

REVIEWS

UNSETTLING FINDINGS ABOUT 9/11

**THE NEW PEARL HARBOR:
DISTURBING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND 9/11**
David Ray Griffin, Olive Branch Press, USA, 2004, pp.214

**THE 9/11 COMMISSION REPORT:
OMISSIONS AND DISTORTIONS**
David Ray Griffin, Arris Books, UK, 2004, pp.339

**CROSSING THE RUBICON, THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN EMPIRE AT THE
END OF THE AGE OF OIL**
Michael E. Ruppert, New Society Publishers, Canada 2004, pp.674

REVIEW ESSAY: CÔME CARPENTIER DE GOURDON

Since the end of the year 2001, an avalanche of articles on the Internet and in print, videos, brochures and books dedicated to investigating the 11th of September attacks, their causes, context and consequences has poured out of the United States and several other countries. Nowadays more than 1,00,000 websites are dedicated to that subject. The books reviewed belong to the category of seriously researched and documented works which command attention and deserve a careful reading.

At the outset, it must be remarked that the official version of the events of that dramatic day as Professor Ray Griffin points out, alleges a particular

conspiracy hatched and carried out by a group of Muslim extremists of mostly Saudi origin but based in Afghanistan and led by an elusive 'former' CIA-linked special operative, Osama bin Laden. Hence dissenting reports should properly be described simply as critical analyses of the government-sponsored version or, at most as alternative conspiracy theories, some of which will appear to an objective reader more plausible and more solidly supported by evidence than the official story. Not surprisingly, according to various opinion polls, about half the residents of New York are convinced that the US Government knew in advance of the 9/11 plot and 'probably' played a role in its execution.

Many of these 'heretical' analyses of the events of September 11, 2001 come from highly credible or academically impeccable sources. On the other hand the Neoconservative leaders, entrenched in Washington D.C. after the trumped-up presidential elections of 2000 which brought to power the Bush Administration, freely acknowledge that the 9/11 attacks provided them with a "providential opportunity" (to quote the exact words used by George Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, and Condoleezza Rice, on more than one occasion and in official statements and documents) to carry out much of their long-standing agenda, which might not have been possible had 9/11 not occurred. Donald Rumsfeld accordingly called it "a blessing in disguise" and, as quoted in an article signed by Brad Carlton in the *Baltimore Sun* of June 12, 2002, the President himself said to his budget director Mitch Daniels a few hours after the earthshaking event began: "Lucky me, I hit the jackpot!".

The books under review make reference to and use of many other publications, some signed by rather prominent authors, such as Thierry Meyssan's "*L'Effroyable Imposture*" (the Big Lie), "*The CIA and September 11*" By Andreas von Bulow, a former German Secretary of the Interior; Michael Meacher, Tony Blair's former Environment Ministers's op-ed on the London *Guardian* (he also wrote the foreword for the English edition of *The*

New Pearl Harbor) and Professor Michel Chossudovsky's volume *War and Globalisation—The Truth behind September 11th*.

Every day new high profile names are coming out to support the view that 9/11 was an "inside job". They include to date Morgan Reynolds, Paul Craig Roberts and Catherine Austin Fitts, all former high finance officials in the Reagan and first Bush administrations; former Republican Senator and Presidential candidate Bob Dole's ex-chief of Staff Stanley Hilton, US Senator Mark Dayton, Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney (who sponsored a public hearing on the subject, on Capitol Hill, broadcast on C-Span), David Schippers, former Chief Investigative Counsel for the US House of Representatives' Judiciary Committee and Robert Bowman, known as the father of 'Star Wars' who headed the US Department of Defence's Advanced Space Projects. We may also take into account the testimony of former British MI-5 operative David Shayler who has gone public with what he claims to know of this matter.

Ray Griffin, a long-standing professor of theology at Claremont College, well-known as a logician, has now become famous as a detractor of the Government's claims. In fact one of his public presentations on the subject was featured on C-Span as well.

He has collected some of the massive and incontrovertible evidence

of prior government knowledge and deliberate deception before, during and after 9/11, leaving doubt only as to whether that operation was, in the jargon of special ops, a LIHOP ('Let it happen') or a MIHOP ('Make it happen'). Professor Griffin tends to conclude that the second hypothesis is more plausible than the first. He acknowledges having long tried to fight off the implications of the many telltale signs of federal high-level complicity with the perpetrators of the outrage, whoever those were, but confesses that the more he studied the facts, the more he had to admit that the Bush Administration must have been party to 'such a heinous thing' for what it regarded as 'the higher national interests', just as Franklin D. Roosevelt had allowed the attacks on Pearl Harbor to happen unimpeded in order to muster massive public support at home for entering the war against Japan and Germany, a fact which has now been formally acknowledged by the US Government as recorded by Professor Naville Maxwell in his brochure "*911-A Reichstag Fire*".

