounts,” *BBC News*, Sept. 13, 2001, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/talking\\_point/1540586.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/talking_point/1540586.stm).

<sup>2</sup> “Everyone was screaming, crying, running,” *Guardian Unlimited*, Sept. 12, 2001, [www.guardian.co.uk/wtccrash/story/0,1300,550486,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/wtccrash/story/0,1300,550486,00.html).

<sup>3</sup> This statement is from a video interview posted to the *Washington Post* website on Sept. 11, 2001, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/mmedia/nation/091101-9v.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> “Eye Witness Don Wright Describes The Pentagon Attack,” *Sun Sentinel*, <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/local/southflorida/sns-worldtrade-pentagon-witness-ra.realaudio?coll=sfla-home-headlines>.

<sup>5</sup> “Extensive Casualties in Wake of Pentagon Attack,” by Barbara Vobejda, *Washington Post*, September 11, 2001, <http://a188.g.akamaitech.net/f/188/920/5m/www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/metro/daily/sep01/attack.html>.

angle.<sup>1</sup> David Marra claimed that a wing hit the ground, causing the plane to cartwheel into the building.<sup>2</sup>

So, what do we make of all this? The only thing we can definitely conclude is that eyewitness accounts are not very reliable. Beyond that, we are compelled to favor the majority observation that a large American Airlines jet did, indeed, crash into the Pentagon. However, let us suspend *final* judgment until we examine the rest of the evidence.

### **WHAT HAPPENED TO THE AIRCRAFT?**

One of the most puzzling aspects of the impact at the Pentagon is the lack of recognizable aircraft pieces like we normally see at crash sites. Where is the tail? Where are huge chunks of wing? Where are the engines? What happened to the fuselage? None of these are visible.



Russell Dodge, an Assistant Fire Chief at the crash site said: “Initially, when we arrived on the scene, I was struck and impressed with how well the building held up, because when we first got there the building was still fully intact.”<sup>3</sup>

Photographs contained in the *Pentagon Building Performance Report* from the American Society of Civil Engineers showed that the impact hole at

the side of the building was 90 feet in diameter. However, photographs taken immediately after the impact – *before* the roof collapsed – reveal that the hole was only about twenty feet in diameter (some say 16 feet), barely wide enough to accommodate the fuselage, to say nothing of a tail section that extended 41 feet above the ground, wings that extended 125 feet from tip to tip, and two engines, each of which were about 9 feet in diameter. Adherants to the official version claim that the hole always was 90 feet wide but that it was obscured in the photographs by smoke. In

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<sup>1</sup> “Pentagon hero receives Purple Heart,” *Airman*, Sept. 2002, [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0IBP/is\\_9\\_46/ai\\_91820705](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0IBP/is_9_46/ai_91820705).

<sup>2</sup> *TIME Special Report: The Day of the Attack*, Sept. 12, 2001, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,174655-1,00.html>.

<sup>3</sup> “Belvoir firefighter among first responders at Pentagon,” *Military District of Washington News Service*, Oct. 4, 2001, [http://www.mdw.army.mil/news/Belvoir\\_firefighter\\_among\\_first\\_responders.html](http://www.mdw.army.mil/news/Belvoir_firefighter_among_first_responders.html).

any case, none of the photographs taken at the crash show recognizable pieces of wing or engine structures.

While it has been assumed that the great billows of black smoke came from burning jet fuel, that was not the source. Dodge said:

At that point, I took the line and concentrated on getting out the fires on the outside of the building. There were two vehicles burning, along with a construction trailer – we didn't know it at the time, but that trailer was the main producer of smoke on the outside of the building – and the foam truck [a fire engine permanently assigned to the helipad that had been set ablaze].<sup>1</sup>

One theoretical answer for the missing large pieces of aircraft is that they folded up on impact and followed the fuselage into the hole. This, of course, is contrary to the laws of physics. The wings and engines are the strongest parts of an aircraft. The fuselage is merely a shell carried along for the ride, and the nosecone of a B-757 is not designed to penetrate reinforced concrete. If anything would be strong enough to pierce the outer wall of the Pentagon, it would be the wings and engine sections. On 9/11, the wings were loaded with fuel, which made them very heavy. Together with the engines, the wings would have had greater inertial mass than the fuselage. It would be more likely that the wings and engines would have penetrated the building leaving the fuselage on the outside. To claim that the wings and engines simply folded back and followed the fuselage into a twenty-foot hole is not credible. That theory is further contradicted by the fact that no large aircraft parts were found inside the building either. So, what happened to them?

First, we must take a hard look at the proposition that there were no aircraft pieces to be found. It is true that photographs taken at a distance do not reveal any debris that looks like it came from a Boeing 757. There are numerous photos on the Internet that show closeups of portions of the long shots, and these, too, seem to confirm the absence of debris. Initially, I was impressed by these photos, but when I finally took the time to examine them in detail, it became apparent that some of them had been altered. I am familiar with programs like Adobe PhotoShop and Corel PhotoPaint and I have become fairly proficient with the use of cloning tools. They are used to remove unwanted blemishes or objects from photographs or to insert objects that are not in the originals. Once I began to seriously examine these photographs, I recognized the pattern repetition, particularly in the roof detail, and I realized that parts of them had been cloned.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

On one widely circulated photo, which shows the roof still intact, you see the same collection of rubble and scorch marks repeated in the center, side-by-side. In this same photo, there is a crane at the right that disappears about half way down. There is another version of the same photo showing the crane in its entirety, but the one with the disappearing crane shows that the artist combined two photos taken at different times to produce this effect. One was taken before the roof collapsed, and the other afterward. That explains why the center section is partly obscured with gray smoke, while everything around it is in normal color. When I first saw these pictures, I thought the gray section was colored to dramatize the impact zone, but now I realize we are looking at a composite of two photos, and the reason the crane disappears is that it was not present in the earlier one. Cranes were not brought to the site until after the roof had collapsed and the fires had been extinguished. Incidentally, even though this segment of the earlier photograph is partly obscured by smoke, it is still clear that there is no 90-foot hole at the base of the structure, as claimed in the Civil Engineer's report.



This is not necessarily proof of deception. It probably was the intent of the original technician merely to show us what the impact zone looked like in reference to the intact building. The explanation may have been attached to the photo when it was originally released but eventually ignored as web masters copied and re-copied it into their own sites. However, it serves to remind us that we cannot automatically believe

everything we see in photographs. If someone wants to make the lawn in front of the Pentagon after the crash look like a golf course, it would be an easy thing to do.

Putting aside the photographs for a moment, let's see what people said who were actually on the scene. Here is a sampling of what they reported.

