

## **AFTER THE ATTACKS ON NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON**

by Rutherford

Reading the news after the attacks on New York and Washington, an unpleasant thought has lodged in my mind like a splinter.

It began with a report in the International Herald Tribune (A Test Few Presidents Have Known, IHT, 09/13/01) which reminded readers that, when faced with the "Iran Hostage Crisis", the Carter Administration proved unable to secure the release of the hostages held in the American embassy in Iran -- and that this failure contributed to the subsequent election of Ronald Reagan.

The same day in the same paper, another article explained that credible opposition to a wide range of important initiatives -- from the missile shield programme to the expansion of global trade -- will be neutralised by linking it in the public/media mind with this horrific tragedy.

In the days and weeks following the attacks, several news articles reported on the extent of public support for wide-ranging changes in security, military, privacy, finance, or other areas of 'national security' as well as the evaporation of opposition, both domestic and foreign, to the proposed missile defence shield:

"The suicide attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon appear to have strengthened, not weakened, the prospects for congressional support of President George W. Bush's missile defence plan."

And,

"...even though the attacks showed that the biggest threat to the nation was from terrorism, as opposed to a missile attack by a rogue state, congressional reluctance to oppose the president at this time seemed likely to overwhelm that consideration."  
(Air Terrorism said to Help Argument for Missile Shield), IHT, 15-16 September, 2001

As troubling as its implications may be, I cannot dislodge the nagging doubt that:

1. a small group within the administration or the National Security Council who seek to bring about drastic changes in geopolitical, security, military, privacy, finance, or some other area),
2. (Let's even give them a philanthropic motive for the changes they wish to see: perhaps they believe that certain changes are needed in the area of national security to counter the threat of terrorists simultaneously releasing chemical weapons within major population centres)
3. and who learned of a plan by, say, Bin Laden's organisation to commit an outrageous act of terrorism on a major American city,
4. might have decided on their own initiative to accept a certain degree of 'collateral damage', to let a number of citizens "take one for the team" ...as the only way to sell the War on Terror and which will bring Afghanistan under Western (or American) political control.

While I am aware of the similarities between my suspicions and some of the 20th century's less amusing conspiracy theories, I contend that this scenario is not impossible -- because it has

happened before. I may well too, be far off-base regarding the reasons and motives of my hypothetical band of conspirators, but, whatever their reasons might be, based on our occasional glimpse under the carpets of power, we can no longer believe that such things do not go on.

Consider:

- i. According to reports supported by documents from Soviet and Israeli intelligence sources, during the 1979 presidential election, senior members of the Reagan campaign team (the ex-director of the CIA, George Bush, and William Casey who Reagan subsequently appointed director of the CIA) met with representatives of the Iranian Revolutionary Council in Paris to negotiate a deal in order to preclude (what has since been dubbed) *the October Surprise* (the 'surprise' release of the US embassy hostages which would have boosted President Carter's chances of re-election)<sup>i</sup>. According to the Soviet and Israeli intelligence sources, the Iranians were promised American weapons technology in exchange for *not* releasing the US embassy hostages until after the election. The hostages were released *exactly one hour* after Reagan was sworn into office. If true, it means that American lives were put at risk in order to further a political agenda: the defeat of Jimmy Carter and the election of Ronald Reagan. These charges are supported by Barbara Honegger (a member of the Reagan/Bush campaign and transition teams) and by Gary Sick (professor of Middle East Politics at Columbia University).
- ii. Since the discovery of Oliver North's team and their illegal activities (prohibited by Congress) in providing arms to the terrorists fighting to overthrow the government of Nicaragua, we can no longer ignore the existence of small groups running 'rogue' operations out of the White House in the belief that they are serving interests above the law.
- iii. The necessary degree of public support for the Gulf War was manufactured by the public relations firm Hill & Knowlton (on retainer by the Kuwaiti royal family) -- through the use of propaganda and lies (including the incubator story) and which the Bush administration -- headed by a former chief of the Central Intelligence Agency -- surely knew to be false.
- iv. That Bin Laden and his Qaida organisation was a creation of the US intelligence community in its proxy struggle against the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan; and that,
- v. That, according to the French daily newspaper *Le Figaro*<sup>ii</sup> and Radio International France (RFI), in July 2001, Osama Bin Laden was treated in July at the American hospital in Dubai where he met a CIA official
- vi. The substantial oil and gas deposits in the former Soviet provinces of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan (said to equal the remaining reserves of Saudi Arabia and Iraq) can only be accessed with the support of a government in Afghanistan sympathetic to Western (American) interests.

