

Editor's note: This is a transcript of a presentation John Judge made before [The 9/11 Omission Hearings](#), conducted by a 9-11 Citizens' Commission in New York City. The transcript has been edited for readability. Other participants included 9/11 Family Members, Citizen Researchers and former Rep. Cynthia McKinney.

John Judge:
September 11 Citizens' Commission
**What Led to This Point: Historical Framework
of Deep Politics & Covert Operations**
New York City, New York
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[mp3 file](#) (14 MB) of complete film (14:29)

I'm John Judge with 911 Citizens Watch and I can only say that I'll tell the truth and nothing but the truth. If I tell you the whole truth you won't need any more witnesses. We don't know the whole truth yet. But I do try to be honest and I also try to get at the truth which is a fairly slippery animal.

I come in the role as someone on a staff of a commission. I was trying to outline earlier, and didn't go into great detail, about some of the omissions in the Report and areas that the Report either doesn't clarify or misleads in. Some of those that I think bear the most fruit for a commission to look into in regard to 9/11, I mentioned before, is whether or not this was an intelligence failure. I think it's been framed as an intelligence failure from the time of the Joint Committee forward; the [Joint Inquiry](#) by the Senate and the House.

But I think framing it that way has put us in a position of then curing that failure by further funding, giving more powers to, fortifying and failing to criticize in any fundamental way, that same intelligence establishment that we're saying failed us on 9/11.

I think the real analysis should be that there was a breakdown in every standard procedure of the intelligence agencies that had functioned prior to 9/11. And it should be looked at that way.

Rather than that the system was dysfunctional. Because had it been dysfunctional, for all those years up to 9/11, someone would have done something to fix it, presumably. And there wasn't any move or criticism of it until you get to 9/11 and then everything that you see happening in the past suddenly doesn't happen in terms of the 9/11 events.

Taking that intelligence failure route also means that we don't criticize the historical framework of deep politics and covert operations, criminal cartels and paramilitary operations, the legal drug distribution networks, and undemocratic forces *combined from their inception* with the US intelligence agencies to create both domestic and foreign covert operations, first to serve the interests of the Cold War, and in a continuing way now to serve the interests of an emerging global corporate expansion.

The history of that is for the most part hidden from us. Because history in 1948 under the [National Security Act](#) became not something that belonged to the people of the United States, but rather a commodity that was put under control of a national security state. This is the military-industrial-*intelligence*—and those are the original words in the draft of the speech—the military-industrial-*intelligence* complex that [Eisenhower warned about going out of office in 1961](#), that he saw emerging and said shouldn't have undo influence.

But the only person that seemed to stand up to it, effectively, John F Kennedy, was [removed from office in a rather abrupt way](#). And not much of anybody has challenged it since. This Commission would *leave it in place* and strengthen it and consolidate it.

For a quick review for those of you who don't know that history from 1954—of all the things that were done in our name and that I would contend have got us into the situation we are in now, as well as all the rest of the people of the world who we don't know why they're angry at us—I would suggest [William Blum's](#) two books *Killing Hope* and *Rogue State*. I would suggest [Peter Dale Scott's](#) *Drugs, Oil, And War* and also his earlier book *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK* to have a deep political understanding which goes even beyond the parapolitical in terms of how these things happen. And it's not so much a conspiracy in a boardroom as it is historical forces that combine.

Also, you can find hundreds of books about the CIA. I challenge you to find more than five on the *real* intelligence establishment, the DIA; the [Defense Intelligence Agency](#) and [its branches](#): the [Office of Naval Intelligence](#), [Army Intelligence](#), [Marine Corps](#). ONI is the oldest and largest intelligence agency in the United States. The CIA is a think tank. When it comes to covert operations they go to a liaison at the Pentagon and the DIA takes over in terms of carrying out the operation.

We're seeing a clash right now between some of these old hands and how they want to

restructure these intelligence agencies and whether something besides the DIA are in charge. They are also over the [National Reconnaissance Organization](#)—whose initials used to be classified (that’s the spy satellites), the [National Security Agency](#) (all the electronic listening). The black budget of the DIA is ten times what the CIA has. They have a hundred times more employees and ten times more budget than CIA and FBI combined.

The only person that writes a little bit about them in the popular press is James Bamford: *Puzzle Palace* and his more recent books *Body of Secrets* and *Pretext For War*.

For a novice I think those are starting points. I have hundreds of other books but I think that’s a way to get into the topic and to understand how we got to where we are.

The two major covert operations that I think would bear fruit looking at that lead us into the period of 9/11 were run initially out of Carter’s administration, suggested by Zbigniew Brzezinski (his National Security Adviser), to go into [Afghanistan](#) and back a reactionary Muslim fundamentalist response to a socialist government that was in power there. There was an attempted coup, then there was a counter-coup and then the US came in to back the people that wanted to take them out of power. They also did it in a way that they felt would force the hand of the Soviet Union into a military intervention and Zbigniew Brzezinski said it would give them their Vietnam. In a recent interview he said he had no regrets about doing that even though it potentially led into a situation like 9/11 because, his words, What are a few stirred up Muslims compared to the fall of the Soviet Union?

Under that operation, we, along with the Saudis—and it was the largest financial—it was three billion dollars, the US part, and matched by the Saudis through drug profits, the [Bank for Credit and Commerce International](#) and the US funding it through Pakistani Intelligence Services. It was a huge covert operation that armed and built the the capability that we now like to call al Qaeda which is a very loose term. The media makes you think that it’s some sort of a corporation with a CEO. It would be equivalent to saying The Movement, in the United States, did something. That’s how basic that term is. It means The Base or an operation but it doesn’t have the sense of a cohesive organization. It has many factions and a wide range of differences and it’s certainly not run out of any one place or through one particular operation.

