

Effective stage magic produces the illusion of an event that did not actually happen, at least not in the manner implied by the illusion.

The implied explanation is "magic", while the actual explanation, invariably more complicated, is quite different. Most members of the audience know that the implied explanation is wrong. They try to imagine how the effect was produced. Very few believe the "official" explanation.

In other, blacker forms of magic, the manipulative element remains but the polarity of the audience is reversed. Most members of the audience "know" that the implied explanation is correct and do not try to imagine how the effect was produced. Very few disbelieve it. If the events of September 11, 2001, were all part of an elaborate piece of stage magic, in effect, how could it have been arranged? This article explores one possibility. The name of the trick is "Ghost Riders in the Sky." It begins with a peek behind the curtain on that fateful day.

Flight 11

The morning of September 11 dawned bright and clear over Boston's Logan Airport as crews arrived for the first flights of the day. The departure lounge for American Airlines Flight 11 was already filling with passengers when John Ogonowski, the pilot, and Thomas McGuinness, the first officer, arrived to board their Boeing 767 and begin the pre-flight check.

As they walked through the lounge, Ogonowski casually scanned the waiting passengers, a longtime habit. Nothing out of the ordinary.

In the cockpit, he and McGuinness worked through the long checklist and, when they came to engine start-up, the two giant General Electric turbofan engines roared into life. The weather reports were good all the way to Los Angeles. It would be a routine flight.

At 7:45 the flight crew closed the cabin doors and the 767 began to taxi out to the runway. Clearance came minutes later and, at 7:59, the engines opened to full throttle and the 767 became airborne. It climbed into clear blue skies, leveled at 25,000 feet, and headed west toward Los Angeles. Ogonowski called up the coordinates for Los Angeles on the flight control computer, then engaged the INS/autopilot system. A flight attendant brought coffee to the cockpit and stayed to chat briefly, before resuming her duties.

The flight continued normally until 8:27, nearly half an hour into the trip. At that point Ogonowski's chest felt tight and he experienced difficulty breathing. Was it a heart attack? He glanced nervously at McGuinness, thinking that if the symptoms got worse, he should warn the co-pilot that he was having a medical problem. But McGuinness' face was white and he appeared to be gasping for air. Then he vomited. "We have a situation," declared Ogonowski, trying desperately to think. There were shouts and screams coming from the passenger compartment behind the closed cockpit doors. His mind seemed to be clouding over and breathing was now impossible. He managed to say, "Call the flight attendants," before passing out. McGuinness' head was already lolling to one side.

Back in the passenger area, the last flight attendant to lose consciousness, sank slowly to her knees before passing out in the aisle. The aircraft smelled of vomit and feces. Except for one or two passengers lying in the aisles, most remained in their seats. They appeared to have all fallen asleep, but they were dead. Everybody in the aircraft was dead.

Back in the cockpit, pilot and copilot sat dead in their seats, eyes staring blankly at the deep blue sky above the cockpit windows. The aircraft continued to fly normally, when suddenly the numbers on the inertial navigation system display changed. Instead of the coordinates for Los Angeles airspace, new numbers jumped into place. The aircraft banked steeply to the left and began a slow descent, adding another 100 mph to its airspeed.

In the distance, the New York skyline was growing steadily larger through the cockpit windows, though no one saw it. The aircraft, continuing to descend, headed for lower Manhattan.

By the time the 767 crossed the East River, it would have been all too clear where the aircraft was going. The World Trade Center Towers loomed steadily larger, dead ahead, through the cockpit windows. At 8:45, the Boeing 767 slammed into the North Tower. A huge ball of flame, burning jet fuel, blossomed from the southeast side of the North Tower. The passengers and crew of Flight 11, having been gassed, were now cremated, along with hundreds of office workers in the North Tower.

At 9:03, 18 minutes later, even as thousands of New Yorkers gaped upward in astonishment and dismay at the burning North Tower, another Boeing 767, approaching from the southwest, crashed into the South Tower. United Airlines Flight 175 had also departed from Boston Logan that morning at 8:15.

At 9:45 a third aircraft crashed into one corner of the Pentagon building. At 10:00 am, a fourth crashed in a field near Pittsburgh, apparently unable to complete its mission.

Within minutes of the first crash, major networks carried the developing story. Four apparent suicide attacks involving large passenger aircraft had just struck two of America's most important landmarks. Asked for their impressions, people on the street described it as "unreal." The scale was unprecedented. The drama swept away the debris of ordinary life, shocking Americans into numbness, then anger.

In the days that followed, the story of four cells of Arab terrorists emerged with unprecedented speed. The names of the hijackers were revealed, along with their affiliation or "links" to al Qaida and the dreaded Osama bin Laden. Soon, Bush would declare his "war on terrorism." Soon American forces would be heading for Afghanistan. Soon Israel would be re-invading the West Bank and Gaza.

The September attacks acquired, almost from the start, an apocalyptic dimension, as if the hijackers stood proxy for the Four Horsemen themselves. This analysis explores the possibility that the aircraft were hijacked not by persons physically present in the cockpit, but by a simple combination of two hi-tech methods. In such a case, there would be no Horsemen, only "ghost riders," recalling the American ballad, Ghost Riders in the Sky.

Analyzing the Terror Attacks

The discrepancy between the account I have just given of the hijackings and the one reported in the media is obvious and, to many, highly improbable. How could anyone question such an open-and-shut case? There had been the decisive and amazingly rapid unfolding of the FBI investigation, wherein the domestic agency had pretty well solved a case involving 19 terrorists in just two days. (It took them several years to find one terrorist - the Unabomber.) There had also been the steady stream of timed press releases and Pentagon briefings, the disclosure of a war plan by the White House within days of the attacks. What could they be but the work of a well-prepared government? Besides, people who had only just begun adjusting to the "new reality" would hardly be in a mood to exchange it for something far worse. Nevertheless, the "unreality" of the attacks themselves would seem to join seamlessly with the unreality of the subsequent drama.

In a following section I will examine the technical feasibility of hijacking large commercial aircraft electronically, as described in the opening scenario. I do not claim that this is what actually what happened on September 11. But even less would I claim that the attacks were planned and carried out by "Arab terrorists."

I claim only that the method described below amounts to one of several methods, albeit among the most efficient, for converting passenger aircraft into flying fuel bombs. I must therefore also claim that the rush to judgment following September 11 was, at best, foolhardy on the part of the Bush administration and, at worst, disastrous for America. In that event, the evidence compiled here points to elements within the power structure of the US government and it can only be concluded that the United States itself has been hijacked.

Before explaining how a hi-tech hijacking might be feasible, it would be appropriate to disclose some findings related to the attacks for clues they may contain that something quite different from hijackings by

"Arab terrorists" was in progress that day.

The historical context: First and most important, no attack blamed on any recognized "terrorist" group, whether Palestinian, Basque separatist, Irish nationalist, Tamil Tiger, Red Army brigade, or what have you, was ever carried out without the group responsible claiming responsibility. The whole point of the attack is to publicize a cause. The only exception to this rule in the history of terrorism is the mysterious Al Qaida, led by the equally mysterious Osama bin Laden. Robert Fisk, the well-known British reporter, gave voice to the same opinion: "They left no message behind. They left just silence." In Fisk's opinion, this was quite out of character for any terrorist organization. (MacIntyre, 2001)

If Al Qaida was responsible for the attacks, what possible reason would bin Laden have for not claiming responsibility? The White House claim that Al Qaida's purpose was to inflict "nameless terror" on America is deeply contradictory. The only other terrorist acts for which none of the "regular" organizations took responsibility, namely, the bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, as well as the attack on the USS Cole in 2000, were also blamed on Al Qaida. What reason would bin Laden have for imagining that the terror inflicted by Al Qaida on September 11 would be blamed on anyone but Al Qaida, let alone be "nameless?" It simply fails to make sense. Worse yet, bin Laden has repeatedly denied involvement in the attacks. On September 11 bin Laden said "This terrorist act is the action of some American group. I have nothing to do with it." Later, on September 28, "I have already said that I am not involved in the 11 September attacks in the United States. As a Muslim, I try my best to avoid telling a lie. I had no knowledge of these attacks, nor do I consider the killing of innocent women, children, and other humans as an appreciable [sic] act." (Ummat, 2001)

Nevertheless, the White House claimed to have "links" between Al Qaida and the September 11 attacks, secret information that, for reasons of "national security," could not be disclosed to the public.

Intelligence leaks: Another discrepancy in the September 11 attacks is apparent to anyone who has followed the history of "terrorism." The sheer size of the operation as outlined by the White House, the high degree of coordination involved, and the need for absolute secrecy, is not one, but two, orders of magnitude greater in scale than anything previously attempted by any terrorist group. Indeed, even the previous attacks blamed on Al Qaida were relatively simple operations involving the clandestine transport of explosive materials (by boat or car) to the target site. In the large-scale operation of September 11, the requirement of secrecy was especially important.

The scale of the operation, however it may have been achieved, was more suited to a large, well-organized intelligence agency, with as many as 50 field agents involved, each privy to one or more aspects of the plan. With such a large operation, leaks are inevitable. The two cited below both point to a very different source for the attacks.

According to Ha'aretz, Israel's largest daily, two employees of Odigo, an Israel-based messaging service in one of the WTC towers, received email warnings of the attack two hours before impact on September 11. (Dror, 2001) The employees immediately informed the company, which cooperated with Israeli security services, as well as American law enforcement agencies, giving them the source of the message. No follow-up on this story has ever been made available, which leads one to believe that the message did not come from a "terrorist" source: If such a source had been suspected, much less proved, the administration would not have hesitated to use the item in its "war on terrorism."

