

Relative of 9/11 victim: “The Bush administration is only concerned with empire, oil and corporate profits”

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Revelations in August that an American military unit, Able Danger, knew the identities of four September 11, 2001, hijackers as Al Qaeda operatives, including the alleged ringleader Mohammed Atta, more than a year before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and that this information was never passed on to the FBI, elicited outraged responses from the some of the families of the victims of the terrorist bombings.

These family members were further angered at the initial rejection of the revelations by members of the September 11 commission—the bipartisan body that conducted the official inquiry into the terrorist attack. In response, a liaison between Able Danger and the Defense Intelligence Agency, Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer, went public to refute the claim by the panel that while they knew about Able Danger, they were never informed that the project had identified Atta or any of the other hijackers, in advance of September 11. The 9/11 commission report categorically declared that no US intelligence agency had identified Atta before the attacks.

After various attempts to minimize these extraordinary disclosures, the media predictably dropped any further coverage. Evidence that the US government had foreknowledge of the terrorist attacks and may have allowed these attacks to take place for its own reasons is a subject that cannot be discussed.

Last month, the *World Socialist Web Site* interviewed Bob McIlvaine, who lost his son, Robert McIlvaine, when the World Trade Center was brought down on September 11. (See “Four terrorists were known to military in 2000: September 11 victims’ relatives speak out on suppressed intelligence”.)

Another 9/11 family member, Valerie Lucznikowska, 66, whose 37-year-old nephew worked on the 83rd floor of the South Tower of the World Trade Center and died during the event, recently spoke to the WSWs.

Ms. Lucznikowska is the executive director of the Congress of International Modern Architects, whose governing board includes Ati Gropius Johansen, the daughter of renowned architect Walter Gropius.

She explained: “My nephew was told that people in the South Tower didn’t have to evacuate because the collapse of the North Tower was an accident. I believe that NORAD [North American Aerospace Defense Command] knew that the South Tower was going to be attacked before it went down. Think of what this means. Able Danger was not the first revelation. There were lots and lots of clues about the fact that the government had prior knowledge.

“It is not only September 11—the war in Iraq and now the catastrophe in New Orleans show time and again that the Bush administration is only concerned with empire, oil and corporate profits. We no longer have a government, because government implies some form of democracy. The last few days in Louisiana have made it clear how much of our resources are being used in the war. This administration has no interest in, no concern for and no connection to the population.

“What we need now are the side-by-side costs in US dollars of what is actually going to our military and what, in simple terms, it could buy for the people—us—who underwrite these expenditures.

“I was shocked to learn that of the \$10.5 billion earmarked for disaster relief in New Orleans, \$10 billion will go to FEMA [Federal Emergency

Management Agency] and \$500 million will go to the Pentagon. Our constitution bars the military from acting in civil law enforcement.

“Where is the theory of Intelligent Design that Bush is pushing in Hurricane Katrina? What role did Intelligent Design play in global warming—which Bush denies—that caused Katrina to heat up to the point of destroying New Orleans? There will be more disasters because science has been emasculated.

“I think that the main thing in New Orleans is that the people have to rise up and march on Washington. Though I’m not sure what would happen because the Democratic Party is the left wing of the Republican Party.

“There will be more tragedies because of the concerted effort to destroy all social programs. How can society function properly? [New York Times columnist Paul] Krugman’s column today [September 2] stated correctly that the government can’t create anything but war. And the people are also disadvantaged by the fact that the trade unions have been thoroughly corrupted.

“When I see the people of New Orleans crying out, ‘Help Me!’ I think of the poem by Stephen Crane, author of *The Red Badge of Courage*: ‘A man said to the universe, “Sir, I exist.” “However,” replied the universe, “the fact has not created in me a sense of obligation.”’

“The day of the Iraqi invasion, I was so traumatized I could not speak. I went into a depression. I was born at the beginning of World War II, my parents came from Poland—starving masses and all that. I simply could not believe that the American government would do this—to declare war on these people. During Vietnam, I was apolitical, but Iraq made me really see the government for what it is.

“I think this had much to do with the experience of 9/11. I am the only one of my family that lives in Manhattan, so the search for my nephew took place from my apartment. We went from hospital to hospital, to the coroner’s office. My nephew’s body was the eighth one to be found, but they didn’t tell my sister, his mother, until eight days later. I believe he was out of the building, and that he died trying to help others. At the corporate memorial, a colleague of his came up to his family and thanked them profusely, saying that he had saved her life.

“When the war began, I did not want my nephew’s death to be used to justify the war. I picketed in front of [New York Senator Charles] Schumer’s office, but nobody would see us. That’s when I met Peaceful Tomorrows [relatives of 9/11 victims].

“I’m just beginning to read all the exposés of 9/11. Even though Able Danger identified four of the hijackers before the bombing, I would still like to know how the government knew so quickly after the attacks who the hijackers were. The 9/11 commission definitely did not get to the full truth.”



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