Steve DeChiaro said: "When I looked at the site, my brain could not resolve the fact that there was a plane inside because it only seemed like a small hole in the building. No tail. No wings. No nothing."<sup>1</sup> Tomi Rucker, one of the first firefighters to get inside the Pentagon, said: "As we walked deeper down the hallways, it got hotter and hotter.... You couldn't see the plane, just debris everywhere you looked."<sup>2</sup> Terry Mitchell, while showing video scenes of the crash site to the press corps at a Department of Defense briefing, said: "They suspect that this is where a part of the aircraft came to rest through this hole, although I didn't see any evidence of the aircraft down there.... This pile here is all Pentagon metal. None of that is aircraft whatsoever."<sup>3</sup>

Statements like these are impressive but they also can be misleading. There is a tendency on both sides of this controversy to filter out evidence that contradicts one view or the other, and so we need to inquire if there is any testimony that contradicts these observations – and, indeed, there is. For example, Congresswoman, Judy Biggert, after visiting the crash site, said she saw a seat from the plane and also part of the tail.<sup>4</sup> The seat to which she referred is probably one of the plane's cockpit seats found on September 15 by the same firefighters who located the plane's black boxes.<sup>5</sup>

It is true that Terry Mitchell saw no pieces of aircraft inside the Pentagon; but further along in the same DoD briefing, Lee Evey, who is the Pentagon Renovation Manager, said: "There's considerable evidence of the aircraft outside the E ring [which is the outer structure]. It's just not very visible.... You don't see big pieces of the airplane sitting there extending up into the air. But there are many small pieces."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "9-11 One Year Later," by Ryan Alessi and M.E. Sprengelmeyer, Scripps Howard News Service, Sept. 11, 2002, *Naples Daily News*, <http://web.naplesnews.com/02/09/naples/d655917a.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> "The Pentagon, September 11," © 2002 by Women in the Fire Service, <http://www.wfsi.org/Rucker.html>.

<sup>3</sup> "DoD News Briefing on Pentagon Renovation," U.S. Department of Defense, Sept. 15, 2001, [www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2001/t09152001\\_t915evey.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2001/t09152001_t915evey.html).

<sup>4</sup> "Wind carries stench of death," *Sun Times*, Sept. 16, 2001, <http://www.suntimes.com/terror/stories/cst-nws-pent16.html>.

<sup>5</sup> It is likely that this is the same seat viewed by Rep. Biggert. "Web Exclusive: Washington's Heroes," *Newsweek*, Sept. 28, 2001, <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3069699/>.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

## THE IMPLAUSIBLE BECOMES PLAUSIBLE

Small pieces *outside* the Pentagon? Enough to account for an entire Boeing 757? Judging by previous crash sites, that seems implausible, but let's take a look at the evidence that supports this claim.

Don Fortunato said: "Traffic was at a standstill, so I parked on the shoulder, not far from the scene, and ran to the site.... There were pieces of the plane all over the highway, pieces of wing, I think."<sup>1</sup>

Mark Faram said: "As I stepped onto the highway next to the triage area, I knelt down to tie my shoe and all over the highway were small pieces of aircraft skin, none bigger than a half dollar. Anyone familiar with aircraft has seen the greenish primer paint that covers many interior metal surfaces – that is what these shards were covered with."<sup>2</sup> John Damoose said that, as he left the Pentagon, he saw pieces of the plane along Fort Meyer Drive, a nearby bike trail.<sup>3</sup>



Will Jarvis said: "There was just nothing left. It was incinerated. We couldn't see a tail or a wing or anything, just a big black hole in the building with smoke pouring out of it.... Then I saw little bits of silver falling from the sky."<sup>4</sup>

Frank Probst said that the jet vanished into a cloud of smoke and dust, with bits of metal and concrete drifting down like confetti.<sup>5</sup> In another

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> "Marc Faram of Navy Times responds to Pentagon attack inquiry," Yahoo! Groups: Frame-up Messages, Sept. 17, 2002, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/frameup/messages/1254>.

<sup>3</sup> "Extensive Casualties in Wake of Pentagon Attack," *Washington Post*, Sept. 11, 2001, <http://a188.g.akamaitech.net/f/188/920/5m/www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/metro/daily/sep01/attack.html>.

<sup>4</sup> "Testimony to Tragedy," *University of Toronto Magazine*, Winter 2002, <http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca/02winter/f02.htm#jarvis>.

<sup>5</sup> "Fortress Reborn," by Vince Crawley, *Military City*, (not dated), <http://www.militarycity.com/sep11/fortress1.html>.

interview, he said: “I dove toward the ground and watched this great big engine from this beautiful airplane just vaporize. It looked like a huge fireball. Pieces were flying out everywhere.”<sup>1</sup>

Clyde Ragland said he saw black smoke and “what looked like white confetti raining down everywhere. The confetti was little bits of airplane falling down after being flung high into the bright, blue sky.”<sup>2</sup>

James Cissell saw a fireball explode into the air and throw debris around his car, including a tire rim he thought might have come from the aircraft.<sup>3</sup>



**This is a close up of some of the debris moved into a pile in front of the Pentagon**

Donald Bouchoux said: “There was an enormous fireball, followed about two seconds later by debris raining down.... I had what must have been an emergency oxygen bottle from the airplane go flying down across the front of my explorer and then a second piece of jagged metal come down on the right side of the car.”<sup>4</sup>

Larry Wheeler, a reporter for the Gannett News Service said: “Among the trash littering the road was a scorched green oxygen tank marked “Cabin air. Airline use.”<sup>5</sup>

On September 17, 2001, *Aviation Week and Space Technology* reported: “One of the aircraft’s engines somehow ricocheted out of the building and arched into the Pentagon’s mall parking area between the main building and the new loading dock facility.”<sup>6</sup> This was confirmed by Lt. Col. Tom McClain who stated: “I saw the

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<sup>1</sup> “Pentagon hit by terrorist attack,” [http://www.dcmilitary.com/army/pentagram/6\\_55/local\\_news/10660-1.html](http://www.dcmilitary.com/army/pentagram/6_55/local_news/10660-1.html).

<sup>2</sup> “Terrorists Attack New York, Pentagon,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 12, 2001, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-091201main.story>.

<sup>3</sup> “I saw the faces of some of the passengers,” *Cincinnati Post*, Sept. 12, 2001, <http://www.cincypost.com/attack/cissel091201.html>.

<sup>4</sup> “The Terrorists Cannot Kill Our Spirit,” *Washington Post*, Sept. 20, 2001, archived [www.lexisnexis.com](http://www.lexisnexis.com).

<sup>5</sup> “Pentagon Takes A Direct Hit,” by Larry Wheeler, *The Journal News*, Sept. 12, 2001, <http://www.thejournalnews.com/newsroom/091201/12wtcpentagon.html>.