An interesting report of another leak alleges that "A US military intelligence report revealed details of an internal intelligence memo linking Mossad to the WTC and Pentagon attacks. The memo was in circulation three weeks before the attacks." (Stern, 2001) It pointed to a threat that Mossad was planning a covert operation on US soil to turn public opinion against the Arabs." David Stern, an expert on Israeli intelligence operations, stated, "This attack required a high level of military precision and the resources of an advanced intelligence agency. In addition, the attackers would have needed to be extremely familiar with both Air Force One flight operations, civil airline flight paths, and aerial assault tactics on sensitive US cities like Washington." Stern also pointed out that the attacks "serve no Arab group or nation's interest, but their timing came in the midst of international condemnation of Israel . . ."

The virtual celebration: A highly suspicious occurrence was the airing of a videotape supposedly shot in Palestine on the day of the attacks. The video shows Palestinians celebrating something. The media claimed that the Palestinians were celebrating the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The only problem with the tapes is the time of day. Shadows thrown by the stands and buildings in the vicinity of the celebrants clearly show the local time to be approximately noon. At the time of the attacks, however, it was already 5:00 pm (daylight time) in Palestine. At that time of day (and year), the angle of the shadows would be at most 30 degrees from the horizontal and readily visible on the video as deep shadows.

Since the tape is unquestionably a fake, shot at some other time and on some other occasion of celebration, it must be asked how it got into the hands of the American media (via an "independent producer") so quickly, unless it had been prepared in advance of the attacks. There is no other explanation for this anomaly.

Planted evidence: Another difficulty arises in the matter of evidence discovered by FBI investigators in the parking lots of airports used by the hijackers. In more than one rental vehicle, field officers recovered copies of the Qur'an and aircraft flight manuals. In a context where the White House was stressing the "sophistication" of the attackers, as well as the high state of organization and coordination necessary to carry them out, it would seem reasonable to assume that all operatives would have been extensively briefed on the importance of leaving no trace of themselves or their mission (in pursuit of "nameless terror"). Such a briefing would certainly include all personal possessions, religious documents, flight manuals, and so on. The rental vehicles would be left as clean as they were when they were rented. No Muslim, (especially, one supposes, a "fanatic") would ever leave a Qur'an in a rented vehicle, especially if he knew he would not be returning to it.

Come to think of it, why would any terrorist organization with such a high level of competence rent cars in the first place? After all, it would be simpler (and no less reliable) to take a cab to the airport.

Again, there are very serious discrepancies between the facts as reported and on-the-ground realities.

The Lebanese playboy: Ziad Jarrah, the alleged pilot of United Airlines Flight 93 (which crashed in Pennsylvania), presents those who seek to understand the September 11 attacks with serious difficulties. As revealed in a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) investigative report, first aired in November, 2001, Jarrah was the playboy son of a wealthy family in Lebanon. (MacIntyre, 2001) The family was only nominally Muslim and Jarrah, if anything, more so. He loved to go dancing with other young people of his set in nightclubs and even had a steady girl friend, hardly practices of a believing Muslim, let alone a fanatical one. Linden MacIntyre, host and reporter, traveled to Lebanon to interview the Jarrah family, then to Hamburg, where he discussed Ziad's behavior during the months leading up to September 11 with Jarrah's landlady. The Jarrahs were completely mystified by their son's alleged role in the hijackings. The landlady, who seemed rather fond of him, was also mystified.

Jarrah loved the good life but had one over-riding passion, to study aeronautical engineering and (probably) to learn how to fly. He went to Hamburg to study and it was there, according to his landlady, that he began making mysterious evening trips to Harburg, sometimes not returning until dawn. Harburg was the address of Mohammed Atta, one of the most notorious of the alleged hijackers, and the person who, MacIntyre opines, probably recruited Jarrah for a special mission. If this is true, although we do not know what Atta may have told Jarrah, June of 2000 finds him in Florida, taking flying lessons (light aircraft only) and discussing with his room-mate (also interviewed for the program) what it would be like to fly a large commercial aircraft.

Anyone with a reasonably active imagination can come up with several different stories that may have been fed to Jarrah (apart from the standard Al Qaida recruitment scenario) causing him to spend a few nights in Harburg or to take flying lessons in Florida. Such behaviour is easily induced by any reasonably competent field officer: A lovely and very cooperative lady in Harburg, as well as the promise of a position as private pilot to a wealthy Middle Eastern businessman currently living in Florida.

On September 9, just two days before the attacks, Jarrah telephoned his uncle in Lebanon. He sounded normal and reasonably happy, according to the uncle. He stated that he would be flying back to Lebanon in two weeks for a party which his family had planned. A new Mercedes awaited Jarrah, an anticipatory wedding gift which his father had purchased for him. MacIntyre professed no little puzzlement over the discrepancies. "It becomes more perplexing as each layer of the mystery peels away."

I will return to the alleged hijackers in a later section.

The 1993 Trade Center bombing: The most important target of the September 11 attacks was undoubtedly the twin towers at the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan. These had been the target of a prior attempt at bombing in February, 1993. Among those charged with the bombing was Mohammed Salameh, a student who lived in Jersey City at the time.

On February 26, 1993, at 12:18 pm, a powerful explosion, originating in parking level 'B' beneath the WTC twin towers shook the buildings, killing seven people and trapping thousands of workers inside for hours, forcing them to breathe heavy smoke. Within a week, the FBI had arrested Mohammed A. Salameh, along with a friend, Nidal Ayyad, as prime suspects in the blast. Salameh had been traced through a fragment of metal found in the WTC parking garage. It bore the serial number of a Ford Econoline van belonging to a Ryder rental agency in Jersey City.

Salameh, it turned out, had certainly rented the van in question. Unlike most terrorists who rent vans to blow up large buildings, he reported the van stolen to Jersey City police on February 25 (the day before the blast). Unfortunately, he was unable to supply the license number, having left the rental documents in the stolen vehicle. He also reported the theft to the rental agency, attempting in the process to retrieve his \$400 deposit on the vehicle. On the next day, even as everyone learned of the WTC bombing, Salameh again telephoned Ryder, obtaining the plate number and filing a second report to the police, this time with the correct number. On the face of things, the youth was behaving just like someone who had no idea that his missing van had been used in the World Trade Center bombing.

This case gets even stranger. Salameh and Ayyad attended a small mosque on the second floor of a building in downtown Jersey City. The Imam was Shaikh Omar Abdel-Rahman. The shaikh was also arrested and brought to trial in separate, closed proceeding. A police search of the mosque revealed no hidden bomb-making or related material. A search of Salameh's apartment had the same negative result.

Police did, however, discover bomb-related wiring, instruction sheets and traces of explosives in the apartment of a "friend" of Salameh's. On the day before the bombing, an acquaintance of Salameh's in Jersey City, one Josie Hadas, had hired him to rent a van to move a certain cargo. Hadas, an Israeli citizen, was taken into custody by police, but was soon sent back to Israel and (apparently) cannot be found to this day. (IIIE, 2001)

The main source of damaging testimony at the trial was delivered by FBI informant Emad Salem, a former Egyptian army officer, who had become close to Shaikh Abdel Rahman and his circle of friends, infiltrating the group on behalf of the FBI. He testified that he had been involved in assisting with the bomb. The jury found the pair guilty of the blast, with Abdel-Rahman being tried in separate proceedings. The verdict was based on circumstantial evidence of a conspiracy; none of the suspects ever being placed by witnesses, or forensic evidence, at the scene of the crime. (Pringle, 1994)

After the trial, Salem disclosed a very different story, that "We was start [sic] already building the bomb which is went off in the World Trade Center. It was built by supervising supervision from the bureau and . . . we was all informed about it and we know that the bomb was start to be built." (Morales & DeRienzo, 1995)

Those who are unfamiliar with the activities of large intelligence operations should be aware that frame-ups and other "dirty tricks" are part of regular operations. (Ostrovsky & Hoy, 1990) They are relatively easy to carry out, for the most part. For example, in the present case, Salameh could have been directed

by Hadas to deliver the goods (innocuous items) to an address somewhere in Jersey City, where he would have to enter a building to report the delivery. While he was inside, the van would be stolen, then driven to another location to be prepared for its ultimate mission.

The missing passengers: In most of the web sources (CNN, 2001) (WRH, 2001) (IIIb, 2001) for passenger lists, the names of the hijackers did not appear. There are, of course, a number of reasons why we might not see the names of the hijackers. One is that the airlines all decided, in releasing the lists to the media, to delete the names of the hijackers from the lists so as not to dishonor the dead, reproducing the lists as consisting of "victims" only. No statement to this effect appeared in conjunction with any of the lists. Another reason is that the hijackers may have used phony names. Yet the passengers are usually identified not only by name on the lists, but their place of residence and occupations are also included. None of the entries give "terrorist" as occupation. It may be a bit of a stretch, but it is just possible that the hijackers' names do not appear on the passenger lists because they were not aboard the aircraft in the first place.

The missing black boxes: Each of the Boeing aircraft involved in the September 11 attacks was equipped with the standard "black boxes," a flight data recorder (FDR) and a cockpit voice recorder (CVR). There is no known instance, prior to September 11, 2001, of a terrestrial airplane crash from which the essential flight and voice data were not ultimately recovered.

Only one of the eight black boxes was ever recovered, namely the CVR of United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed in rural Pennsylvania. According to ABC News, "The voice recorder was said to be heavily damaged and the manufacturer was being asked to help with further analysis. The plane that crashed in Pennsylvania was reported to have hit the ground in excess of 500 miles an hour."