Professor Ray Griffin acknowledges his particular debt to the aforementioned book by Meyssan and to Nafeez Ahmed's "*The War on Freedom: How and Why America was attacked on September 11, 2001*" as also to Paul Thompson's extraordinarily comprehensive 9/11 Timeline, available on the Internet. He also calls attention to the collection of revealing

photographs about the attacks on the WTC towers and their collapse gathered by Eric Hufschmid in his book "*Painful Questions: An Analysis of the September 11 Attacks*" (2002). Griffin reviews five major types of evidence collected against the official accounts and he finds that most of those challenges stand scrutiny. He points out that his goal is not to explain what really happened, since he does not have access to a great deal of information still unavailable or kept secret by the authorities, but "merely summarize what seems to be the strongest reasons that have been given for considering the official account to be false".

Four indisputable facts stand out as a result of his and other thorough investigations of the 9/11 events:

- 1 The US Authorities knew beforehand of the likelihood of that type of attack on those specific targets, though they have denied it since, despite all the incriminating evidence.
- 2 The US Authorities did not try to intercept the planes in the first three cases of hijacking and in fact prevented their interception.
- 3 The WTC North and South Towers were brought down 'at free fall speed' by controlled demolition (they 'exploded...and desintegrated into dust...'. Seismic tremors were recorded simultaneously at Columbia Geophysical Observatory), just as the smaller WTC-

7 Tower, untouched by the planes, was also dynamited in the afternoon, as acknowledged inadvertently by the owner, Larry Silverstein on PBS Radio. "Officially sanctioned" attempts to account for the crash of the towers as being solely the result of the planes' impact are technically untenable.

- 4 The US Federal Authorities blocked any effective, independent, public investigation from taking place just as they had 'actively obstructed investigations that might have uncovered the plot'. In this regard, no less experienced an analyst than Alex Standish, editor of *Jane's Intelligence Review* has concluded that 9/11 was not an Intelligence failure but the result of a 'political decision not to act against bin Laden'.

Faithful to his logically systematic approach, Griffin establishes eight levels of possible official complicity in ascending order and, towards the end of the book he concludes that only the two highest levels (direct involvement in the planning by the White House, Pentagon and Security Agencies) can account for most of the facts which stand against the Government's own version of events.

Griffin picks out 24 indices of official complicity, some from other researchers and some from his own investigation and he lists no less than 38 coincidences that must be accepted as such (i.e. as fortuitous) if the

government-sponsored version of the circumstances and causes of 9/11 is to be believed. Against that burden of circumstantial evidence, the Bush regime's response has been either to reject the charges with contempt or to claim that the government would have been incapable to plot and execute such a convoluted and devious operation, which is tantamount to begging the question.

The three books under review remind their readers of the prophetically precise warnings given by official sources years before the tragic date. The Terror Report 2000 published in 1993 by a commission of experts from the Pentagon originally envisioned civilian planes being used as missiles to bomb national landmarks though this particular scenario was 'deleted' at the request of the Defence Department's top brass who apparently did not want this prospect to be publicised. The experts had specifically singled out the WTC because of its 'symbolic nature' and had added that "... terrorist groups (would) likely consider mounting multiple, simultaneous operations".

In 1999 again a National Intelligence document predicted rather accurately what happened three years later, probably stealing a page from the 'Plan Bojinka' discovered by the Philippine police in 1995. Not surprisingly on the fateful day of the attacks, Rumsfeld was able to say in his office, after hearing of the first strike

on the WTC that he expected more attacks, less than one hour before the Pentagon was struck by what he himself called in an unguarded moment 'a missile' about a month later at a Press conference.

In the afternoon of 9/11, Rumsfeld issued to his staff a revealing memo, showing that he was none too concerned to hide his priorities: "Best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. (Saddam Husain) at same time. Not only UBL (bin Laden). Go massive ... Sweep it all up. Things related and not".

Naturally, a regime so determined to take maximum advantage of a crisis which was far from unexpected was not going to allow any investigation that might blow the whistle on its very suspicious behaviour. In his second book *'The 9/11 Commission' Report*, Griffin demonstrates that by its "omissions and distortions" the so-called Independent Inquiry deserves to be remembered as the "9/11 Coverup Commission" since it practically whitewashed the Administration, especially its top leaders, of any guilt beyond that of negligence or unpreparedness for which in fact nobody has been punished, with the possible exception of CIA Director Tenet who was made a scapegoat and resigned in 2004.