<sup>6</sup> “Pentagon Attack Hits Hard,” *Aviation Week*, Sept. 17, 2001, <http://www.aviationnow.com/content/publication/awst/20010917/aw48.htm>.

remains of engines in the North parking lot of the Pentagon as well as melted aluminum and other debris left from the aircraft.”<sup>1</sup>

Tony Terronez said: “Pulling away from the Pentagon there was tons of stuff on the ground, big pieces of metal, concrete, everything. We got up to a certain point and there was this huge piece of something – I mean it was big. It looked like a piece of an engine or something – in the road. And there was somebody, definitely a security guard or maybe a military person, with his car in front of it making sure no one touched it.”<sup>2</sup>

### LEE EVEY’S STATEMENT IS VERIFIED

These statements (and *many* more like them) leave no doubt that a large area *outside* the Pentagon was strewn with pieces of aircraft. A few larger pieces were present, but they were rare, and the largest were found in the parking lot or on Interstate 395. A U.S. Navy photograph taken by Mark Faram shows one of the rare



larger pieces that came to rest on the Pentagon lawn. It has led to speculation over what part of a Boeing 757 it could be, but the most important thing about this photo in my opinion is that it shows the debris of small chunks of metal all over the grass in the background. Apparently, Lee Evey was right when he said that there was considerable debris outside the E ring but that it just wasn’t very visible. Pieces the size of a half dollar would not show up in photographs taken from a distance – and that created the false impression that the Pentagon lawn was unruffled and that the plane had simply vanished.

Even so, how is it possible to cause a huge plane like this to be pulverized into such small pieces? The official explanation is that the structure of the Pentagon recently had been hardened to withstand the impact of missiles and bombs. Therefore, this crash was different from others because the surface did not yield. It would have been like flying into a granite cliff. The plane would have been shattered into a million pieces.

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by Lt. Col. (ret) Tom McClain, E-Mails from Listeners and Readers, [http://www.geoffmetcalf.com/pentagon/pentagon-email\\_20020316.html](http://www.geoffmetcalf.com/pentagon/pentagon-email_20020316.html).

<sup>2</sup> “Amazing Stories: The air, the island and the fortress,” American Counseling Association, *CTOnline*, archived at <http://www.ratical.org/ratville/CAH/linkscopy/amazing1001.htm>.

Is that a valid explanation? I believe it is. We must remember that Flight 77 was not trying to land at minimum speed. At the moment of impact it was flying at full throttle with its flaps up. Had the plane been at maximum speed, it could have been traveling over 500 miles per hour. However, it had executed a series of complex spiraling maneuvers immediately prior to its final thrust, and that would have been impossible at full speed. Witnesses heard the engines rev up at the final moment, indicating that, prior to that, the plane had been at reduced power in order to execute the turns. Even so, it is likely that it was traveling at least 300 and possibly 400 miles per hour at the instant of impact. By comparison, a plane that drops from the sky, subject only to the force of gravity, will fall at a maximum rate of 135 miles per hour. Those who have witnessed high-speed impacts of military planes in combat attest to the fact that the debris is similar to what was found at the Pentagon. Col. McClain explains:

I used to fly the F-4 Phantom, a 25 ton behemoth of a fighter jet that was built like a locomotive. Yet in high-speed crashes, very little is ever recovered of it. I saw the remains of one Phantom that crashed at over 600 mph and the largest part left was the tail hook. Everything else was vaporized or reduced to parts no larger than your thumb.<sup>1</sup>

In 1988, the Sandia National Laboratories conducted a test to determine the ability of reinforced concrete to protect a nuclear reactor from the impact of a jet aircraft. The plane was an F-4 Phantom with two engines, the same type flown by Col. McClain. It was traveling at 480 miles per hour upon impact. The test established that “the major impact force was from the engines.” Video of the test shows that the entire aircraft disintegrated upon impact, leaving no recognizable parts behind. The video and still photos can be viewed at the Sandia web site.<sup>2</sup>



## WERE EXPLOSIVES ON BOARD?

There is another possible scenario that we cannot ignore if for no other reason than to make sure we have looked at all possibilities before rejecting them. This one involves the conjecture that high-energy explosives may have been on board. Agreed,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> Sandia Science Photo Gallery, Sandia National Laboratories, <http://www.sandia.gov/media/NRgallery00-03.htm>.

that sounds pretty far fetched and, like anything else that is outside the official explanation, it raises questions no one wants to ask, such as who could have placed the explosives on board and why. A more cautious person than myself would just sidestep that issue and avoid the potential for criticism, but my nature compels me to take a look anyway just to see if there is anything behind this speculation.

At the DoD briefing on September 15, news reporters were told: “The nose of the plane just barely broke through the inside of the C ring.... That’s the extent of penetration of the aircraft.”<sup>1</sup> The C ring is the third ring of offices counting from the outside. This is consistent with reports that the nose wheel was found between the C and B rings. That means that the nose of the aircraft penetrated six concrete walls



before coming to rest. Many observers feel that this is an unlikely scenario. The front of a Boeing 757 is not built to penetrate nine feet of concrete. At the Pentagon, it would have absorbed the greatest force of impact, yet it is the only part of the aircraft other than a portion of one engine that yielded recoverable parts. This does, indeed, seem strange.

Tim Timmerman is a military pilot who witnessed the impact from his apartment window overlooking the Pentagon. He said: “It didn’t appear to crash into the building; most of the energy was dissipated in hitting the ground, but I saw the nose break up, I saw the wings fly forward, and then the conflagration engulfed everything in flames.”<sup>2</sup> Vin Narayanan said: “The hijacked jet slammed into the Pentagon at a ferocious speed. But the Pentagon’s wall held up like a champ. It barely budged as the nose of the plane curled upward and crumpled before exploding into a massive fireball.”<sup>3</sup> It is easier to believe that the nose broke up or crumpled upon impact than that it pierced through nine feet of concrete. Nevertheless, *something* pierced those walls. If it wasn’t the nose of the aircraft, then what was it?

## A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION

I will leave it to others to provide a technical explanation of how a shaped charge is designed to accomplish precisely the effect that we saw at the Pentagon and how it could have cleared the way for shattered pieces of the nose section to follow.

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<sup>1</sup> “DoD News Briefing on Pentagon Renovation,” *Op. Cit.*

<sup>2</sup> “America Under Attack,” CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0109/11/bn.32.html>.

<sup>3</sup> “Tomorrow always belongs to us,” by Vin Narayanan, *USA TODAY*, Sept. 17, 2001, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2001/09/17/first-person.htm>.

Still others claim that there was a brief white flash at the instant of impact, which, they say, is the signature of an explosive device and does not occur with the ignition of jet fuel. I have no expertise to evaluate these things so, I can neither agree nor disagree. However, if this information is accurate, it would explain why the initial hole was only about twenty-feet in diameter and located at the point where the nosecone impacted, not where the heavier wings and structurally stronger engines struck.<sup>1</sup> This is conjecture, of course, but it is interesting to note that, although the odor of jet fuel permeated the crash site for many hours, immediately after the blast, several occupants of the Pentagon also reported smelling cordite, which is an explosive.