Black boxes are built to withstand g-forces of up to 3400 Gs, generated by a deceleration of 108,800 f/sec/sec. An aircraft traveling at 500 mph that crashes into the ground or a building will have all motion arrested within one-tenth of a second, at the very least, yielding an average deceleration of at most 7,330 ft/sec/sec, about 7 percent of the rated maximum. Heat resistance for the units is 1100 degrees Celsius over a thirty minute period. Temperature would not have been a factor in the Pennsylvania crash, but even the fireball resulting from the WTC impacts had a temperature no greater than 1000 degrees Celsius. (NTSB, 2002) The heat lasted no longer than the jet fuel and temperatures may not have reached half that value in the insulated confines of the black box housings. In any event, the buildings each collapsed in less than half an hour from impact.

There can be little doubt that had the black boxes been recovered, they would have all the information necessary to confirm that hijackers did, indeed, commandeer the four aircraft on September 11. There have been no further reports in the media about the contents of the Flight 93 CVR. The FBI, which claimed that the tape had sounds of screams and shouts on it, has refused to release it. (Quinn, 2001) It might be added that the presence of such sounds on the CVR is perfectly consistent with what would be heard in and from the cockpit of Flight 93 in the few minutes following implementation of the hijacking method described below.

The missing interceptors: It has been standard policy for many years to intercept any aircraft within minutes of it being reported off course. The request is made by an air traffic control (ATC) operator as soon as he or she notices that an aircraft has deviated from its flight path. Failure to contact the pilot (which would have been the case under both the alternate scenario and under the White House interpretation) results in a request by ATC to the military (NORAD) to intercept the aircraft (FAA, 1998) (FAA, 2001). Interception is automatic, does not require approval by any authority higher than the FAA liaison official at NORAD, and takes anywhere from five to 15 minutes, depending on the initial separation of target aircraft and the nearest operational base. Upon arrival, the interceptor waggles its wings to elicit a response from the pilot of the off-course aircraft. The pilot is also instructed to make a visual check of the cockpit area.

New York and Washington are among the most heavily guarded places in the United States. For the first time in the history of this policy being implemented, no interceptors were sent up, in spite of the fact that

not one but four aircraft were involved.

It would have taken approximately five minutes for any fighter from, Andrews Air force Base to intercept the aircraft that struck the Pentagon, for example. Aircraft were on standby on the morning of September 11, according to the official air force website, although the contents of the site were changed two days after the attacks to say that no aircraft were available that morning (a strange circumstance, considering the sensitivity of the area and the number of fighters stationed there). (Ruppert, 2002)

The air force had not five minutes, but more than an hour to carry out interceptions.
Virtual hijacking

The natural assumption of every single viewer of the September 11 attacks was that human beings were at the controls of the aircraft. What could they be but hijackers? Since they were also committing suicide, what could they be but terrorists? But what at first sight seems impossible sometimes turns out to be not only possible, but the actual explanation of events. Although I shall be using an in-principle argument, it must be recognized that the "devil is in the details" and that certain features of the scheme I have worked out might have to be implemented in another way. About the main conclusion, however, there can be little doubt. The thing is do-able.

In a modern commercial airliner like the Boeing 757 or 767, all control signals from the pilot and co-pilot go through the flight control system (FCS) (Safford, 1975) (Spitzer, 1987). The heart of the system is a computer with three processors to ensure reliability of operation. Each processor is able to run separate versions of what is essentially the same software. Only one processor runs at a time, but the pilot can switch from one processor to another if he suspects a malfunction. Each processor, like any multi-mission computer, has an operating system.

If something goes wrong with the computers or with the flight control system generally, a manual override is initiated by the pilot. This allows the pilot to fly the aircraft manually -- unless he is dead.

The simplest possible scheme for converting a modern commercial airliner into a flying fuel bomb involves two elements: a) two small canisters of lethal gas hidden in the aircraft's ventilation ducts and triggered either by a timer or by radio signal, b) a small information implant (three numbers) in the flight control system and a means to trigger it.

The agent of choice for part a) would probably be fast-acting sarin, a lethal nerve gas that, at the dose levels to be used in a hijacking, would incapacitate every human being in the aircraft within a minute of first breathing the gas. Should the oxygen masks all pop out of the ceiling, it would make no difference to the outcome. One breath of the deadly gas would be more than sufficient. The symptoms described in the alternative scenario are all typical of sarin poisoning. Sarin degrades chemically within a short time of use, being undetectable thereafter.

The information implant mentioned in part b) would be new coordinates (latitude, longitude and altitude) in a form used by the inertial navigation system (INS), which is part of the aircraft's flight control system (FCS). The central problem of this analysis is to determine which of two ways of achieving this goal is most efficient. In what I call the "custom job," a pre-installed virus-like code implant in the flight control computer(s), triggered like the gas canisters (either by timer or by radio signal), sends new coordinates to the INS. No more than a few lines of code would be required: there would be a time/signal check followed by an instruction to replace the Los Angeles coordinates by the ones stored in memory location so-and-so. In the "installed base" method (Vialls, 2001), the software already exists in the FCC operating system, awaiting its use (presumably) as a counter-hijacking facility. This software would be able to read the new coordinates directly by radio from the ground. It has proved impossible to document this possibility from reliable sources.

In the custom job, installation of the unfriendly software and hardware would be carried out on selected aircraft during routine maintenance periods. The agents carrying out the installation might pose as mechanics or even cabin cleaners. In the cockpit they would install the special software patch in all three

FCS processors, if necessary. In a maintenance port of the plane's air supply system, they would install two custom-made sarin gas canisters, each with its trigger. Such installations are actually the easy part of the overall operation, depending on how much "cooperation" the organization receives. Although it would not be crucial, access to aircraft maintenance and location schedules would be very useful to the agents, giving them more time for installation on specific aircraft, instead of having to make the installation on additional aircraft, which might or might not be used.

The components of the FCS that concern us here are the flight control computer, the INS, and the autopilot. During most commercial flights, the pilot places the aircraft on autopilot, as guided by the INS. The autopilot manages the aircraft's control surfaces to guarantee a smooth, level flight, automatically compensating for various forms of disturbance, such as turbulence and other factors. Autopilots have been around for over fifty years and have grown increasingly sophisticated with time. They do a superb job of what might be called "local control," keeping the aircraft on its present heading, altitude, and so on. However, autopilots have no idea where they're going, so to speak. That information must come from the INS. The destination coordinates, stored in the FCC, may be called up by the pilot and sent to the INS. Routinely, commercial pilots engage the INS and autopilot together, the INS continually sending new directions to the autopilot to keep the aircraft on course.

Inertial navigation systems have been around for approximately thirty years and, like autopilots, have been the subject of tremendous development and sophistication. According to Edward Safford, dean of American avionics, "The plane can fly any course in the world without the need for a navigator or external nav aids." (Safford, 1975) Present INS capabilities are even more sophisticated, positioning an aircraft over the center of a runway hundreds of miles from the point of insertion. Such accuracy is adequate to accommodate the precise three-dimensional coordinates of the impact sites of the WTC towers and the Pentagon.

The agency carrying out the attacks would, after clandestine installation of software implants of the kind outlined above, simply trigger the whole operation when it was determined that the target aircraft was flying in INS/autopilot mode. The gas cannisters would then be triggered and after about five to ten minutes the software implant would feed the new coordinates to the INS. The flight would be managed smoothly, the direction being changed as soon as the new destination coordinates were in place. The changes in direction that took place on September 11 would be visible on ground radar (transponders or no transponders) as a "hard left" or a "hard right." (This is precisely how Air Traffic Control personnel described the turns.) By inserting more than one set of coordinates, it would also be possible to program a more complicated flight, with several changes of direction.

Virtual phone calls

However an electronic hijacking might be managed, the organization responsible would also be sure to add other elements to the basic plan, not only developing lists of ghost riders, but sending fake cellphone calls from some of the passengers. The following analysis focuses on Flight 93, from which more alleged cellphone calls were made than from the other three flights combined. It could be called the "Cellphone Flight." The calling operation would be no less complex and require no less planning than the virtual hijacking itself.

Any analysis of the cellphone and "airfone" calls from Flight 93 must begin with some basic, high-altitude cellphone facts. According to AT&T spokesperson Alexa Graf, cellphones are not designed for calls from the high altitudes at which most airliners normally operate. It was, in her opinion, a "fluke" that so many calls reached their destinations. (Harter 2001) In the opinion of a colleague of mine who has worked in the cellphone industry, it was a "miracle" that any of the calls got through from altitude. An aircraft, having a metal skin and fuselage, acts like a Faraday cage, tending to block or attenuate electromagnetic radiation. One can make a cellphone call from inside an aircraft while on the ground because the greatly weakened signal is still close enough to the nearest cellsite (relay tower) to get picked up. Once above 10,000 feet, however, calls rarely get through, if ever.

Here is the statement of an experienced airline pilot: "The idea of being able to use a cellphone while flying is completely impractical. Once through about 10,000 feet, the thing is useless, since you are too

high and moving too fast (and thus changing cells too rapidly) for the phone to provide a signal." (AVWeb, 1999)

People boarding aircraft for the last decade or so have all heard the warnings to turn off their cellphones for the duration of the flight. The reason for this has nothing to do with interference with aircraft radio equipment, which is all electronically shielded in any case. Instead, the FCC has requested that airlines make this rule, owing to the tendency for cell phone calls made from aircraft at lower altitudes to create "cascades" that may lead to breakdown of cellsite operations.

