

What we know and don't know about 9/11

Paul Craig Roberts

08/16/06 "Information Clearing House" -- -- I received a number of intelligent responses from readers of my August 14 column, "Gullible Americans," The letters deserve a reply. Moreover, some contain important points that should be shared with a wider audience. Pundits such as myself are not the only people who have interesting things to say. Considering the number of letters and the time it would require to respond individually, I am replying instead in this column.

Most readers from whom I heard understand the difference between loyalty to country and loyalty to a government. They understand that to support a political party or a government that is destroying the US Constitution and America's reputation in the world is, in fact, an act of treason. Therefore, I did not have to read the usual drivel about how doubting "our government" is un-American.

Among the issues raised are:

How could the complicity of the US government, or some part of it, in the events of 9/11 be kept a secret? For the most part, this question comes from Americans who believe the government must have been, to some extent, complicit in the attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon.

How can we differentiate between the real facts, the 9/11 Commission's reporting of the facts, and "conspiracy theories"?

What about the role of suicide flyers led by M. Atta?

What about the Popular Mechanics article and the TV documentary that debunk the skeptics and support the official explanation of 9/11?

What about the role of the US media in propagandizing Americans with the official explanation instead of examining the explanation, especially with regard to such truncated hatchet-job interviews with 9/11 skeptics such as the hatchet jobs presided over by Donny Deutsch on CNBC and by neocon Tucker Carlson on MSNBC?

Why are so many Americans hostile to holding the Bush regime accountable for its obvious and documented lies, lies that have misled America to war and gratuitously slaughtered and maimed tens of thousands of people, including our own troops?

I will begin by stating what we know to be a solid incontrovertible scientific fact.

We know that it is strictly impossible for any building, much less steel columned buildings, to "pancake" at free fall speed. Therefore, it is a non-controversial fact that the official explanation of the collapse of the WTC buildings is false.

We also know for a fact that the Air Force somehow inexplicably failed to intercept the alleged hijacked airliners despite the fact that the Air Force can launch jet fighters to 29,000 feet in 2.5 minutes. We also know that the two co-chairmen of the 9/11 Commission have just written a book that reveals that the US military lied to the Commission about its failure to intercept the hijacked airliners.

There are various explanations for this second fact. The military could have lied to cover up complicity or to cover-up its incompetence. However, no investigation has been made to ascertain the true explanation for the failure.

This leaves us with the incontrovertible fact that buildings cannot “pancake” at free fall speeds.

The only explanation known to science for the free fall collapse of a building, especially into its own footprint, is engineered demolition, which removes the supports for each floor of the building at split second intervals so that the debris from above meets no resistance on its fall. To call this explanation a “conspiracy theory” is to display the utmost total ignorance. Any physicist or engineer who maintains that buildings can “pancake” at free fall speed has obviously been bought and paid for or is a total incompetent fool.

The WTC buildings are known to have collapsed at free fall speed into their own footprints.

This fact does not tell us who is responsible or what purpose was served.

Since the damning incontrovertible fact has not been investigated, speculation and “conspiracy theories” have filled the void. Some of the speculation is based on circumstantial evidence and is plausible. Other of the speculation is untenable, and it is used to protect the official explanation by branding all skeptics “conspiracy theorists.” I would not be surprised if some of the most far-out “conspiracy theories” consist, in fact, of disinformation put out by elements in the government to discredit all skeptics. But I do not know this to be the case.

How could government complicity be kept a secret? It can be kept a secret, because so many Americans are scientifically ignorant and emotionally weak. They are incapable of realizing the contradiction in the government’s claim that the WTC buildings “pancaked” at free fall speed, and they are emotionally incapable of confronting the evil of the Bush regime. Many Christians think that Bush is “a man of God” who is protecting American morality from homosexuals and abortionists. Others who wear their patriotism on their sleeves think Bush is standing up for America and innocent Israel, and that they must not let anti-American anti-war protesters cause America to lose another war and repeat the Vietnam experience. Americans are both ignorant and full of resentments against the left. This makes them easily manipulated by the neoconservatives who dominate the Bush regime and the media.