John Bowman, a retired Marine lieutenant colonel, was in Corridor Two near the main entrance to the south parking lot. He said: “Most people knew it was a bomb.”<sup>2</sup> Gilah Goldsmith, who is a personnel attorney at the Pentagon, said she saw a huge black cloud of smoke and that it smelled like gunpowder.<sup>3</sup> Don Perkal, whose office in the Pentagon was close to the point of impact, said: “People shouted in the corridor outside that a bomb had gone off.... Even before stepping outside I could smell the cordite. Then I knew explosives had been set off somewhere.”<sup>4</sup>

The use of high-energy explosives in the form of a shaped charge could help to explain several perplexing anomalies: (1) the relatively narrow area of impact damage, and (2) the surprising advance of the relatively fragile nose section through six concrete walls. However, it does not explain the remarkable absence of aircraft debris inside the building. In this scenario, it would have to be assumed that a second charge was placed in the aircraft, behind the nose section, that blasted the remaining debris out of the hole and back into the air or that the nose section broke away from the fuselage, most of which disintegrated and ricocheted upon impact with the outer wall. Either of these events would explain how the cabin oxygen tank ended up on I-395 instead of inside the building.

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<sup>1</sup> We have all seen photographs of firefighters looking at a round hole about six feet in diameter in the wall of one of the inner courts of the Pentagon. The words “Punch out” are sprayed on the wall next to the hole. I always assumed that this was where the nosecone of the plane punched out into the courtyard. However, when reading through the DoD reports, I discovered that this hole was punched out by firefighters to gain access and remove debris.

<sup>2</sup> “Where is Safe?” by Dennis Ryan, Sept. 14, 2001, [http://www.dcmilitary.com/army/pentagram/6\\_37/local\\_news/10380-1.html](http://www.dcmilitary.com/army/pentagram/6_37/local_news/10380-1.html).

<sup>3</sup> “Shul brings comfort to Pentagon worker’s close call,” by Debra Rubin, *Washington Jewish Week*, Sept. 21, 2001, <http://www.jewishsf.com/bk010921/usp14a.shtml>.

<sup>4</sup> “The Works of Humankind,” a dispatch by Don Merkal, Sept. 19, 2001, <http://www.mcsweeneys.net/2001/09/19perkal.html>.

## **THE INTENSE HEAT THEORY**

Contrary to this view, it is argued that the heat from burning jet fuel was so intense inside the building that it literally vaporized the aircraft debris. Indeed, there are witnesses who saw what appeared to be puddles of melted glass and aluminum; yet there is a great deal of “Pentagon metal” seen throughout the interior, including exposed steel rebar in the supporting columns. Body parts were recovered from all but five of the passengers and crew, indicating that steel and human remains survived, but the plane did not. The “intense heat” theory has problems.



So, what can we conclude? As intriguing as all of this is, the explosives theory still is just speculation. There is no hard evidence, such as a piece of the explosive casing or traces of chemical residue to confirm it – or if there is, it has not been released to the public. If we are to move on to bigger issues without losing credibility with those who have total faith in the honesty of their leaders, we cannot rely on conjecture and circumstantial evidence. Therefore, until hard evidence to the contrary is made public, we are compelled to accept the official story that the wings and tail of Flight 77 disintegrated by the force of impact; most of the fuselage inside the building was vaporized by intense heat; and the nose assembly penetrated six walls of reinforced concrete through its own structural strength and momentum.

## **WHERE ARE THE BODIES?**

One of the criticisms commonly heard about the government’s version of the Pentagon attack is that no bodies of passengers or crew were ever found. Technically, that is true, but the massive autopsy program conducted by the military in the days following 9/11 succeeded in identifying all but five of those on board Flight 77.<sup>1</sup> It was coordinated by the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) and was called Operation Noble Eagle, which I thought sounded a bit grandiose considering its actual purpose. But then everyone at the time was trying to ride the wave of patriotism that followed 9/11, so I chalked it off to an overly zealous PR staffer who was merely trying to get favorable recognition for his team. But the name continued to bother me

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<sup>1</sup> The remains of the hijackers were identified through the process of elimination. The forensic team had DNA samples, dental records, and other clues to the identity of all passengers and Pentagon workers. Five profiles found in the wreckage failed to match any of these, so it was concluded they must be the hijackers. There were five known profiles that did not match any fragments at all, so those were classified as missing but not positively identified.

at a subconscious level. Why would an autopsy team describe itself in terms that befit a commando raid against an enemy stronghold or a first landing on the moon?

Then it dawned on me. It was important to the government at that time to put to rest any doubts about what happened to the victims of 9/11. Grieving family members wanted to know, even if it was confirmation of what they dreaded. They looked to the government for answers, and it would have been unthinkable to make them wait. So a massive effort was launched, not merely as a team of autopsy specialists doing their grizzly job, but as a top priority government effort to bring closure to the anxiety and grief of those who lost their loved ones. In other words, it took on the aura of an act of American resolve to survive terrorism and to fight back. Operation Noble Eagle makes a lot more sense in that context.

For this to be successful, though, there would have to be very little ambiguity about the findings of this team. Family members want answers, not questions. The goal would be consensus, not ambiguity. This was inadvertently confirmed by Capt. Glenn Wagner, Director of AFIP, when he said: “The success of this investigation ... underscores the importance of a collaborative, cooperative enterprise where consensus, commitment, and communication are prized.”<sup>1</sup> Very interesting. I can understand the value of commitment and communication, but what is the merit of consensus? Consensus is a political asset, not a scientific one. One would think that *accuracy* would be the highest goal, but that isn’t even on the list.

I am making too much of this. After all, it is just a question of choosing a better word, but it serves to remind us that even scientific teams can be influenced by political considerations – especially if those teams work for the government – and one of the most pressing political needs after 9/11 was to establish consensus regarding the fate of those who lost their lives, especially those aboard Flight 77.

Operation Noble Eagle was conducted by a staff of over fifty people, all of them military personnel or government contractors. Most of them were assigned to gathering, labeling, and indexing specimens. According to the AFIP, the critical task of lining up specimens with victims’ names was done by a team of seven forensic scientists from the Army, the FBI, and the Smithsonian Institution.<sup>2</sup> At first, I was surprised to see the Smithsonian on this list, but then I remembered that the FBI previously had called in two Curators of Anthropology from the Smithsonian to authenticate autopsy reports at Waco. Douglas Owsley and Douglas Ubelaker came under criticism at the time for violating rules of forensic examination and then signing off on reports that exonerated the government from any responsibility for the deaths.

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<sup>1</sup> “AFIP’s Response to September 11,” *AFIP Letter*, Oct. 2001, p. 2, <http://www.afip.org/images/public/Dec01.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

Recalling this background did not make me feel comfortable about Operation Noble Eagle.

In spite of my misgivings about the government's autopsy reports at Waco, I studied the reports published by this group as objectively as possible and looked at the photographs of the men and women who worked on the various projects. It is inconceivable to me that these faces, brimming with pride in their work, belong to deceivers. If this team fabricated evidence to perpetuate a grizzly hoax on the American people, or even if just those few who wrote the final reports did so, it seems likely to me that there would be a whole slew of whistleblowers. But, of course, there are none. I still find it strange that, as far as I know, no one has ever reported the recovery of jewelry, pieces of laptop computers, eyeglasses, or metallic components of luggage at the Pentagon crash site. Nevertheless, unless there is one whopper of an exposé from inside the ranks of these forensic teams, I must conclude that the reports are accurate and that the passengers and crew died exactly as we have been told.