The cascade problem is more likely at altitudes of 10,000 feet or lower, where reaching a cellsite, although still a touch-and-go matter, is more easily accomplished. However, because of its superior position, the cellphone may reach several cellsites at once. This can create problems, as software that determines which site is to handle the call makes its judgment based on the relative strength of calls. If the call is made from an overhead position, it may well not be able to distinguish relative strength at different cellsites. When this happens it is designed to close off the calling channel, selecting another channel in its place. But the same problem of deciding which cellsite should handle the call also occurs on the new channel, so the new channel is closed, and so on. One by one, in a rapid cascade that would last only seconds, all the channels would be closed, leading to a network-wide breakdown. [Fraizer 2002]

Although it was practically impossible for any calls to get through early in the hijacking of the Cellphone Flight, when it was at or near cruising altitude, there would be no theoretical difficulty after its slow descent over Pennsylvania. But it was then just as unlikely that no cellphone network cascades would occur. On the morning of September 11, no such cascades occurred. Two more elements of doubt thus weigh against the official account.

It must also be remarked that the alleged hijackers of the Cellphone Flight were remarkably lenient with their passengers, allowing some 13 calls. However, it would seem highly unlikely that hijackers would allow any phone calls for the simple reason that passengers could relay valuable positional and other information useful to authorities on the ground, thus putting the whole mission in jeopardy. The following analysis of the actual calls is based on text assembled by four reporters of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. [Roddy et al. 2001] The calls were mostly rather brief and it must be borne in mind that, with the exception of two recorded messages, the persons called would not necessarily recollect the exact words which either they or the caller used.

Following a delay in its scheduled departure time of 8:01 am, Flight 93 reached its cruising altitude of approximately 30,000 feet about 40 minutes into the flight. At about this time the INS/autopilot would have been engaged. And at about this time, the aircraft was "hijacked," according to several cellphone calls.

CALL A1: A man claiming to be Tom Burnett called his wife Deena in San Ramon, CA around 9:20 to Deena's best recollection:

Deena: "Are you alright?"

Caller: "No. I'm on United Flight 93 from Newark to San Francisco. The plane was hijacked. We are in the air. They've already knifed a guy. There is a bomb on board. Call the FBI."

CALL B: Just before 9:30 am, a man claiming to be Jeremy Glick called Lyz Glick, who was visiting in-laws in the Catskills of New York state. The phone was answered by Glick's mother-in-law, JoAnne Makely:

JoAnne: "Jeremy. Thank God. We're so worried."

Caller: "It's bad news. Is Liz there?"

The caller went on to describe Arabic-looking hijackers wearing red headbands and carrying knives. One had told the passengers he had a bomb. The caller asked if it was true that planes had been crashed into

the World Trade Center. She confirmed this. The caller mentioned that another passenger had heard the news on his/her cell phone.

CALL A2: The man claiming to be Tom Burnett called Deena Burnett again around 9:30 am. As Deena later described his call, "He didn't sound frightened, but he was speaking faster than he normally would." He told her there were hijackers in the cockpit.

Deena: "A lot of planes have been hijacked, but they don't know how many."

Caller: "You've got to be kidding."

Deena: "No."

Caller: "Were they commercial planes or airliners?"

Deena: "I don't know."

Caller: "Okay. I've got to go."

CALL C: A man claiming to be Mark Brigham called Brigham's sister-in-law, Cathy Hoglan, who was being visited by Brigham's mother, Alice. Cathy took the call and handed the phone to Alice with the remark, "Alice, talk to Mark. He's been hijacked."

Caller: "Mom? This is Mark Brigham." (Alice Brigham accounts for this strange announcement as due to her son being flustered.)

Caller: "I want you to know that I love you. 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."

Alice: "Who are these guys?"

Caller: (after a pause) "You believe me, don't you?"

Caller: "Yes, Mark. I believe you. But who are these guys?"

(After another pause the line went dead.)

CALL D: A man claiming to be Todd Beamer on a United Airlines airfone had some trouble getting through to anyone but the Verizon customer service center, where the operator relayed the call to Verizon supervisor, Lisa Jefferson at 9:45 am. (Verizon is a large communications company that has the contract for airfones on United airlines equipment.) The man told Jefferson that the plane had been hijacked, that he could see three hijackers armed with knives, one of them claiming to have a bomb. He described how the passengers had been herded to the rear of the aircraft, guarded by the one with the bomb. He asked the supervisor to call the Beamer family on his behalf.

Caller: "Oh! We're going down. (pause) No. We're okay. I think we're turning around." (It was approximately around this time that the flight, then passing near Cleveland, made a hard left toward Washington, DC.)

CALL A3: The man claiming to be Tom Burnett called Deena Burnett again.

Deena: "They're taking airplanes and hitting landmarks all up and down the east coast."

Caller: "Okay. We're going to do something. I'll call you back."

CALL F1: At 9:47, the answering machine of Lorne Lyles recorded a call that he thought was from his

wife, CeeCee. The woman could be heard praying for herself, her family, and even for the souls of the hijackers.

CALL B (cont'd.) State police, talking to Jeremy Glick's mother-in-law, asked her to relay a question to Jeremy. Did he know where his plane was? He didn't know, but said they had changed direction.

Caller: "I need you to be happy and I will respect any decisions that you make."

He told Ms Lyles that the passengers were about to take a vote on whether to take back the aircraft. Should they try?

Lyz: "Honey, you need to do it." They spoke of weapons. The caller joked.

Caller: "I have my butter knife from breakfast."

CALL G: About this time, Phil Bradshaw, husband of flight attendant Sandy Bradshaw, received a phone call from a woman who identified herself as his wife.

Caller: "Have you heard what's going on? My flight has been hijacked. My flight has been hijacked by three guys with knives.

Phil asked her who was flying the plane.

Caller: "I don't know who's flying the plane or where we are. I see a river."

Bradshaw: "Be safe and come home soon."

The caller then explained that she had to go. She planned to prepare boiling water in the galley -- to pour on the hijackers.

CALL H: Sometime after 9:30, Fred Fiumano received a call from someone claiming to be his friend, Marion Britton. The caller was crying, stating that the plane had been hijacked and that two passengers had already been killed. Fiumano tried to console his friend, stating that the hijackers were probably going to take her for a ride. "You'll be alright."

CALL I: Jack Grandcolas in San Rafael, CA, received a call from a woman claiming to be Lauren Catuzzi Grandcolas, his wife. The message, as recorded on his answering machine, was short:

Caller: "Sweetie, pick up the phone if you can hear me. (pause) Okay, I love you. There's a little problem with the plane. I'm fine and comfortable for now..."

She asked Jack to pass along her love for everyone, then passed the airfone to her seat-mate.

Caller: "Now you call your people."

CALL J: Esther Heymann received a call from a woman claiming to be her stepdaughter, Honor Elizabeth Wainio, also Grandcolas' seat-mate.

Caller: "Mom, we're being hijacked. I just called to say good bye."

Heymann: "Elizabeth, we don't know how this is going to turn out. I've got my arms around you."

Wainio said she could feel them.

Heymann: "Let's look out at that beautiful blue sky. Let's be here in the moment. Let's do some deep breathing together." (pause)

Caller: "It hurts me that it's going to be so much harder for you than it is for me."

CALL A4: Once again, just before 10:00 am, Deena Burnett received a fourth phone call.

Caller: "A group of us are going to do something."

Deena: "No, Tom. Just sit down and don't draw attention to yourself."

Caller: "Deena, if they're going to crash the plane into the ground, we have to do something. We can't wait for the authorities. We have to do something now."

Caller: "Pray. Just pray, Deena. We're going to do something."

CALL D (cont'd): The caller who had identified himself as Todd Beamer appears to have remained connected with Lisa Jefferson, the Verizon supervisor, almost to the end of the flight. At this point the caller was reciting the 23rd Psalm from the Bible

CALL F2: The caller identifying herself as CeeCee Lyles finally got through to Lorne Lyles.

Caller: "Babe, my plane's been hijacked."

Lyles: "Huh? Stop joking."

Caller: "No Babe, I wouldn't joke like that. I love you. Tell the boys I love them."

As the couple prayed together, Lorne heard sounds that he would later interpret as passengers preparing a counter-attack.

Caller: They're going to force their way into the cockpit."

CALL D (cont'd): Having finished his prayer session with Lisa Jefferson, the caller claiming to be Todd Beamer left the phone connected. Jefferson recalls hearing the now famous rallying cry.

Caller: "Are you guys ready? Let's roll."

CALL J (cont'd): Esther Heymann, who believed herself to be talking with her step daughter, heard her last words.

Caller: I need to go. They're getting ready to break into the cockpit. I love you. Goodbye."

CALL G (cont'd): Phil Bradshaw heard his caller's last words to him.

Caller: "Everyone's running to first class. I've got to go. Bye."

CALL F2 (cont'd): Lorne Lyles recalls hearing the last moments of Flight 93.

Caller: (screams) "They're doing it! They're doing it! They're doing it!"

The caller screamed again, said something he couldn't hear, then the line went dead.

Operational details

How on Earth could any organization fake the calls I have just described? In the middle of writing this very sentence, I was interrupted by someone calling through the back door of our porch: "Is anybody home?" It was my son who was visiting us from out of town. He had been out with some old friends. I went out to the back porch to greet him.

It wasn't my son at all, but the neighbor next door wanting to borrow our ladder. I marveled that I could have mistaken his voice for that of my son. It has a different timbre and tone, yet the context of expectation over-rode my ability to discriminate sounds. This example proves nothing, of course, but it illustrates a fact that has been used by spiritualists and mediums to beguile clients for hundreds of years. Forlorn people, hoping to contact a deceased loved one, would typically report satisfaction with a seance. "I swear, it was my son. There was no mistaking that sweet little voice." The context leads the recipient of such a message actually to hear the loved one. Of course, the tone of voice must be approximately correct. In the case at hand, persons faking the calls would have the further advantage of electronic fuzzing, the tendency for audio lines with very low bandwidth to transmit the human voice somewhat imperfectly. In addition, extreme emotional stress alters the human voice even more markedly, causing the person addressed to make unconscious allowances.