It was the Bin Laden family in Saudi Arabia who, financed by the CIA, built the operation caves that we’re led to believe are the source of our current problems. So it’s a direct route to understanding. And then when did that actually cut off? Because there was funding even after the fall of the Soviets there—and their withdrawal, and the rise of the Taliban—there was US intelligence funding of the Taliban. There was a 43 million dollar transfer even in 2001 to the Taliban to stop growing opium. When they stopped growing opium there, in part, then the Northern Alliance took over and now it’s a new government that the US has helped to bring in.

They're back up to eighty-five percent of the world opium production there in Afghanistan.

There appears to be also ongoing US covert funding of other fundamentalist Muslim movements in other countries besides Afghanistan in the period post 9/11 and certainly up to that period.

I think that would bear fruit and I think the people who have studied the history also know that the *Taliban warned* the United States about the 9/11 attack. The Taliban offered three times to turn Bin Laden over to an International Court. That was called We don't negotiate with terrorists. Then the Taliban was taken out of power in a plan that pre-existed 9/11. That goes all the way back at *least* to that summer of Colin Powell telling the surrounding countries that we were going in in mid-October to take them out and staging the British and US troops in the area to be ready for it before 9/11.

The Iraqi invasion was similarly planned well before that. We were told by the press that eleven days before the invasion Bush got word of it. That told me he was among the last to know.

John, do you remember the actual quote that the Taliban were given, I think it was in Turkey, or in Germany? We'll bury you in...

Yes, they said "Either you accept our offer of a carpet of gold, or we bury you under a carpet of bombs." These were US intelligence people. But the BBC also reported that Colin Powell had forewarned the surrounding countries of the invasion. That operation fed into the same funding circles, the same drug money, into the next major operation that became known as **Contragate**, sending the missiles to Iran. We were arming both Iran and Iraq during that war period and went through the Bush senior and Reagan years into the Clinton years. These covert operations and funding went on.

But Contragate existed then and many of the people that ran it—including some that were were brought up on legal charges and convicted—were brought in then as the new advisors to the Bush administration, in the Bush administration team. Among them Colin Powell who had actually signed off with Poindexter on the shipment of the missiles unbeknownst, I believe, to Reagan and on Bush's authority. Because Bush was president the day that they signed it because Reagan was in prostate surgery.

Poindexter, Reich, Abrams; Reich being promoted now to head ambassadorship to Iraq. Richard Armitage in the State Department who also **met with Mahmood Ahmed**, the head of Pakistani ISI intelligence, in the period right after 9/11. This black budget that we're talking about put Saddam Hussein into power and then took him out. It armed the Kosovo Liberation Army through drugs and it was responsible over those years for assassinations, *coup d'etats*, changes of regime in many societies.

The most glaring failure of the intelligence system in my view is this history of its covert operations and its support of, and backing up of, repressive regimes and getting in the way of democracy around the world. When those forces no longer serve the corporate interest they're taken out and it's painted as us promoting democracy. But women *used to go to school* in Afghanistan before we backed the rise of the reactionary mullahs there.

The Commission says that the problem is lack of oversight by the Congress. And its recommendation is to consolidate control over the budget into the hands of a director of national intelligence under the Executive. The *only* leverage Congress had over the intelligence agencies at all was control of that budget and so they recommend taking it out at the same time they chide Congress. Who was responsible in Congress for this lack of oversight? Porter Goss and Bob Graham, the heads of the two respective Intelligence Committees. Two people who were meeting with General Ahmad, the morning of the attack, the head of Pakistani Intelligence and two people who wrote the [Joint Inquiry Report](#) setting the stage to call it an intelligence failure. And Porter Goss, whose history goes back to the Bay of Pigs, the Rex Invasion on Cuba, and other covert operations in Europe and around the world and is now being promoted into a position of a new DCI (Director of Central Intelligence) whose powers will be strengthened by a recent executive order by Bush, it's as if this Commission created conditions for its own jobs after it got done.

I wanted to talk also a little bit about how there were not only individuals named in relation to this plot, but the 28 pages missing from the Joint Inquiry talked about foreign countries and this Commission absolves any countries—Saudi Arabia was specifically mentioned, others weren't. But this says this was the 19 people with a little bit of outside money and help and that was it. But those 19 people, if we look into their backgrounds, don't seem to have either the motivation or the capability to have carried out the plot by themselves.

I think another major area that I didn't mention is the [Anthrax Attacks](#) and they are under the purview of the Commission. They were never touched. The anthrax chemically and biologically analyzed goes back to something called [Project Jefferson, run by the DIA](#) to create the next generation of anthrax on orders from Rumsfeld. They said on September the 9th, 2001, that they had succeeded and then in October of 2001 the most weaponized and lethal anthrax ever seen shows up in the offices of the two major opponents of the [Patriot Act](#): Senator Daschle, and some spill over into Feingold's and some in to Leahy's office. Then also it shows up in Florida at the office of the tabloid—it kills a tabloid photographic editor in the headquarters down there who published the first picture of Bush's daughters being arrested on DWI. And he's the only one in the place that dies. And the other go to Dan Rather and Tom Brokaw, no friends of mine, but since we're so far to the right those are the liberals in the US media.