I am not suggesting that such a group actively instigated the attacks on New York and Washington (although, that too, is not entirely beyond the realm of possibility) -- only that a small, dedicated group might, having learned of an impending attack, be prepared to sacrifice a number of citizens as the best way to ensure certain results.

Not surprisingly, within 48 hours of the attack on New York and Washington, the anti-globalisation protestors have begun to be vilified by association -- and the issues they raise to be safely ignored. We are assured that, "(the attacks will) underscore the absurdity of the misplaced violence against globalisation" and "remove much of the hysteria from discussions surrounding the globalisation of

world financial markets and commerce". (*The New World Order Is a Clash of Civilisations*, IHT, 13/09/01). The IHT has now begun the campaign in earnest (*Terrorists Exploit Anti-Globalisation*, Reginald Dale IHT, September 22/23). Drawing readers' attention to "a not entirely coincidental synergy between the actions of the terrorists and the aims of the anti-globalisation forces," he warns ominously that these two groups share their "dearest objectives".

Remembering that none of the major media outlets seriously challenged president Bush Sr.'s repeated claim that his objective in fighting the Gulf War was to "restore democracy in Kuwait" (a specious claim since Kuwait was not and is not a democracy), the IHT may have felt safe implying in the same article that the subsequent cancellation of the annual meetings of the World Bank and the IMF suggests collaboration between the terrorists and the anti-globalisation protestors' "aim to shut down meetings of elected officials and prevent the voices of the majority to be heard".

To accuse the protestors of subverting democratic processes is one thing, but it is positively Orwellian to describe the small minority who control the distribution of wealth of the planet and their representatives at the World bank and the IMF as either democratically elected or a majority. This may have been the first truth to fall in the war against evil -- but I fear it will not be the last.

The polled and charted growth of 'unquestioning public support' is already a regular topic in the US media -- along with a growing number of articles about the bills recently presented to Congress that restrict civil rights under the guise of fighting terrorism.

This does not imply that the system is wholly corrupt, but simply recognises that well-positioned fanatics are not to be found only in "rogue" nations and societies and that we too, have always had our share. Neither is this to depict the US as "the Great Satan", nor does it mean that I would not rather live in the shadow of the sleeping elephant (in Pierre Trudeau's phrase) than under the decidedly more oppressive scimitar of Islamic (or any other form of religious) fundamentalism.

Although just a footnote to the events of September 11th (a fact which is itself part of the problem), I was disappointed to see how the TV news groups jumped so easily onto an unfortunate piece of video footage in which less than two dozen Palestinians (and who became "hundreds" in subsequent text reports) were shown celebrating news of the attacks on New York and Washington. Although information soon emerged that the videotape had seriously misrepresented the scene, instead of correcting the false impression made by the footage, follow-up articles in the US-media repeatedly emphasised 'the Image Problem' caused by the report -- but left intact the most pernicious impressions left by the footage.

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<sup>i</sup> [Who will unwrap the October Surprise?](#), *Columbia Journalism Review*, Sept/Oct 1991 and [The Death of my Friend Paul Wilcher](#), Sarah McClendon's *Washington Report*, 4 July 1993

<sup>ii</sup> [Ben Laden a été soigné en juillet à l'hôpital américain de Dubaï](#), *Le Figaro* mercredi 31 octobre 2001