To obtain names and relevant personal data, operatives would have taken the flights in question several times before September 11, engaging fellow passengers in friendly conversation: "Take this flight often?" It would not take very long to build a file of names, secretly recorded voices, and a host of more or less intimate details from the lives of passengers. The ultimate list might run to several dozen passengers, not all of whom would be on Flight 93 the fateful morning of September 11.

Meanwhile, a script has been written to portray a sequence of events. The backbone of the script, a timeline running from the moment of sarin/INS insertion up to the point of impact, would consist of a sequence of pseudo-events such as the first appearance of the hijackers, their announcement, scuffles with passengers, the back-of-the-plane strategy session, and the final rush to the cockpit. It would also include real events such as the aircraft's turn mentioned in Call D.

Imagine then an operations room (of which every intelligence agency has several) with a screen on which the events appear as text, keeping all operatives on the same page, so to speak. An operations director would have much the same role as a symphony conductor, cueing various operators as the script unfolds. An audio engineer would have several tapes already made in a sound studio. The tapes, which portray mumbled conferences among passengers or muffled struggles, replete with shouts and curses, can be played over any of the phone lines, as determined by the script, or simply fed as ambient sound into the control room. Trained operators with headsets make the actual calls. Each operator has studied tapes for several of the individuals, as recorded on prior occasions of Flight 93, as well as profiles of the individuals, including a great deal of personal information, some of it obtained "on the ground," as they say. As soon as the passenger lists become available, each operator scans his or her own copy, searching for the names that he or she will specialize in, discarding the rest.

The introductory sentence, somewhat fuzzily transmitted, would carry the hook: "Honey, we've been hijacked!" Thereafter, with the belief framework installed, a similar live voice could react to questions, literally playing the situation by ear, but being sure to include pertinent details such as "Arab-looking guys," "boxcutters," and all the rest. If the contact has been made successfully in the operator's opinion, with the essential information conveyed, it is always possible to terminate the call more or less gracefully, depending on what portion of the script is under execution. "Okay. We're going to do something. I'll call you back." Click.

Each operator has a voice that is somewhat similar to that of the person he or she is pretending to be. It is not particularly difficult to do this. For example, it is far easier to find someone with a voice that can be mistaken for mine (especially over a telephone line) than it is to find someone who looks like me (even in a blurred photograph). Moreover, most people can learn to mimic voices, an art well illustrated by comedians who mimic well-known personalities.

Operators would have received general instructions about what to do in the course of a call. Although each has been supplied with at least some "intimate" details of the target's life, there would be techniques in place for temporizing or for avoiding long conversations where basic lack of knowledge might threaten to become suddenly obvious, and so on. Three such techniques are praying (from text, if necessary) (Calls D, F1, and J), crying (as in call H), or discussing the other attacks (as in call A2 and B).

In the case at hand, Flight 93, various calls may now be examined as a consistency check. First, it must be noted that the longest call was made by the person who identified himself as Todd Beamer (Call D) to someone whom the real Todd Beamer did not know at all, Lisa Jefferson, a Verizon supervisor. Among the shorter conversations were Calls B, A2 and D.

Early in Call B (Glick), the caller indicates that it is general knowledge among the passengers that other aircraft have been hijacked that morning. Near the end of this conversation, when the caller discusses possible actions against the hijackers, he makes a joking remark:

Caller: "I have my butter knife from breakfast."

This is strange because it implies that the caller had already finished breakfast, whereas meals are not normally served until the aircraft reaches cruising altitude, about the time that the alleged hijacking began.

In Call A2 (Burnett), Deena Burnett describes the other hijackings.

A2 Deena: "A lot of planes have been hijacked, but they don't know how many."

Caller: "You've got to be kidding."

Deena: "No."

Caller: "Were they commercial planes or airliners?"

Here, the caller seems to be temporizing. Not only are hijackings of commercial (i. e., cargo) aircraft extremely rare events, the caller's apparent surprise contradicts the implication of Call B (made earlier) that the other attacks were already general knowledge among the passengers of Flight 93.

Call C, also short, may point to a possible fumble. Was one of the callers asleep at the switch?

Caller: "Mom? This is Mark Brigham."

Caller: "I want you to know that I love you. 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."

Alice: "Who are these guys?"

Caller: (after a pause) "You believe me, don't you?"

Caller: "Yes, Mark. I believe you. But who are these guys?"

Alice Brigham attributed the strange introductory sentence to her son being flustered. But if Mark chose his mother to call, over all other people in the world, would he be likely to make such a mistake? Would thoughts of his mother not be uppermost in his mind, no matter what happened in the passenger compartment? A caller can only make such a mistake if he or she is thinking of something entirely unrelated to the reason for the call or the person being called and that can hardly have been the case in the alleged circumstances.

Instead of answering his mother's question, the caller seems uncertain. Mrs. Brigham has just asked "Who are these guys?" and the caller answers with another question. Does she believe his previous sentence? The caller, who may have lost confidence in the call, terminates the conversation (possibly pounding his forehead in silent frustration).

Caller C never called back. Of the 13 phone calls allegedly made from the plane, four were from one caller (A: Burnett), two were from another (F: Lyles), and the remaining seven calls were not repeated.

Non-repeated calls would thus represent final exits with either flubbed results or a smooth performance. The repeated calls give continuity to the script, as well as opportunities for myth-building. Here's Todd Beamer, known to friends (and observers) as a kind of go-ahead, take-charge guy. Perfect. He will be the "reason," decided well in advance of September 11, why the plane crashes well short of the White House.

Caller D, the one alleged to be Todd Beamer, apparently had difficulty using his airfone. This could be explained if the telephone used by the caller was not part of the Verizon system. However, the caller could easily access the Verizon supervisory office over an ordinary telephone, explaining that he had been trying to reach someone. Strangely enough, caller D preferred to talk to Lisa Jefferson (asking her to call his loved ones for him), even though he was about to die.

One other cellphone call bears mention. Barbara Olson, a well-known Washington lawyer and, more recently, television political pundit, died aboard American Airlines Flight 77, the aircraft which apparently struck the Pentagon building. News reports (San Diego, 01), (BBC, 01), (Telegraph, 01) described two calls which Ms Olson made to her husband, Ted Olson, Solicitor General of the United States. The caller said she had locked herself in the lavatory and attempted to place the call to Mr. Olson ten times before the charges were accepted. The first conversation, in which the caller said, "Can you believe this, we are being hijacked," was cut short, for some reason. In a second attempt, the caller described men with box-cutters overpowering the flight crew, then asked, "What do I tell the pilot to do?"

The Olson call is neither less nor more mysterious than the calls previously analysed. In this case it might be asked what advice Ted Olson could possibly have for the pilot (who was allegedly at the back of the plane with the passengers).

The foregoing analyses certainly do not prove that the cellphone operation actually took place. But they clearly demonstrate that all the conversations are consistent with such an operation, along with a sprinkling of tantalizing clues that are more consistent with the operation than actual in-flight calls. That is all one can hope for from such an analysis, even if the alternate scenario is correct or approximately correct.

In any case, there are serious doubts that the calls could have been made from cruising altitude or that they would not trigger cellphone network cascades at lower altitudes.
Interceptor reprise

If Flight 93 were hijacked by the alternate method outlined in this document, it may have been deliberately crashed. This is easily achieved by the INS portion of the method. Allegedly heading for the White House, the INS coordinates would be set for the (preselected) point of impact in an empty Pennsylvania field. The point would lie on a line pointing in the general direction of the White House. The aircraft's flight path would be a long, shallow dive, producing a high-speed crash would be sure to leave an extensive debris field.

Three F-16 fighters were apparently scrambled from a base in Langley, Virginia to shoot down Flight 93. They were, by one estimate, about 14 minutes away from the aircraft when it crashed. Such a late scramble would be guaranteed to miss.

In the case of all four flights it would be crucial, once such an automated hijacking was in progress, that air force fighters not be deployed anywhere in their vicinity. As part of operating procedure during such intercepts, pilots are instructed to inspect the aircraft visually, including a look into the cockpit. Has the aircraft been hijacked? Under this scenario, the pilot would see the flying officers slumped over in their seats -- and no guys with dark beards.

Virtual Hijackers

One clue that the alleged terrorists are not everything they seem comes from the rather deep gulf between the stereotype and the reality. We have already seen, in the case of Ziad Jarrhah, a young man who has no commitment to Islam, suddenly converted into a fiendish hijacker. As far as religion goes,

almost every hijacker has displayed the same troubling discrepancy, as we shall see. At the same time, Jarrah earnestly wished to become an aeronautical engineer. If Islam (or "Muslim fanatics") did not divert him from his chosen course in life, who did? Perhaps no one.

Another puzzle is presented by Hani Hanjour, a small, shy lad who, throughout his teens in Saudi Arabia, wanted nothing more than to be a flight attendant. Despite the fact that Hanjour displayed little interest in his flying lessons, abandoning courses that he did not flunk outright, he was the alleged pilot of American Airlines Flight 77 which crashed into the Pentagon.

In 1998, Hanjour received a one-hour lesson after which, in the words of manager Wes Fults, "He had only the barest understanding of what the instruments were there to do." Yet by April 1999, by means that FAA officials refuse to discuss, Hanjour had obtained a commercial pilots license, capping several years of trying. In April of 1996 he attended a 30-minute class at the Sierra Academy of Aeronautics in Oakland California, never to return. The next month finds him in Scottsdale, Arizona, where he signed up for lessons at CRM Flight Cockpit Resource Management. Hanjour left after three months with no certificate. He returned one year later, stayed only a few weeks, then left again. Over the next three years, Hanjour called the Scottsdale School seeking re-admission but was rebuffed as having no pilot potential. In 1998 Hanjour enrolled at Sawyer Aviation in Phoenix, Arizona. He attended a handful of sessions on the flight simulator, then disappeared once again. (Goldstein et al., 2001)

In August of 2001, Hanjour arrived at the Freeway Airport in Bowie, Maryland. His attempt to get himself checked out in a single-engine plane ended once more in failure. Owing to his general incompetence, officials at Bowie refused to rent an aircraft to him. (Goldstein et al., 2001) In view of the fact that Hanjour could not manage to fly single-engine aircraft, it seems amazing that Hanjour piloted the Boeing passenger liner that hit the Pentagon right on target.