### **MISSING EVIDENCE**

One of the most worrisome aspects of 9/11 is the degree to which the federal government has not shared evidence with the public. The usual explanation is that this is necessary for national security. Supposedly, if we let the terrorists know how much we know about them, it would give them an advantage. That may be true in some circumstances, such as when we must protect sources of information, but it makes no sense when it involves concealing information from the American people about the terrorist attacks themselves.

Within hours of the impact, the Pentagon was swarming with FBI agents, picking up and cataloguing thousands of pieces of metallic debris. The controversy over the source and identity of these pieces could have been ended long ago simply by releasing for public inspection a master catalogue of these parts, including photographs of the most significant ones. That would have made it possible to identify many of the pieces as positively belonging to Flight 77. Three years have passed, and this has not been done.

### **BLACK BOXES**

The two black boxes for Flight 77 were found near the point where the plane impacted the building. Normally, these would have been turned over to the National Transportation Safety Board for analysis. Soon thereafter, the sound recordings and transcripts from the cockpit voice recorder would have been made available to representatives of the Federal Aviation Commission, the aircraft manufacturer, engine manufacturer, pilots association, and survivors. Not this time. The FBI immediately took possession of the recorders and conducted its own very private investigation with the NTSB merely providing technical advice. The excuse was that the recordings

contained crucial evidence for an ongoing investigation of a crime. Five and a-half months later, FBI Director Robert Mueller announced that the cockpit voice recorder contained "nothing useful." Nevertheless, the original memory chips were not released for independent analysis.<sup>1</sup>

Most of us would assume that "nothing useful" means the devices were so badly damaged that the recording was lost or unintelligible. That assumption would be strengthened by the report that the devices were charred by fire, and the end of one of them was torn open.<sup>2</sup> Upon closer examination, however, we discover that being charred by fire is *common* in plane crashes, and these devices are built to survive that. Regarding the torn-open end, we find that this, too, is common. Black boxes are divided into three parts. One is a transmitter that sends out a radio signal if the crash is at sea. One is a housing for electrical components. One is a housing for the memory chips that store data. In the event of a land crash, it is only this third component that needs to survive, and so it is the only part that is built to withstand extreme forces of impact and heat. The others often are torn apart on impact. The part that houses the memory chips, however, is nearly indestructible.

The September, 2000, issue of *Scientific American* magazine carried an article entitled "A Better Black Box" and explained it this way:

These recorders also contain circuit boards that process and compress the data, but only the memory chips are enclosed in the crash-survivable unit inside the box. This unit is covered with thick steel armor so that it can withstand a crushing impact shock. Beneath the steel is a layer of thermal insulation designed to protect the memory chips from the high-temperature fires that often ignite after a jet accident. ...

Nearly 100,000 flight recorders have been installed in commercial aircraft over the past four decades. ... Although older recorders using magnetic tape were susceptible to fire damage, no solid-state device has been destroyed in an accident to date.<sup>3</sup>

So now we must revisit the FBI's explanation. We note that Mueller did not say the voice recorder contained nothing or that it contained nothing intelligible, but that it contained nothing *useful*. And we are tempted to wonder: "Useful to whom?" If the

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<sup>1</sup> "Speed Likely Factor in WTC Collapse," CBS News,,  
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/02/25/attack/main501989.shtml>.

<sup>2</sup> "Web Exclusive: Washington's Heroes," MSNBC News/Newsweek, Sept. 28, 2001,  
<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3069699/>.

<sup>3</sup> "Working Knowledge; A Better Black Box," Scientific American Digital, September 2000,  
[http://www.sciamdigital.com/index.cfm?sc=top\\_nav](http://www.sciamdigital.com/index.cfm?sc=top_nav).

recorder contained voices, but none of them were of hijackers, that certainly would not be useful to the government's version of the event.

To put this matter to rest, all the FBI has to do is turn over the original memory chips for independent analysis. The fact that it continues to refuse this can only add fuel to the fires of suspicion that something important is being withheld from the public.

## **SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**

The Pentagon has surveillance cameras at numerous places around the point of impact, but we were told that none of them succeeded in capturing images of the incoming aircraft. Initially, I found that hard to believe. The brain center of American security didn't have cameras that worked! But then it was pointed out to me that many surveillance systems record only single frames at intervals of a second or two apart. If that is the system used at the Pentagon, it would not be surprising if it missed the moment of impact, although one still would expect that some point within the plane's final seconds of approach would have been recorded.

The Pentagon eventually released five still photos from one of its cameras, which was positioned at the guard gate. They show a blur of something streaking close to the ground and impacting the Pentagon, followed by a great ball of fire, but it is impossible to tell what it was, because it is obscured by the gate structure. It was never explained why only these five frames were released. If still images were recorded every second or so, then this may be all there is to see. On the other hand, if these frames had an interval of less than a second apart or if they were taken from a full-motion video, the rest of the frames might give a better view of the incoming object. Either way, because of the controversy surrounding this issue, the public has a right to a full explanation. If full-motion video was the source, it should be released for public viewing. The government should clarify this issue one way or the other instead of leaving us to speculate.



There is a CITCO gas station located at the entrance of the Pentagon with a surveillance video camera pointing in the direction of the impact zone. This camera

would have viewed the entire event. That should have ended the controversy even before it started. Nothing could be more dramatic or conclusive than images of an American Airlines jet plowing into the side of the Pentagon. However, according to the owner, Mr. Jose Velasquez: “I’ve never seen what the pictures look like. The FBI was here within minutes and took the film.”<sup>1</sup>

What a wonderful example of FBI efficiency. The government says it had no idea that terrorists would use airplanes to attack commercial or government buildings. Yet, the FBI was on the spot within *minutes* of the Pentagon strike. The important question, however, is, not how quickly the surveillance tape at the CITCO gas station was confiscated, but why was it taken at all. Presumably, it was needed for the investigation of a crime. But that was three years ago, and the American people have never seen the images on that tape. If no images were captured, the FBI should say so and allow this matter to be put to rest.

### **OTHER SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**

Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough are reporters for *The Washington Post*. Ten days after the Pentagon attack, they published the following report:



A security camera atop a hotel close to the Pentagon [the Hilton] may have captured dramatic footage of the hijacked Boeing 757 airliner as it slammed into the western wall of the Pentagon. Hotel employees sat watching the film in shock and horror several times before the FBI confiscated the video as part of its investigation.<sup>2</sup>

If this report is accurate, then we know that something important *was* captured on this tape. Otherwise, the employees would not have watched it in shock and horror. The FBI has never revealed the images from this camera.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is housed close to the Pentagon. It has several surveillance cameras positioned to monitor freeway traffic along Interstate 395. There is reason to believe that one of those cameras captured an image of the incoming aircraft as it flew only a few feet above frightened motorists. The company that manufactures and maintains this closed circuit TV system is the Arinc Company. The following announcement appears on its web site:

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<sup>1</sup> “Three Month On, Tension Lingers Near the Pentagon,” by Bill McKelway, *National Geographic News*, Dec. 11, 2001, [http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/12/1211\\_wirepentagon.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/12/1211_wirepentagon.html). Please note that many people refer to all types of video media as film, especially if they remember back to the days before videotape became common.