Also, many anti-war and anti-Bush online sites are scared of being called “crazy conspiracy kooks.” They protect their sites by staying away from the 9/11 issue, just as so many Americans are scared to death of being called “anti-semitic” and thereby do not dare criticize

Israel no matter the heinous war crimes that state routinely commits. Of all the online subscribers to my column, only vdare.com and NewsMax had the courage to post my column. Realizing that even antiwar sites would serve as de facto gatekeepers for the neocons, I offered the column to ICH, whose editor cannot be intimidated.

The Popular Mechanics article and the TV documentary are obviously false since they both endorse the official explanation that the WTC buildings “pancaked” at free fall speed, an obvious scientific impossibility. Whether the false reporting by Popular Mechanics and television are due to incompetence or to complicity in a government cover-up, I do not know.

We know nothing about alleged suicide flyers led by M. Atta except what the government has told us, a government that has lied to us about everything else, such as Iraq’s alleged WMD and alleged links to Osama bin Laden, and Iran’s alleged nuclear weapons program, a program for which the International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors cannot find evidence.

According to reports, the BBC has found 6 of the alleged suicide hijackers alive and well in their home countries. I do not know if the report is true, but I do know that the report has been ignored and there has been no investigation. Both the US government and the US media have turned a blind eye. We have no way of knowing if Atta and his named accomplices hijacked the planes, or, if they did, whether they were dupes of intelligent services that pretended to be a terrorist cell and organized the cover for the engineered demolition.

The fact that we do not know any of these things, and the fact that the 9/11 Commission co-chairmen now tell us that their report is flawed, are good indications that we have no documented information of who was behind the plot, why it occurred, or how it operated.

With regard to the role of the US media, if it is indeed a media rather than a propaganda ministry, one reader cited remarks by the distinguished investigative reporter, John Pilger, made in an address at Columbia University on 14 April 2006:

“During the Cold War, a group of Russian journalists toured the United States. On the final day of their visit, they were asked by their hosts for their impressions. ‘I have to tell you,’ said their spokesman, ‘that we were astonished to find after reading all the newspapers and watching TV, that all the opinions on all the vital issues were by and large, the same. To get that result in our country, we imprison people, we tear out their fingernails. Here, you don’t have that. What’s the secret? How do you do it?’”

This quote is probably apocryphal, but it is well used to make a valid point. The answer to the Russian’s question is that during the cold war the American public viewed the Soviet Union as a dangerous adversary and were amenable to reports to that effect. The fact that the Soviets were a potentially dangerous adversary made Americans blind to the roles of the US military-industrial complex, which benefitted financially from cultivating the adversary relationship, and the US government, which benefitted politically from cultivating the adversary relationship, in keeping the adversarial relationship alive.

The uniformity of the US media has become much more complete since the days of the cold

war. During the 1990s, the US government permitted an unconscionable concentration of print and broadcast media that terminated the independence of the media. Today the US media is owned by 5 giant companies in which pro-Zionist Jews have disproportionate influence. More importantly, the values of the conglomerates reside in the broadcast licenses, which are granted by the government, and the corporations are run by corporate executives--not by journalists--whose eyes are on advertising revenues and the avoidance of controversy that might produce boycotts or upset advertisers and subscribers. Americans who rely on the totally corrupt corporate media have no idea what is happening anywhere on earth, much less at home.

Despite the dark days in which we live, some readers find optimism in recent polls that show more than one-third of the US public now disbelieve the official account of 9/11 despite the Bush regime's propaganda faithfully trumpeted by the US media. Bush's own rock-bottom polls show that Americans, like the Russians of the Soviet era, can read between the lines of the propagandistic US media. Many Americans can still spot a liar and a cheat when they see one.

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