The other major discrepancy between stereotype and reality in the case of the alleged 19 (or 20) hijackers is religion. Perhaps Hanjour was the most religious of the lot, having been rather devout, according to his older brother, throughout his youth. Hanjour was never observed flouting the rules of Islam openly, as several of his better-known colleagues were. Some of the other alleged hijackers were observed drinking alcohol and engaging in sexually promiscuous behaviour.

How could it be possible for more than a dozen "hijackers" to live in the United States for more than a year, doing what the media have reported them to have done, and yet not be hijackers at all? In this section. I will demonstrate how the men in question could have carried out all the actions reported of them, yet be entirely innocent of any "terrorist" activity. It all depends on what the men themselves thought they were doing. Presently, I will sketch a "dirty trick" (one among many possibilities) that will provide an in-principle answer this question.

First, it will be necessary to develop a list of the "19" alleged hijackers and to sort out some of the confusion surrounding their names. A preliminary list furnishes us with 19 names distributed among four aircraft:

United Airlines Flight 175 (WTC South Tower)

- * Marwan Al-Shehhi
- * Fayez Ahmed
- * Mohald Alshehri *
- * Hamza Alghamdi
- * Ahmed Alghamdi*

American Airlines Flight 11 (WTC North Tower)

- * Waleed M. Alshehri*
- * Wail Alshehri
- * Mohamed Atta

- * Abdulaziz Alomari*
- * Satam Al Suqami

American Airlines Flight 77 (Pentagon)

- * Khalid Al-Midhar
- * Majed Moqed
- * Nawaq Alhamzi
- * Salem Alhamzi
- * Hani Hanjour

United Airlines Flight 93 (Pennsylvania)

- * Ahmed Alhaznawi
- * Ahmed Alnami
- * Ziad Jarrah(i)
- * Saeed Alghamdi

Were there 20 "terrorists" and not 19? One Amer Kenfer was also alleged to be on United Airlines Flight 175. Perhaps it doesn't matter, since five of the hijackers' names released by the FBI to the media proved to be mistakes. Kenfer, along with four others listed below, were identified by the FBI not only by name, but by occupation and birthdate. They all turned out to be not only alive and well, but outraged that they had been identified as "terrorists:"

- * Waleed Al Shehri (BBC, 2001)
- * Abdulaziz Al Omari (BBC, 2001)
- * Ahmed Ibrahim Al Ghamdi (Islam Online, 2001)
- * Fayez Mohammad al-Shehri (Islam Online 2001)

How could 25 percent of the hijackers be so misidentified? According to FBI sources, Arabic names are easy to confuse with one another. But how does one confuse birth dates and occupations? In more than one instance, the passports of these gentlemen had been stolen sometime in the past (Telegraph, 2001). This fact is certainly consistent with the alternate scenario, although the mainstream US media has opined that passports were stolen by Al Qaida operatives prior to 2001. It is not clear why Al Qaida would carry out an operation that would deflect blame onto other Arabs. What possible difference could it make?

If the passports were, in fact, the incriminating element, then how would the FBI have gotten hold of them? They would not have survived the crashes and must have been left with rental vehicles. Such an explanation only strains our credulity even further. Were all 20 passports left in the rental vehicles? It is more reasonable to suppose that the FBI obtained the information from another source.

Magic Carpet Air Services

Here is but one way that the trail left by the alleged hijackers could have been engineered prior to Sept. 11: Each of the men who are alleged to have been in the United States prior to the fateful day were lured there by promises of lucrative employment. Imagine a false front operation called "Magic Carpet Air Services." Here is the sales pitch delivered by an agent posing as a senior executive officer of a startup corporation by that name:

"We propose to call our new venture 'Magic Carpet Air Services.' Although it will operate primarily as a high-speed executive jet service between major Middle Eastern cities and beyond, it will also explore a variety of other opportunities, including specialized cargo operations, agricultural spraying and other things that we are continuing to look into. We need, at this point, a group of talented gentlemen like yourselves to form the managerial core of the company. Other managers and staff will be recruited later, but we need a core staff and you gentlemen will have the inside track. In the months to come, you will be given every opportunity to display the kind of initiative and imagination that we are looking for. You will be paid, of course, and paid generously. But those of you who survive the training period will find yourselves

paid far better, once we launch the enterprise.

"You will all attend a variety of training sessions, including flight training, in order to familiarize yourselves with the various operations of the proposed air services. By no means will you achieve professional levels but we want you to understand the various operations of our proposed company. It is well known that managerial staff with some hands-on experience make better decisions than those without it. We will also require that you set a good example for the employees to follow by encouraging good health habits, eating sensibly, getting lots of sleep, and working out regularly.

"Now I must ask, for reasons of corporate security, not to discuss the company or its goals with anyone, including friends and relatives. We want to be in position to get the jump on our competitors, once we have begun operations."

Since only nine of the alleged 19 hijackers left paper trails, the training scenario may apply only to the nine persons. The operation would have commenced no later than early 1999, the time when the paper trail begins. Of particular interest are the public activities of Mohamed Atta, as remembered by several different witnesses in 2000. In mid-March of that year, he moved into the apartment of Amanda Keller, a woman of dubious virtue with hair dyed a bright pink. Keller can no longer be located. (MCMN, 2002b) Between the end of April and the third week of May, Johnette Bryant, a Dept. of Agriculture loan officer, states that Atta applied for a USDA loan to buy a crop duster. (MCMN, 2002b) The FBI has vehemently denied both allegations, possibly because Atta was supposed to be still in Hamburg, recruiting potential suicide pilots such as Ziad Jarrah.

The official timeline has Atta arriving in the US on June 3, 2000. Previously bearded, Atta had shaved his face clean. In July of 2000, Atta and Marwan AlShehhi enrolled at Huffman Aviation in Venice, Florida, while Nawaq Alhamzi and Khalid Al-Midhar began flight training in San Diego, California. (ABC, 2001) The latter pair terminated training early, owing to problems with English. They are alleged to have gone to Arizona for more training. In Florida, where most of the trainees lived, several may have tried to follow the health advice of the "executive" by regularly attending the World Gym in Boynton Beach, Florida. They showed little enthusiasm for the workouts, however. "Waleed Al-Shehri, Wail Alshri, and Satam Al-Suqami simply clustered around a small circuit of machines, never asking for help . . . never pushing any weights." Atta, on the other hand, worked out very hard. (Golden & Moss, 2002)

At Huffman Aviation, where Atta and Al-Shehhi were enrolled for flight training, they apparently told the director that they would be working in the United Arab Emirates. They obtained their pilots licenses on December 21, 2000. On December 29 of that year, both men took three hours training each on a Boeing 727 flight simulator in Opa-locka near Miami.

The alleged hijackers, notably Atta, left a well-marked trail involving witness memories, video surveillance tapes, car rental records, and so on. Those in charge of the Magic Carpet operation would know the movements of their charges, later greatly facilitating the FBI investigation by being able to suggest specific venues where records would be available. The movements of Atta, for example, are now known through a few scattered records. (ABC, 2001) They are consistent not only with a terrorist planning a hugely ambitious attack on the United States, but with an earnest dupe (of relatively low morals) keen on earning the huge salary promised by Magic Carpet Air Services.

The trail left by Atta, as we have it today, involves only those activities that support, in one way or another, his role as a terrorist. However, each activity has a parallel interpretation under the Magic Carpet scenario. For example, in January of 2001, Atta flew to Madrid, returning after six days. Was he consulting with the upper echelons of Al Qaeda or taking a vacation thanks to his inflated salary? In February and March of 2001, Atta and others are remembered as having inquired about crop-dusting planes at the agricultural spraying firm of South Florida Crop Care. Again in August of the same year, Atta and friends made inquiries at another crop-dusting operation in Belle Glade, Florida. Were they planning anthrax attacks or learning about crop-dusting operations for Magic Carpet Air Services?

From mid-May to mid-June, Atta and Al-Shehhi lived in Hollywood, Florida while they took flight training.

For Al Qaeda or Magic Carpet? In late June, Atta traveled to Las Vegas, meeting there with Alhazmi, Hanjour, Al-Shehhi and Jarrah. Another Las Vegas meeting in mid-August included Hanjour and Alhamzi. Were these an Qaeda planning sessions or a Magic Carpet business meetings?

A succession of flights by Atta in June and July of that year (Ft. Lauderdale to Boston, Boston to New York, Newark to Ft. Lauderdale) are just as consistent with the Magic Carpet operation as they are with the al Qaeda scenario. Again, in early July, Atta flew to Spain again, touring the country for 12 days, an activity which is somewhat more consistent with an extended vacation (encouraged by Magic Carpet executives) than it is with an al Qaeda strategy session.

On July 31, a waitress and bartender at the Pelican Alley restaurant in Venice, FL overhear Atta, Al Shehhi, and a third heavy-set gentleman are overheard arguing about money. Big guy: "We're talking \$200,000. We've got to answer to the family!" The waitress thought they were mafia. (MCMN, 2002a) The figure of \$200,000 happens to coincide with the estimated cost of the September 11 operation to al Qaida. In this context it could as easily be an argument about salaries.