Some of the Commissioners felt so uneasy or even in disagreement with the concessions made by the Bush-appointed Republican Chairman

Thomas Kean monitored by the executive director Philip Zelikow, another trusted 'asset' of the White House, that they protested and one even resigned in disgust. Like the prior Joint Congressional Inquiry, the Commission 'simply assumed from the outset that no deliberate complicity was involved', while the President and the Vice-President who could be regarded as 'key suspects' refused to testify under oath. In deference to the Presidential directives, the Commission meekly stated that it was "not interested in assessing blame" and that its focus would be "on the future". Yet one of its less compliant members, Max Clelland stated to the press: "As each day goes by we learn that this government knew a lot more about these terrorists before September 11 than it has ever admitted".

Michael Ruppert, like Griffin does not indulge in technical analyses and speculations about the methods really used to carry out the attacks, whether or not they involved remote-controlled, 'modified' planes as more than a few qualified investigators have concluded while affirming that the Pentagon strike in particular could not have been effected with a Boeing 757.

Instead, Ruppert, known for his investigative website and newsletter *From the Wilderness* warns readers in his foreword that he has followed the procedure used by criminal prosecutors, (with which he is familiar in his quality as a former LAPD narcotics agent), to

build a case before a grand jury. He lays out the geopolitical context and the background of the major actors and states at the outset the summary of his conclusions: "The only suspects found ... will not be *Al Qaida* and Osama bin Laden. They will instead be a group of people operating within certain government agencies, including the White House ... However the only possible unifying thread will be the Intelligence Community and in particular, the US Secret Service and the CIA".

He spells out the key finding of his investigations which is "official acknowledgments that a number of drills simulating terrorist attacks on government facilities, some with hijacked airplanes were planned in the years and months before 9/11 and on that very day". He notes significantly "the running of such an exercise is an excellent method of confusing emergency response personnel (for instance, pilots)" and indeed the book provides the names and some specific details of five of those concurrent drills.

Ruppert does not hide the fact that, as a political activist, his aim is to change the political system in the USA which he argues "represents an institutionalised and ongoing attack on democracy". He hammers home with the assurance derived from his intimate knowledge of the Intelligence and Special Operations methods: "The US Government not only had complete foreknowledge of the attacks of

September 11, it also needed them and deliberately facilitated them, and even helped plan and create them using techniques long understood in the world of covert operations".

This massive book is more ambitious than many other studies on 9/11 which merely try to uncover the real culprits and lay bare their *modus operandi* because it seeks to connect the attacks with the larger issue of global oil politics, probably the most strategically critical and explosive in this age. He brushes a panorama of the international energy situation and exposes the key US Government objectives, in keeping with the "Project For A New American Century" and related official documents. He maintains that "the deepest, darkest results of September 11 lie buried in the records of the US National Energy Policy Development Group (NEPDG) which...produced its final report in May 2001" and which was headed by Vice-President Cheney, a veteran figure in the oil industry and the military-industrial complex.

There is plenty of evidence that certain agencies within the US Government aided and abetted terrorist 'Islamic' groups before 9/11 and no less an authority than the FBI counter-terrorism expert John O'Neill confirmed it in July 2001, not long before dying in the collapse of the WTC towers, the day after being appointed to head the security of the complex.

What emerges from Ruppert's analysis is that the Bush administration is the visible projection of an establishment whose major concern is the perceived imminence of 'peak oil', implying the rapid decline of oil production worldwide which in turn impels the superpower to control the main fossil energy sources through a combination of military and economic endeavours. Both Ruppert and Griffin are convinced that the September 11 attacks neatly fit into that plan for expanding and bolstering the dominance of the US abroad and, at the same time, extending the powers of the government at home.

Most critical analysts of the US Government's role in the context of 9/11 are quite cynical about the real position of Osama bin Laden in the framework of that grand design. Ruppert writes, "Having created and armed an enemy, the US Government now had to make the enemy act on a broad enough scale..." and he recalls that in 1995 the Bin Laden Group of Companies purchased the bankrupt Iridium LLC's network of 73 low-orbit satellites, demonstrating thereby the family's close involvement with the American 'hitech' national security interests. He also throws some light on the complex relationship between the US Intelligence community and Pakistan's ISI which in a number of cases is shown to act as an arm of the CIA and DIA in South Asia. Several clues point to the likelihood that the

Bush administration used the ISI as a proxy and a 'patsy' to organise the attacks, in order to create a trail leading to the Islamist bogeyman.