<sup>2</sup> “Video of Attack” by Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough, *Inside the Ring*, Sept. 21, 2001, <http://www.gertzfile.com/gertzfile/ring092101.html>.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) CCTV system used to manage the Northern Virginia freeway network had cameras in place that observed the September 11 crash site at the Pentagon. This CCTV system and the VDOT Smart Traffic Center were used as a command center for emergency responders and cleanup and recovery crews following the incident.<sup>1</sup>

It was difficult to believe my eyes when I saw that statement. Was this the video we all were looking for? I immediately sent an email to the company asking if they had images of the impact. On August 8, I received the following reply:

Dear Mr. Griffin.

To the best of my knowledge, the cameras were not observing the site at the moment of impact but were used during the response phase of the incident. No recorded images are available. Thank You For Your Interest in ARINC.

Rob Ayers, Director, ITS, [rayers@arinc.com](mailto:rayers@arinc.com)

This was my reply:

Hello Rob Ayers.

Thank you for your prompt response. I understand that the cameras were not aimed at the Pentagon but at traffic, so my inquiry was improperly stated. What I meant to ask was if the cameras recorded an image of the aircraft as it passed over traffic. If no recorded images are available, does that mean that none exist? Or that they never existed? Thanks again for your help on this important issue.

On September 16, Mr. Ayers responded cautiously: “No such images exist. I am not in a position to speculate on whether any such images ever existed.” Ayers had sidestepped the question. Notice: he did not say he didn’t *know* if images ever existed. He said he wasn’t in a position to *speculate* about it. Of course not. In his “position,” speculation would not be appropriate. That’s not what he is paid to do. I replied: “Who can we contact at either Arinc or VDOT who would know if images ever existed and what happened to them?”

On September 19, Ayers replied: “They do not maintain archives of recorded images at VDOT. To do so would open them up to all kinds of FOIA requests and legal issues. Therefore they do not keep any historical images to avoid these problems.”

Hmmm. Let’s see if I understand this correctly. The Virginia Department of Transportation, whose mission is to coordinate and facilitate *transportation* within the state is worried about people using the Freedom of Information Act to request access to their archives? And, to avoid having to show what they have, they erase the

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.arinc.com/products/rail\\_control\\_ctr/cctv\\_systems.html](http://www.arinc.com/products/rail_control_ctr/cctv_systems.html).

images? Why would there be a flood of requests for scenes of traffic jams and railroad tracks? And, even if there were such requests, why would they be submitted through the Freedom of Information Act? Wouldn't a simple typed letter be sufficient? And wouldn't the Department be happy to provide those recordings as a public service? Even if such a dubious policy existed, wouldn't you think that 9/11 would be an exception? Is it reasonable to believe that, on that historic day, with traffic jams surrounding the Pentagon, and aircraft debris falling all over the highway, no one at the Department thought it might be a good idea to save the recordings?

In any event, Mr. Ayers did not answer my main question, which was who would *know* if an image of the plane had been recorded, someone who would not have to *speculate* about it. So, once again, I replied: "Thank you for explaining why images are not archived. Please advise who was involved with monitoring and rotating recordings on that date. We are seeking contact with anyone at Arinc or VDOT who would know if images of Flight 77 were viewed or recorded. Thank you again for your help."

This time, Mr. Ayers did not respond. If I receive a reply, I will add it to a future revision of this report. In the meantime, this is probably the best I am going to get from Arinc. A similar inquiry sent directly to the Virginia Department of Transportation was never answered at all.

If images of the plane had never been recorded, one would think that Arinc and VDOT would simply say so. There would be no need for failure to respond to inquiries or convoluted answers. "Our cameras were out of commission at the time" or "Our cameras do not face that section of Interstate 395" would be easy to prove, and it would have put an end to the controversy. Because this did not happen, and especially because of what *did* happen at the CITCO gas station and the Sheraton Hotel, it is not unreasonable to believe that a traffic camera at the Virginia Department of Transportation probably *did* capture an image of the plane, but the recording was confiscated or destroyed by the FBI.

## **CONTROVERSIAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

The Navy photo discussed previously shows what appears to be a fairly large piece of aircraft lying on the lawn in front of the Pentagon. It is painted light blue with a white and red stripe. This, we are told, is a piece of Flight 77, and there is little reason to doubt it. The colors are right, and that is what it is *supposed* be. However, its



small size and unusual shape have fueled the suspicion that it may have been part of a smaller aircraft. In the photo it appears that the structural covering is too thin for what we expect to see on large aircraft. There is little about the shape or structure of this fragment that compels the conclusion that it is from Flight 77. Actually, it bears a rather strong similarity in size and shape to the engine cowling of a Global Hawk. Normally, this would not even be an issue but, under the present controversy, it has become a matter of concern among those who do not feel comfortable with the official version. Fortunately, it would be easy to put this matter to rest. All that would be necessary is to have this piece analyzed by Boeing engineers, under conditions open to public scrutiny, and identified as having come from a specified structure of the aircraft. This has not been done – or, if it has, the public has not been informed.

