

*Even after 9/11/2001, U.S. foreign policy has still tended to favor Islamist regimes (such as Saudi Arabia) over more secular Muslim regimes. And Bush's so-called "war on terror" had the net effect of strengthening - not weakening - both Islamism and terrorism overseas.*

In Afghanistan, the new, U.S.-installed government was another Islamist government, though not as extreme as the Taliban. Osama bin Laden and much of Al Qaeda escaped into Pakistan and were not even pursued there (until recently), let alone caught.

And then the U.S. invaded Iraq. Saddam Hussein, though a tyrant, was *not* an Islamist; he ran a relatively secular government. But now, thanks to the war, Iraq has become a stronghold of Islamism and Islamist terrorism. There was no Al Qaeda in Iraq before the war, but there is now. And the new, U.S.-installed government in Iraq has an Islamist constitution.

Despite the alleged "war on terror," it is possible that the U.S. foreign policy establishment may still see Islamist terrorism as a useful weapon against Russia and China. There has been lots of terrorism in Russia, e.g. in Chechnya and Dagestan. And the U.S. foreign policy establishment seems to have both the goal of encircling Russia and China and a tendency to downplay that goal in public (e.g. the U.S. missiles in Poland, allegedly aimed at Iran).

*To whatever extent a pro-Islamist U.S. foreign policy still exists, it is very harmful to all non-Muslims, and to women, and to gays. It is also very harmful to politically moderate Muslims, both by killing them directly and by sparking bigotry, on the part of non-Muslims, against all Muslims including secularists.*

## Committee for 9/11 Accountability New Yorkers Against Religion-Based Bigotry

NYARBB will hold a meeting on **Thursday, September 17, 2009, at 7:30 PM**, to discuss concrete actions New Yorkers can take to support an independent investigation of 9/11. For details, and for info about some of the alternatives we'll be discussing, please see:

[nyarbb.com/c911a/nyc.html](http://nyarbb.com/c911a/nyc.html)

and please RSVP on our Meetup site: [meetup.com/nyarbb](http://meetup.com/nyarbb)

# Why we need a new investigation of 9/11

Why should anyone still care about 9/11, now that Bush is no longer President?

- ◆ Because Obama is continuing the wars that were justified by 9/11, and is letting the torturers get away with it.
- ◆ Because excessive secrecy and lack of accountability are toxic to democracy. *Even if* no one in the U.S. government was guilty of anything worse than incompetence, it is our right and duty, as citizens and as taxpayers, to hold them accountable.

After 9/11/2001, many people had questions about how and why the attacks were able to succeed.

- ◆ Why did the Bush administration ignore warnings?
- ◆ Why wasn't there any effective air defense?
- ◆ Why were some of the 9/11 hijackers, already known to be terrorists, even allowed into this country?

Bush opposed calls for an investigation into these questions. Eventually the 9/11 Families movement, led by four 9/11 widows known as the "Jersey Girls," did succeed in pressuring Congress and Bush to create the 9/11 Commission.

But there is lots of evidence of coverups. For example:

- ◆ Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, the chair and vice chair of the 9/11 Commission, have said they were "stonewalled by the C.I.A." (*New York Times*, January 2, 2008). In their book *Without Precedent* (2006), they charge that the 9/11 Commission was "set up to fail." They have voiced these complaints despite their own widely perceived go-easy attitude.
- ◆ Thomas H. Kean has said that NORAD (the North American Aerospace Command) made blatantly false statements "so far from the truth" that the 9/11 Commission considered criminal charges (*Washington Post*, August 2, 2006).