Equally bland activities in mid-August involve a four day car rental by Atta and Al-Shehhi in Pompano Beach and a three-day rental of a Piper aircraft at Palm Beach. Were they visiting Al Qaeda operatives or touring air service sites or just vacationing?

After purchasing two tickets for American Airlines Flight 11 (on the internet) in late August, Atta appeared in Shuckum's Oyster Bar in Hollywood, Florida. Atta drank Cranberry juice and played the pinball machine while his colleague Al-Shehhi drank alcohol with a third, unidentified man. Was the third party another hijacker or an executive with Magic Carpet?

On what may well have been their last night on Earth, Atta, Alomari, and Al-Shehhi visit the Red Eyed Jacks sports bar in Daytona Beach, where they spent heavily on drinks and lap dancers. There may or may not have been a fourth party with them. The celebrants were careful to engage in some audible (and possibly prompted) America-bashing, saying "Wait 'til to-morrow, America is going to see bloodshed." They were also careful to leave a Qur'an on the bar, of course. (CBS News, 2001)

Later that evening, Atta and Alomari checked into the Comfort Inn in South Portland. Security cameras caught them at a nearby gas station, at two separate ATMs and in the local Wal Mart. Was this the night before the alleged suicide missions or, as far as the Magic Carpet trainees were concerned, just another business trip? (ABC, 2001) In what must have been a superhuman effort, the FBI spent literally thousands of hours going through miles of videotape from every ATM, gas station and supermarket in the area. How else could they have come upon the tapes so quickly?

It is quite possible that no Magic Carpet operation, or anything like it, was ever launched. Instead, Atta and at least some of the others were well aware that they were "going through motions," earning large sums of money in the process, thanks to CIA paymasters. One piece of evidence that supports this possibility are rumors that appeared in Newsweek magazine, the Washington Post and the Miami Herald in 2001 (MCMN, 2001). These media outlets alleged that Atta had attended International Officers School at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery Alabama.

The "mother of all hijackers" is, of course, Ousama bin Laden himself. Since September 11, 2001, videotapes of bin Laden pontifications have turned up in abandoned houses, caves, and other venues with a frequency sufficient to warrant charges of littering against Al Qaida. The tapes, which were made with unbelievable incompetence, have extremely fuzzy sound tracks which can be interpreted to mean almost anything. In the earlier tapes, this can be put down to casual incompetence, but in the later ones, which the makers would know were going to media outlets, the fuzzy sound tracks are frankly not possible. The tapes varied in content, from discussions of the Trade Center attacks to explanations of why Al Qaida is attacking western targets. The scripts are laid out in contemporary Islamic boilerplate which students of Middle Eastern politics would instantly recognize.

Suspicion that some or all of the interpretations are essentially faked has been widespread since late

2001. For example, a videotape reported to contain the complete text of a declamation against the west was found in late November, 2002. The text, subsequently published in many newspapers, aroused widespread indignation against bin Laden and Al Qaida (not to mention an accompanying deepening of the mistrust with which Arabs and/or Muslims are viewed in North America). The tape was analysed by the Swiss AI Institute, which issued a statement saying that the audio portion of the tape was not compatible with the video portion, being superadded at another time. (SMH, 2002)

Mopping up

The extensive "training program," the hitech hijacking, and the cellphone operation would involve dozens of persons. If Mossad were to carry out such an operation, for example, many of the operatives would be Mossad officers (katsas) and helpers (sayanim), as well as outsiders with appropriate talents for various special tasks. Although Mossad personnel can be counted on to keep their mouths shut, what can one do about those who might talk too much? Harsh though it may seem, the simplest thing to do is to get rid of the unreliable personnel -- for good.

The simplest and most effective way to "mop up" after a highly sensitive operation involving many operatives is to put the less reliable ones on a passenger aircraft with a cover story that they are being sent to an out-of-the-way place "for their own good" until things blow over. On October 4th, 2001, less than one month after the aircraft hijackings, a Sibur Airlines TU-154 flying from Tel Aviv to Novosibirsk went down in the Black Sea, killing all 77 passengers and aircrew. Initial reports indicated two explosions, one at altitude, the other just before impact, leading some to suspect that two bombs had been placed aboard the aircraft. However, the story changed within days when US "officials" stated that the aircraft had been shot down by Ukrainian missiles during military exercises, a charge flatly denied by Ukrainian military spokespersons. (CNN, 2001)

What is "complicated"?

Some readers have complained that the alternate scenario spelled out in this document is "too complicated." Complication, however, is a purely relative matter. What may seem "too complicated" to me or to you may turn out to be quite simple when the goal of an operation is taken into account. Consider, for example, the relatively minor goal of an operation described by former Mossad officer Victor Ostrovsky while still working for Mossad and assigned to an European post. (Ostrovsky & Hoy, 1990)

It was learned from internal sources that the Syrian Air Attaché was going to Europe to buy furniture for new administrative quarters that had been constructed for the Syrian Air Force in Damascus. Mossad planned to take advantage of this information by planting listening devices in the furniture at some point between purchase and delivery. The perceived potential payoff in new information made the following "complicated" operation worthwhile.

With three weeks before the purchase was to be made, operatives had to move fast. They set up a dummy furniture brokerage company, printed expensive brochures, trained an officer (katsa) in sales techniques and sales lingo, brought in cooperators (sayanim) to stage a scene, followed the movements of both the Air Attaché and his Aide during the few days they were in Brussels, waited for the Attaché to leave for Paris, followed the Aide to an expensive furniture store, brought in a katsa pretending to be a furniture broker, brought in a sayan posing as a satisfied customer, had the sayan thank the katsa profusely within earshot of the Aide for a wonderful deal, had the sayan leave, and had the katsa engage the Aide in conversation, showing him a brochure of expensive furniture.

The Aide was so impressed by the marvelous deal, as spelled out by the katsa, that he agreed at once and sat down with the katsa to draw up a shopping list of tables, chairs, and what have you. The deal became irresistible when the Aide realized that he could pocket the difference between list price and the actual amount being charged by the "salesman." Mossad then purchased the items, shipping two of the tables to Israel by private jet, where Mossad experts spent days installing complicated microphones and radio gear, sending the tables back to Brussels, then shipping the entire purchase to Syria.

The overall operation was a good deal more complicated than this. It may well be asked, "Why so complicated?" especially for such a minor payback. Given the value of the goal to Mossad, however, and

the mere fact that the plan was feasible, Mossad proceeded with the operation. Under the circumstances, it may well have been the simplest method. According to Ostrovsky, such operations are routine. Modern intelligence organizations like Mossad not only gather intelligence, they create "facts," frame people, carry out assassinations, organize political events, and even provide training for militants in other countries.

How much more complication would be allowable for a really important operation like hijacking four aircraft and blaming it on Arab terrorists? Considering the payoff, the methods outlined here are not only relatively simple, but not atypical of methods in the Mossad playbook. Who benefitted?

If the September 11 attacks are regarded as an unsolved crime, the most reasonable approach is to follow standard criminal investigation technique, asking in effect, "Who benefitted?" Assuming for the moment that Al Qaida is not the perpetrator, the finger of suspicion swings 180 degrees; Ehud Sprinzak, an Israeli expert on terrorism at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, referred to the attacks as follows: "From the perspective of Jews, it is the most important public relations act ever committed in our favor." (Jackson, 2001) This observation ties in with a news report that was nearly lost in the post-September 11 shuffle.

Within an hour of the attacks on the WTC towers, five Israelis were spotted in a parking lot near Liberty State Park in New Jersey, directly across the Hudson River from the twin trade towers. Three of them stood on the roof of a white cube van, taking videos of the disaster and, according to an eyewitness who watched them through binoculars, shouting with cries of joy and mockery. (Melman, 2001) The witness, who watched the five from a building adjacent to the parking lot, reported their strange behaviour to the FBI immediately. The five men, described as "Israeli tourists," were picked up by the FBI, two of them being subsequently identified as working for "Israeli intelligence." (ABC, 2002) The five were held for approximately two months, then deported to Israel. This apparently real celebration provides an ironic contrast with the faked Palestinian one.

Certain elements in the United States also stand to benefit. First, there was an immediate excuse to engage in a lengthy military exercise that would involve the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars worth of munitions, a plus for the arms industry. Strategically, the United States would also benefit from the ensuing "war on terrorism" because it promises to secure American control of the extraordinarily rich Central Asian oil fields via Afghanistan, the natural pipeline corridor to the Persian Gulf. Of course, Afghanistan was the alleged base of Al Qaida operations.

If the United States and Israel are jointly culpable of this crime, it would not be unfair to ask what role each played in the disaster. Under the alternative scenario, it would seem likely that by secret arrangement Israel's Mossad took care of the aircraft attacks under a separate (and purely oral) "contract." That way, the right hand would not know what the left hand was doing, except in the most general terms; elements in the US government would have known that some kind of attack was coming.

In one of many ironic twists that accompany this scenario, the declaration by the US Department of State that they had definite information that Al Qaida was responsible may actually have been true. Implications of the alternative scenario

If the September 11 attacks were planned and executed as a combined clandestine operation between Mossad and some US agencies such as the CIA and NSA (with God knows what involvement by the Joint Chiefs and the White House), it can be reliably inferred that other attacks blamed on Al Qaida are also fakes or "dirty tricks" in CIA parlance. These would include the bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998, as well as the attack on the USS Cole on October 12, 2000, in the port of Aden, Yemen.