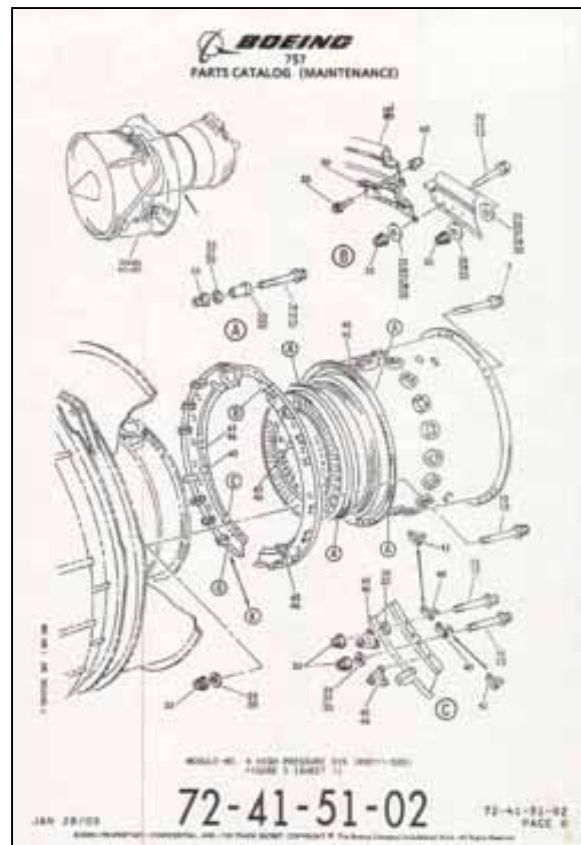


Photographs from the crash site show what looks like the rim of a landing wheel and what appears to be a piece of the engine’s turbofan. Surely these are from Flight 77. One might think this would close the case right there, but not so. Critics claim that the landing gear is similar to what is found on a Global Hawk, and the size of the turbofan is too small for a Boeing 757. Photographs of the Hawk’s wheels seem to support that claim; but, upon closer examination, the number of spokes around the rim in the wreckage does not line up with the number in a Hawk. There are conflicting photos on the Internet purporting to show the landing gear of a 757. One shows the same number of holes around the rim as seen in the wreckage rim, but the other shows more holes. We have requested confirmation from Boeing regarding which photo is correct, and their answer will be posted to this web site just as soon as received. Obviously, this is of great importance, because, if the number of holes in the wreckage rim is different from the number in a 757, the rim must have come from some other type of aircraft. In any event, neither of the photos resemble the rim of a Global Hawk.

There is no such ambiguity, however, about the engine. Richard Stanley and Jerry Russell obtained a manufacturer’s detail drawing of the combustion chamber in a Boeing 757 engine, and it shows a strong resemblance to the part that was photographed. This is what they say about it:

The engine compressor or turbine disk appears to be approximately the correct diameter to have been used in a Rolls Royce RB211-535E4B engine, as used in American Airlines 757 aircraft. The fragment of the high pressure combustor casing also comports with the string of fuel inlet nozzle holes, the mounting bosses of which have the correct number of screw holes (6).... Some observers have claimed that these engine parts are too small to have come from a 757. The confusion is because the RB-211 engine configuration is dominated by the large turbofan at the front of the engine, which is what people expect a 757 engine should look like. However, because the RB-211 is a “high bypass” engine, the high-pressure compressor, combustion chamber and turbine are all much smaller than the turbofan, as shown in the small overview.<sup>1</sup>

All of this speculation could be brought to an instant halt simply by allowing the public to inspect the catalogue of these parts and then request Boeing engineers (and any others who care to participate) to identify them. What could be simpler than that? But, for some reason, the government continues to hide the data from public view. Something is wrong with this picture.



<sup>1</sup> “The Five-Sided Fantasy Island,” by Richard Stanley & Jerry Russell, March 12, 2004, <http://www.911-strike.com/engines.htm>.

There is a well-publicized photograph taken on 9/11 showing a group of men who appear to be carrying a large object, about five feet high and ten feet long, covered by a blue tarp. It is possible that this was one of the engine pieces that we are told fell into the parking area. There also has been speculation that this may have been a piece of wreckage that would be recognizable as *not* belonging to a B-757. Otherwise, why would it have been covered? Personally, I doubt if it is either of those. It appears to be very light for its size. The men carrying it are not straining in the least, and some of them seem to be barely touching it. That would tend to rule out the engine theory. The problem with this photo is that we cannot see what is at the right side of the object. For all we know, it could be resting on the prongs of a forklift, in which case the men would be merely helping to keep it balanced. The object appears



to have a uniform shape, like a commercial container. It is slightly tapered at the top but uniform all the way along the ridge. I cannot imagine a piece of wreckage with this shape. Admittedly, it could have been covered with a lid or a box, but we must not be committed to the assumption that this object is being carried *away*. It could just as well be *arriving*.

Rescue and cleanup operations undoubtedly required a great deal of incoming materials and supplies. In that scenario, it would not be surprising to see a pallet neatly wrapped for transportation. As I look at the photo, it is easy to imagine that these men are unloading something relatively lightweight from the bed of a truck. I have been unable to find any acknowledgment of this photo by government sources, but it would be easy simply to tell us what this object was and why it was covered. I have no doubt that the explanation will be entirely satisfactory, but we still are entitled to know what was under that tarp for no other reason than to put this matter to rest.

## CONCLUSION

I am not arguing that Flight 77 did not crash at the Pentagon. I believe it did. I am not claiming that the passengers and crew did not perish in the crash. I believe they did. My conclusion is simply that there are burning questions about the evidence that cry out for answers. These are the questions:

1. How was it possible for the FBI to arrive at the CITCO gas station within minutes of the impact and already have instructions to confiscate surveillance tapes?

2. Why were the surveillance tapes confiscated by the FBI from the CITCO station never shown to the public?
3. Why were the surveillance tapes confiscated by the FBI from the Sheraton Hotel never shown to the public?
4. Did the cameras at the Virginia Department of Transportation capture images of the incoming aircraft? If not, why not? If so, why were they never shown to the public?
5. Only five frames were shown to the public from the surveillance camera at the Pentagon guard station. If these were taken from a stop-motion camera, were there any additional frames between the ones released? If they were taken from a full-motion video, why hasn't the full sequence been released?
6. Did other surveillance cameras at the Pentagon capture images of the incoming aircraft? If not, why not? If so, why haven't they been shown to the public?
7. If there are clearly identifiable parts of Flight 77, why hasn't a catalogue and related photos of those parts been released for public inspection?
8. Why has the FBI not released the memory chips from the cockpit voice recorders for independent analysis?
9. Are the Flight 77 autopsy records available for inspection by independent professionals? If not, why not?

These are the burning questions that must be answered before we can say this case is closed. The government has not answered, and this has led many to wonder if something is being covered up. Those who are not content with the official explanation should not be categorized as ignoramuses – or, as my angry subscriber suggested, “disgruntled Americans for authorities to keep track of.” They have logical questions. It would be easy to provide the answers without sacrificing national security. In fact, it is the other way around. Concealing evidence creates a climate of suspicion and distrust that can only lead to a weakening of national unity. If we truly support our government, we must insist that those in office immediately release the evidence and answer the questions.

I would like to conclude as I began: with an appeal to put this issue into perspective. We must not squabble over who has the best interpretation of this piece of evidence or that. Instead, we should unite on the one issue about which there is little doubt. Even if all of these burning questions are eventually answered to our satisfaction, the grim reality is that our collectivist leaders had ample warning of the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and did nothing to prevent them. It is not necessary to go further than that to know we have a huge problem. Their motive was to use the threat of terrorism and an endless war *on* terrorism to condition public opinion to support

four objectives: (1) the creation of an American hegemony in the Middle East – what CFR planners call a *Pax Americana*; (2) the use of military power to deliver control of the vast oil resources in that region into the hands of multinational oil companies; (3) an acceleration of the evolution of the UN into a world government based on the model of collectivism; and (4) to convince Americans that it is necessary to abandon their privacy and freedom in exchange for homeland security. This last objective is essential if the United States is to be comfortably merged into a collectivist world government.

To reverse that plan is an absolute necessity if freedom is to survive anywhere in the world. Let us unite in this common cause.

