

Obama administration continues to block report on Saudi financing of 9/11 attacks

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Even after more than thirteen years, a cloud of secrecy hangs over the events of September 11, 2001.

At every opportunity, the American political establishment cites the terrorist attacks that took place on that date as justification for military aggression abroad and the buildup of a police state at home. Immediately after the attacks, a “war on terror” was declared that continues to this day. Official remembrances of the attacks have taken on the character of state rituals. However, the US government continues to obstruct the release to the public of factual information about the events of 9/11.

On January 7, current and former members of Congress as well as families of victims held a press conference to demand the publication of 28 pages that remain classified from a December 2002 congressional report entitled “Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Activities Before and After the Terrorists Attacks of September 2001.”

These pages were classified by the Bush administration at the time the report was released. The January 7 press conference called attention to the fact that the Bush and Obama administrations have obstructed the release of these redacted pages ever since.

“The 28 pages primarily relate to who financed 9/11 and they point a very strong finger at Saudi Arabia as being the principal financier,” former Democratic Senator Bob Graham noted at the press conference. Graham was the co-chair of the inquiry and he co-authored the report in question, so he speaks from first-hand knowledge of the report’s contents.

“While the 28 pages are maybe the most important and the most prominent, they are by no means the only example of where information that is important to understanding the full extent of 9/11 has also been withheld from the American people,” Graham added. “This is not a narrow issue of withholding information at one place, in one time,” he continued. “This is a pervasive

pattern of covering up the role of Saudi Arabia in 9/11, by all of the agencies of the federal government, which have access to information that might illuminate Saudi Arabia’s role in 9/11.”

Graham presented the issue as solely one of “incompetence” and the Obama administration’s desire to avoid the exposure of incompetence.

An organization of family members of the victims of the World Trade Center attacks called “9/11 Families United for Justice” is campaigning to have the 28 pages released. Terry Strada, whose husband was killed in the World Trade Center attacks, is a co-chair of the organization. “When former President George W. Bush classified the 28 pages of the Joint Inquiry,” she said at the press conference, “he effectively protected the people who gave financial and logistical aid to at least some of the 19 hijackers while they were here in this country.”

Even without the full declassification of the 28 pages, there is ample evidence that Saudi Arabia was principally involved in financing the September 11 attacks, though this evidence is covered up by the media and the US political establishment.

Previous reports and leaks have indicated that the classified 28 pages detail the case of two of the hijackers in the plane that crashed into the Pentagon, Nawaf al-Hazami and Khalid al-Mihdhar. The pair flew to the US under their own names after attending an Islamist training camp in Malaysia that was monitored by the CIA. They were met in Los Angeles by Omar al-Bayoumi, an individual with ties to Saudi intelligence and, according to unclassified sections of the report, “seemingly unlimited funding from Saudi Arabia.”

Bayoumi met al-Hazami and al-Mihdhar at the Saudi consulate and took them to San Diego, where they moved in with an FBI informant in the months preceding the September 11 attacks. An associate of Bayoumi, Asama Bassnan, received checks from the then-Saudi ambassador

to the United States, Prince Bandar, and his wife—money that was used to assist the hijackers.

While in San Diego, the pair had meetings with Anwar al-Awlaki, the cleric and US citizen who was assassinated by the Obama administration in September 2011. Al-Awlaki had his own strange ties with the US state, having attended a meeting with military officials at the Pentagon only months after the September 11 attacks, as part of a supposed “outreach” effort.

In October of last year, Zacarias Moussaoui—the so-called “20th hijacker” who is currently serving a life sentence in maximum security prison—released a letter to the Oklahoma Western District Court alleging that he was personally assisted by Saudi Prince Turki bin Faisal Al Saud. Moussaoui took flight lessons in Norman, Oklahoma along with Mohamed Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi, two of the alleged 9/11 hijackers.

According to Moussaoui, the Saudi prince financed his flight lessons “and was doing so knowingly for Osama bin Laden.”

Since coming to office, the Obama administration has worked to prevent a full public accounting of the ties between Saudi Arabia and the September 11 hijackers. In 2009, the administration intervened on behalf of the Saudi monarchy to block the release of documents gathered by the families of September 11 victims.

While the January 7 press conference has been almost entirely ignored by the mass media, the fact that the Obama administration is continuing to cover up a report proving that the September 11 attacks were financed by Washington’s ally is no ordinary matter. It calls into question the entire official “war on terror” narrative.

The Saudi connection to the September 11 attacks is only one of many unanswered questions regarding the involvement of sections of the US state in the terrorist attacks.

US intelligence agencies cultivated ties with Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Al Qaeda for decades before the September 11, 2001 attacks, including during the Soviet war in Afghanistan (1979-1989). During that war, President Ronald Reagan famously proclaimed that the jihadist militias in Afghanistan were “freedom fighters.”

Today, the US intelligence agencies still enjoy close ties with such groups, utilizing them as shock troops for its campaigns in Libya, Syria and elsewhere. Saudi Arabia remains a significant source of funding for these groups. (See “ISIS: The jihadist movement stamped ‘Made in America’”)

A majority of the September 11 attackers came from Saudi Arabia. The Saudi monarchy, a bastion of reaction, has been Washington’s principal client in the region since the 1950s.

In January 2002, the *World Socialist Web Site* published a four-part analysis entitled, “Was the US government alerted to the September 11 attacks?” Using material that was available at that time, the series reviewed the advance warnings the US intelligence agencies received, the information they had about the hijackers beforehand, the history of these agencies’ activity in the Middle East, and the conspicuous failures to investigate in the aftermath of the attacks.

That series concluded, “Certainly the least likely and least credible explanation of that day’s events is that the vast US national security apparatus was entirely unaware of the activities of the hijackers until the airliners slammed into the World Trade Center and Pentagon.”

The fact that the financing for the attacks came from Saudi Arabia—and the fact that the US government is still trying to cover it up—underscores the issues that were raised in that series of articles and places even more question marks over the official story.

Did the US intelligence agencies know, before the attacks, that Saudi Arabia was financing Al Qaeda? Was Saudi Arabia, in fact, financing Al Qaeda at the behest of sections of the American state and US intelligence agencies?

Senator Graham contends that the 28 still-classified pages demonstrate the “incompetence” of the intelligence agencies. The limited information that is available points not to incompetence, but to deliberate indifference or worse.



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