Self-attack is the theme of some scandalous proposals of the Joint Chiefs and the National Security Agency to launch attacks on American targets, blaming them on Cuban terrorists some decades ago. (Bamford, 2001) The schemes code-named "Operation Northwoods" and "Operation Mongoose" both involved terror attacks, mostly on US soil. The attacks included blowing up a ship at the US naval base in

Guantanamo, Cuba, sinking boatloads of refugees, mounting a "communist" terror campaign in Miami which included bombings and the assassination of prominent Cuban exiles. More to the point, a proposal signed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and presented to President Kennedy involved a "real or simulated" airliner hijacking which would result in the deaths of all aboard. The purpose of the proposal was to blame Cubans, recruiting public opinion to the point where the media would back a direct military invasion of the country. (Kennedy rejected the plan.)

It would consequently be fair to infer that Al Qaida itself is not exactly your run-of-the-mill terrorist operation. (As the only Arabic word in the Scrabble dictionary, "qaid" might well be the inspiration for the original name of the organization.) The possibility emerges that Al Qaida is a front under joint Israel-US control. Links between bin Laden and the CIA, as well as between the bin Laden and Bush families are well known. With "Al Qaida" performing the necessary terrorist services, the United States gets a free hand to engage in whatever military operations it likes, while Israel gets a free hand on the West Bank and Gaza. This in no way precludes the possibility that some members of Al Qaida may think they belong to a genuine terrorist organization, including bin Laden himself. (The whole operation becomes increasingly reminiscent of Joseph Heller's novel, *Catch-22*, wherein Milo Minderbinder sells US Air Force bombing services to the Germans.)

Unfortunately, we are not living in a novel or a movie. However, the surreal quality of the September 11 attacks, noted by many observers, may be an unwitting, grassroots comment on the overly-dramatic, near-cinematic quality of the attacks. What might be called "Hollywood evil" (rather than the "banal evil" thought to lie behind the Jewish Holocaust, for example) has been invoked in the form of a terrorist who has no real cause, who, having being made insane by his religion, simply loves to kill people and looks forward to martyrdom. (Or perhaps he is "envious of western civilization.") Such imagery has played a key role in media reporting on the Middle East since well before the September 11 attacks. Why now?

Under the alternate scenario, the timing of the September 11 terror attacks can be directly related to Israel's discomfiture, one should say extreme discomfiture, with a slow turning of the tide of public opinion in the west against Israel for its treatment of the Palestinians. The change is more noticeable in Europe than in North America, but Israel has feared that as time went on, more and more Americans would become disillusioned with Israel and there would be increasing political pressure on elected officials to begin changing America's relationship with Israel.

This was not to be tolerated, as more than \$100 billion dollars (probably a conservative estimate) has been sent from the United States to Israel since the 1950s. With this money and only with this money, most of it "foreign aid," much of it in donations, Israel has been able to survive economically. Much of the foreign aid money goes right back to the United States, being spent on American arms.

Among the pressure items prompting Israel to act now was the UN conference on racism in Durban which addressed, among other matters, the issue of Israeli state racism. American and Israeli delegates walked out of the conference as soon as the item was raised.

Another pressure item was the filing by Palestinian complainants of a brief to the Belgian Court of International Law on the June 18 2001. The Palestinians were survivors of the Sabra and Shatila massacres in Lebanon in 1982. Their brief singled out Ariel Sharon and other Israelis. It came just one day after a BBC documentary concluded that Sharon was indictable for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Thought to constitute a strong legal challenge, the complaint seemed likely to lead to trial. Sharon would be charged under the 1993 Law for the Repression of Grave Breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and of additional Protocols I and II. Sharon took the prospects of a trial seriously enough to hire a Belgian lawyer Michele Hirsch to derail the proceedings.

American policy in the Middle East, broadly conceived, has come to resemble Israel's policy on the West Bank and in relation to neighbouring Arab states. Israel, which has been using the word "terrorist" for several decades, urging it upon the US media at every opportunity, uses the label to obscure the roots of "terrorism" in its own policies in the West Bank, Gaza, and in neighbouring Arab states. Its continuing

response to Palestinian militancy seems calculated to guarantee a continuing source of violence that permits Israel to pose as a victim, rather than a perpetrator.
The media

Sadly, ever since the Gulf War, the US media, particularly television news operations, have been under strict control of the Pentagon in any and all matters relating to military reporting. (MacArthur, 1993) Gone are the days of the independent reporter roaming the war zone, as was the case in Vietnam. Reporters who do not toe the Pentagon line, adopting its interpretation of events, are simply not invited to press briefings. The media have, furthermore, been subtly influenced into adopting the "terrorist" spin urged upon it by parties with an interest in promoting hatred of Arabs and/or Muslims.

In this context the American news media have become enthusiastic partners in the war on terrorism, serving narrow interests that it interprets as "American." Under the scenario developed in this report, it can be reasonably be suggested that had the media not allowed its own best interests to be undermined in this way over the last two decades, the September 11 attacks would not have taken place. For without the guarantee of a news media already programmed to fall instantly into line with the "terrorism" spin urged upon it by the Pentagon, the planners of this tragedy would surely have thought twice. (Where are Woodward and Bernstein when you really need them?)

By allowing the "terrorist" to become a separate, amorphous entity, straight out of Central Casting, the media have guaranteed that legitimate struggles for self-determination, driven as they sometimes are to violent expression, will result in more "terrorists," involving American forces in a never-ending search for the boogey-man of the new millennium:

"So cowboy change your ways to-day or with us you will ride chasing this devil herd across these endless skies."

Summary

This document describes an alternate method to achieve the effects witnessed on the morning of September 11, 2001. There can be little doubt that the method, consisting of the sarin/INS component and the cellphone operation, will work. No claim is made that this method was actually used, only that a clandestine operation by the side with the most to gain happens to be more consistent with various facts on the ground (about which there is no dispute) than is the standard explanation involving "Arab hijackers" and Al Qaida.

These facts include the political background, wherein Al Qaida is the only terrorist organization ever to attack a target or targets without claiming responsibility, and wherein Israel and the United States are the real beneficiaries of the attacks.

The alternate scenario is also more consistent with the following events than is the standard explanation: intelligence leaks; the virtual celebration in Palestine on the day of the attacks; the prior attempt to blow up the World Trade Center towers; the missing interceptors; the missing passengers; the missing black boxes; the (apparently) planted evidence; the mystery of Ziad Jarrah. In short, if the entire constellation of events behind the September 11 attacks is regarded as a jigsaw puzzle, the pieces of the puzzle already in place would represent the facts which everyone knows and about which there is no disagreement from any quarter. The pieces not yet placed include the White House scenario and the alternate scenario described here. The first piece has the right overall shape but, when we try to actually put it in the proposed space of the puzzle, it doesn't actually fit. The piece proposed by the White House must find a very different place in the puzzle, perhaps in the cover-story corner.

One may approach the problems posed by the official White House explanation of September 11 from a scientific point of view. What is the probability that the standard explanation is correct? To find out, one would simply multiply the probabilities of the component parts: Thus if one says that interceptors are sent up only half the time when airliners go off course (instead of all the time), that black boxes are found only half the time (instead of virtually all the time), that passengers are missing from passenger lists half the time (instead of rarely), that at least one out of 100 cellphone calls get through at least half the time, then

the probability that all four elements are present in an event (without taking any of the other elements into account) is no more than one-sixteenth. This should be enough to make any rational person suspicious, especially as this brief probability analysis goes out of its way to favor the official explanation.

The author is aware of allegations made by others that the Pentagon attack was in some manner faked, involving a much smaller aircraft, that the WTC towers were assisted in their demolition by planted explosives, and that approximately 130 Israelis that should have been among the WTC dead were not. Such possibilities have been excluded from the present analysis for the sake of simplicity and without further comment. Also excluded is the analysis of potentially endless faked terror attacks, such as the bombing in Bali (Israeli-made C4 plastic explosive discovered on site) or the Washington area sniper (Mr. Muhamad's name was not actually "Muhamad," he had no "white van," etc. etc.).
Recommendations:

The mere possibility that the September 11 attacks had a quite different source demands two responses:

1. An open, public inquiry into the attacks should be set up under an independent judicial body. Investigations currently under way in the US Congress may well be compromised by the attempts of Bush and Cheney to limit their scope, itself a suspicious circumstance.
2. The evidence presented in the trials of Salameh, Ayyad and others in relation to the 1993 Trade Center bombing should be re-examined by an independent judicial body in open hearings.

About the author

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Recommended reading

N. M. Ahmed. 2002. *The War on Freedom: How and why America was attacked, September 11, 2001*. Tree of Life Publications, CA.

This book is ably researched and documented by a well-known scholar with impeccable credentials. The present article complements Ahmed's book which misses only one major element - a genuine alternate scenario for the events of September 11, 2001. It can be found in many book stores or ordered on Amazon.com, as well

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Note: the reference technique used here is non-standard in that it lists the reference in parentheses next to the reference itself. This was done to ease the process of checking or consulting references by lay

readers who may be unfamiliar with reference systems.

History of Releases:

This document has undergone successive revisions as more information about the September 11 attacks came to light. Thoughtful comments by knowledgeable readers made this succession of increasingly feasible scenarios possible.

Release 1.0: January 22, 2002: In this scenario, hijackers were recruited by an intelligence agency under what former Mossad officer Victor Ostrovsky has called a "false flag" operation.

Release 1.1: February 4, 2002: In this scenario, the use of hijackers was assumed to be too risky and two all-electronic hijacking operations were explored.

Release 1.2: March 8, 2002: After expert criticism relating to impossibility of disabling manual control, a new approach developed. On the assumption that the passengers and crew of the aircraft were gassed first, the whole operation became an order of magnitude simpler.

Release 1.3: August 30, 2002: A partial transcript of the telephone conversations allegedly made from Flight 93 was made the basis for a more detailed exploration of how fake cell phone and "airfone" messages might be managed.

Release 1.4: December 5, 2002: One of many possible ways that Arab immigrants/visitors to the US could be converted to "terrorists" brings the last major piece of the puzzle into position.