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This analysis was written in haste to answer the many inquiries that arrived after offering of *911 In Plane Site*. I spent only a few weeks in research prior to the first draft, so it is likely that I have missed something important. I welcome your critique, especially if it points out errors of fact. I anticipate having to make corrections and additions in future updates. Emails should be sent to [griffin@realityzone.com](mailto:griffin@realityzone.com). Although the demands on my time will prevent me from entering into correspondence, I deeply appreciate your help.

**The following items relating to this topic are available from The Reality Zone @ [www.realityzone.com](http://www.realityzone.com) or (800) 595-6596.**



### **911 in Plane Site**

This is the video that triggered the events leading to the writing of this report. It presents evidence that the World Trade Towers were not struck on 9/11 by commercial airliners but by military tankers flown by remote control – and that the Pentagon was not struck by a Boeing 757 but by a smaller aircraft, perhaps a military drone. We do not endorse this view for reasons stated in this report but we believe that the program raises valid questions that cry out for answers. The DVD also contains a bonus section revealing that, at the bombing of the Murrah Federal building in Oklahoma City, there was not just one bomb, but four. There was one in the Ryder truck at the curb and three *inside* the building. At the same time that the truck bomb went off, one of the inside bombs also detonated, and that is what destroyed the center of the building. The other two failed to detonate. It was stated that these interior charges were more powerful than the nitrate bomb on the street. All three of the interior explosives together would have demolished the building, causing a collapse similar to the Twin Towers in New York.

You will see live TV coverage confirming the presence of these bombs within the first hour following the explosion. You will see bomb squads called in to remove the undetonated charges. One live report on TV explains that the unexploded bombs could allow experts to determine who made them. But then the FBI took charge of the investigation, and the bombs inside the building were never mentioned again. The perplexing facts surrounding these events force us to consider the possibility that the tragedies which have frightened Americans into surrendering their liberties in exchange for homeland security may have constituted one of the most sinister covert operations in all history. Is this fact or fantasy? See the evidence and judge for yourself. Available at: <http://www.realityzone.com/plane.html>.



### **The Hidden Agenda** **Merging America into World Government**

as told by Norman Dodd, Congressional investigator of tax-exempt foundations. In this program you will learn that the major tax-exempt foundations, since at least 1945, have been operating to promote an agenda that has little to do with charity, good works, or philanthropy.

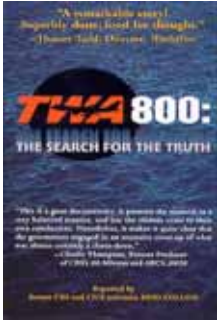
The real objectives include the creation of a worldwide collectivist state, which is to be ruled from behind the scenes by those same interests that control the foundations. This story is told by Norman Dodd who, in 1954, was the staff director of the Congressional Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations, known as the Reece Committee, in recognition of its Chairman, Congressman Carroll Reece. Mr. Dodd speaks from experience with the leaders of the great foundations of that period, some of whom were amazingly frank about their goals. This interview, conducted by G. Edward Griffin, has captured a rare piece of history and illustrates the continuity between the past and present drive for a “New World Order.” Available at: <http://www.realityzone.com/hiddenagenda.html>.



### **The Final Report** **on the Bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building**

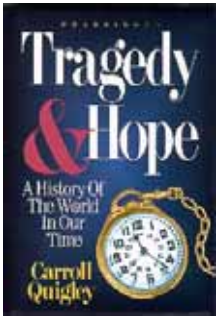
Compiled by Charles Key, former Oklahoma state representative and member of The Oklahoma Bombing Investigation Committee. Here is the product of six years of meticulous research showing that (1) the government had prior knowledge of the bombing, yet did nothing to alert the victims, (2) there were two teams of bombers, (3) the building was destroyed by bombs planted inside the building, not by the truck bomb outside, (4) the

FBI concealed evidence of the bombs inside the building, and (5) the FBI concealed evidence of a Middle-East connection to the event. You may have heard these allegations before, but here, at last, is the hard evidence. Read it and weep for America. Available at: <http://www.realityzone.com/finalreport.html>.



### **TWA 800; The Search for the Truth**

This documentary shows beyond doubt that the official story of the destruction of TWA Flight 800, which blew up in 1996 after takeoff from Kennedy Airport, is wrong – and that there is a cover-up at the highest levels to conceal evidence. Several plausible theories are presented as to the real cause. One is friendly fire from a US Naval exercise then underway in the vicinity. The other is a terrorist's surface-to-air missile. The main issue here is not that Flight 800 was shot down but that our government has concealed the evidence! You cannot afford to be uninformed about this event. Available at: <http://www.realityzone.com/twa.html>.



### **Tragedy & Hope: A History of the World in Our Time**

by Professor Carroll Quigley

This is the book that blows the lid off the secret organization created by Cecil Rhodes to quietly gain control over the nations of the world and establish a global government based on the model of collectivism. Professor Quigley (President Clinton's history professor at Georgetown University) was a trusted supporter of this organization and was given access to its private papers. When his book was released by a major New York publishing house, it was expected that it would be read only by academics who are interested in the organization's history and sympathetic to its goals. However, when it began to be quoted by critics, the publisher withdrew the book from print. This led to the appearance of an underground version that circulated throughout the 1970s and 80s. Eventually, the publisher was pressured into authorizing this official reprint edition, which is an exact replica of the original. It is a mammoth history interspersed with startling information about the secret

organization's impact on almost every major event of modern history. Available at: <http://www.realityzone.com/tragedy.html>.

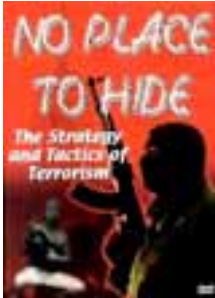


### **The Anglo-American Establishment**

by Professor Carroll Quigley

The best way to describe this book is to quote its first words: "The Rhodes Scholarships, established by the terms of Cecil Rhode's

seventh will, are known to everyone. What is not so widely known is that Rhodes in five previous wills left his fortune to form a secret society, which was to devote itself to the preservation and expansion of the British Empire. And what does not seem to be known to anyone is that this secret society ... continues to exist to this day. ... This group is, as I shall show, one of the most important historical facts of the twentieth century.” Available at: <http://www.realityzone.com/aae.html>.



## **No Place to Hide**

### **The Strategy and Tactics of Terrorism**

This video documentary removes the mystery from terrorism. On the surface, it appears to be irrational and counter-productive but, when the long-range strategy and tactics are understood, it becomes recognizable as part of a larger plan to weaken and destroy target governments. It is but one phase of the Marxist-Leninist dogma of so-called Wars of National Liberation. The terrorists themselves are dispensable players in this deadly game because, if the target governments are finally toppled, it will not be the terrorists who come to power, but the international Marxist apparatus, which has trained and supplied them. Here are the documented facts that show the detailed operation of this network. The program is built upon sound research and offers powerful visual images and amazing historical footage. Written and narrated by G. Edward Griffin. Available at:

<http://www.realityzone.com/noplacetohide.html>.