- ◆ Senator Bob Graham (D-Fla.), on the Senate Intelligence Committee, has said that there is evidence of involvement by foreign governments - evidence that remains highly classified. Graham has alleged that the information remains classified not for any genuine national security reason, but merely to avoid embarrassing some people. (PBS interview, July 24, 2003)

Many people regard the 9/11 Commission itself as part of the coverup, for many reasons including the following:

- ◆ The 9/11 Commission Report, dismisses the question of the financing of the 9/11 attacks as being “of little practical significance” (Chapter 5).
- ◆ Many whistleblowers were not interviewed.
- ◆ The 9/11 Commission had subpoena power but rarely used it.
- ◆ The 9/11 Commission’s research staff was directed by Philip Zelikow, who had strong ties to the Bush administration. (He had been a member of Bush’s transition team, and he had co-authored a book with Condoleezza Rice). Thus the investigation was not truly independent of the Bush administration, as it should have been.

It is clear to many people that there have been coverups. But coverups of *what*? Among people who talk about 9/11, debate is now polarized between people who insist that “9/11 was an inside job” and people who insist that whatever might have been covered up, it couldn’t possibly be anything worse than incompetence. But there are many other possibilities between the extremes of “inside job” and “nothing worse than incompetence.” Other possibilities include criminal negligence, corruption, and treason. Due to the coverups, we simply don’t know all the facts.

Chapters 5 and 7 of the 9/11 Commission Report, which deal with Al Qaeda and the hijackers, are based largely on CIA reports about interrogations of people who were tortured. Torture is not only a severe violation of human rights, but also results in notoriously unreliable confessions. The commissioners were not allowed to interview the detainees themselves, nor were they even allowed to view direct transcripts of interrogations.

Whatever the U.S. government did or didn’t do on or before 9/11, what’s important is that those responsible for its failures be held accountable -- *even if* no one in the U.S. government was guilty of anything worse than incompetence. And it is important to know what

really went wrong in terms of counter-terrorism policy, so that we can know what’s really needed to protect us from terrorism, without undue sacrifice of our privacy and civil liberties. (The “PATRIOT act” was probably overkill.) To that end, we need a new, more truly independent follow-up investigation, similar to what the 9/11 Commission was supposed to be.

## Ongoing U.S. support for Islamist terrorism?

***Whatever was covered up, a new investigation would most likely shed light not only on counter-terrorism policy, but also on the strange love-hate relationship that the U.S. government has long had with Islamist regimes and Islamist terrorism.***

Islamism is the political doctrine that governments should be subject to Islamic law. (Islamism, a political ideology, is not to be confused with Islam itself, the religion.) Both Islamism and the more sexist, puritanical, and religiously bigoted forms of Islam are, in today’s world, far more prevalent than they would otherwise be, thanks to Saudi oil money plus U.S. government support for Islamist regimes and Islamist terrorist groups overseas.

In the 1980’s, the U.S. supported Islamist terrorists fighting a Soviet-allied government in Afghanistan. Not only did the U.S. give them military aid, but the CIA, with help from USAID and the University of Nebraska, spent millions of dollars on violently militant textbooks for Afghan schoolchildren. That war became the Soviet Union’s “Vietnam” and spurred the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The extreme Islamists also killed many of the more moderate Muslim leaders. Cheryl Benard, a RAND Corporation expert on Islam and the wife of future US ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad, has admitted that U.S. policy favored “the worst crazies ... we can find” and “allowed them to get rid of, just kill all the moderate leaders” (Robert Dreyfuss, *Devil’s Game*, 2005, as cited on the History Commons website)..

In the early 1980’s, there was the Iran/Contra affair, in which the U.S. government secretly sent arms to the radical Shi’ite government in Iran. Incredibly, this occurred soon after the embassy hostage crisis, which ended with the U.S. government sending billions of dollars in ransom money to Iran.

In Yugoslavia in the 1990’s, the U.S. and NATO helped Islamist Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegovic, at the expense of the more moderate and more popular Bosnian Muslim leader Fikret Abdic. Islamist terrorist groups, including Al Qaeda, were active in the Balkan wars, with support from Western countries, helping to provoke the anti-Muslim panics and massacres that were the stated justification for U.S. bombing of Yugoslavia.