There are so many aspects of the 9/11 scenario which directly incriminate the government that no book, not even Ruppert's opus has been able to cover all of them. One fact, reported by *Newsweek* and other media is that three of the nineteen alleged Arab hijackers trained until "D-Day" at the Pensacola Naval Air Station in Florida, a state governed by the President's brother Jeb Bush where no less than fourteen amongst them spent time during 2001. Files pertaining to their presence and activities were removed by judicial authorities right after September 11 and remain unavailable to this day.

Coming to the actual staging of the attacks, *Crossing the Rubicon* shows step by step that there was a "deliberately superimposed overlay of wargame exercises being conducted by several government agencies that inserted false blogs on radar screens in the Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS) ... (Those wargames) involved lively exercises with aircraft posing as hijacked airliners and effectively confused and paralysed all response". "Vigilant Guardian in particular, which began on September 10, 2001 was a 'hijacking drill' in which several planes were to pose as hijacked airliners. One of the exercises within that drill involved shooting

down a remotely piloted plane posing as a hijacked commercial jet”.

Ruppert also records that some of the games involving the NRO (National Reconnaissance Office) on September 11 consisted of crashing planes into high-rise buildings and at least another one on an earlier date, under NORAD's control was a MASCAL (mass casualty exercise) which simulated a hijacked plane hitting one of the WTC towers.

The conclusion reached in the book is that there was a deliberate resolve at the top of the government to make sure that the existing interception and defence mechanisms were disabled. It turns out that since May 8, 2001 Vice-President Cheney was in charge of the Federal Emergency Management Authority. Another leading actor may have been Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld from whom orders to ‘stand down’ (block) the air defence response system in New York and the District of Columbia must have come. According to an Instruction from the Joint Chiefs of Staff dated June 1, 2001, superceding earlier procedures, Rumsfeld was made the sole authority for “approving... any requests involving ‘potentially lethal support’ in cases of aircraft piracy (hijacking)”. Cheney or he logically would thus have ordered the shooting down of the fourth plane, UA Flight 93 over Pennsylvania since it now appears that a missile brought down that aircraft, for reasons that are still not clear since the Administration has denied issuing that order.

Thereby, Ruppert answers rather convincingly some of the most troubling questions raised by Griffin and many other investigators. Griffin also singles out Chairman of the Jt. Chiefs of Staff Richard Myers and the NORAD Commander General Ralph Eberhard, both very committed to the development of the new Space Command as a part of the all-important project of militarisation of space intended to give the US Government ‘full spectrum dominance’ over the world.

The last part of the book explores the ways in which the Bush Administration sought to cover its tracks. There Ruppert supplements the information provided by Ray Griffin's second volume. Specifically he seeks to prove that a parallel command system reporting directly to Dick Cheney was run from the underground Presidential Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) of the White House and must have been linked to the Secret Service office located in the WTC Tower 7 (later destroyed). Both the authors underline that NORAD's spokesmen later lied on many essential points regarding the unfolding of events in their statements to the press and testimonies to Congress. The Kean Commission on the other hand acted to cover up many major discrepancies, partly by pinning the blame on the Federal Aviation Authority in order to exonerate the essential actors at the helm of government.

Attention is also given by both our authors to the well-known fact that massive speculative trade on the stock of companies that were directly affected by the 9/11 attacks took place in the immediately preceding days and hours. Statistically, according to most observers it is very unlikely that this was merely coincidental and Ruppert for one has investigated the apparent connection of one of the banks concerned with the CIA through one of its executives, well-known Agency veteran David “Buzzy” Krongard.

Dozens of other documented facts contribute to reinforce the case summed up by Ruppert, “The plans for the invasion of Iraq, the worldwide deployment of US military forces to control oil reserves, the Patriot Act, Homeland Security and legislation that sets the stage for biological warfare and complete domestic repression were all in place well before the first plane hit the World Trade Centre”. He qualifies the Bush regime’s policy as a “no-holds barred, no rules, and no quarter race for global domination” though the President preferred to self-servingly describe it in his September 12, 2001 address to the nation as “a monumental struggle of Good versus Evil”.

Indeed as Richard Falk puts it, in a very understated way, in his foreword to *The New Pearl Harbor*: “(It) changes the way we understand the workings of constitutional democracy in the US at the highest levels...”

And so it will, if the September 11 drama is proven to have been the first great crime committed by a State against its own citizens in the new century.

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