

9/11 and the Smoking Gun that Turned on its Tracker

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SUMMARY

A mere week after the destruction of the World Trade Center, authorities were gradually building toward an official announcement that would definitively link Osama bin Laden to the events of September 11 -- a wire transfer of \$100,000 to lead hijacker Mohamed Atta. To an increasingly skeptical public, here was the "smoking gun", a bona fide money trail that would demonstrate how al-Qaida planned and financed the operation.

On October 1, 2001, the press revealed the pseudonym of the al-Qaida operative who allegedly passed on the funds to the hijackers. Days later, *CNN* revealed that the pseudonym belonged to a 28-year old Pakistani militant, a former student at the London School of Economics named Omar Saeed Sheikh. Yet on October 9, the *Times of India* reported that Omar Saeed was in fact acting under the authority of General Mahmud Ahmad, the chief of Pakistani intelligence, who had spent the morning of September 11 in deep discussion with Sen. Bob Graham and Rep. Porter Goss (now the co-chairmen heading up the "independent" investigation into 9/11). An intricate disinformation campaign was now set in motion to control any damaging fallout that might have implicated elements of the U.S. government in the events of September 11.

At the insistence of U.S. authorities, General Ahmad was "quietly retired," and a cover story was then elaborated to explain that General Ahmad was "purged" by the Pakistani President for being "pro-Taliban" -- yet distancing him from any connection to the 9/11 money trail.

As for the initial "smoking gun" itself -- the money trail -- trouble was brewing in the days before the *Times of India's* October 9 revelation. While plans were possibly being put into effect to initially publicize Omar Saeed as the 9/11 paymaster, confusion apparently set in when the Indian government began to ferret out the link between Omar Saeed and the Pakistani spymaster. It now became necessary to gradually put the brakes on the money trail story, minimizing it with the release, on Oct. 3, of the Blair document setting out the "persuasive" case against bin Laden (yet omitting mention of the alleged money trail).

A few days later, the invasion of Afghanistan commenced, and the money trail story began to die a slow death in the mainstream media. Yet in the meantime, it had to be dealt with.

With a cover story for General Ahmad's sudden dismissal firmly in place, a "legend" now had to be elaborated for Omar Saeed to distance him from General Ahmad and the money trail story. After October 9, as Omar Saeed suddenly disappeared from the world's headlines, the Indian-Pakistan front was now heating up, stoked by an October 14 announcement on

Kashmir by al-Qaida.

By mid-December, the *Associated Press* had dislodged Omar Saeed from the money trail story by tagging bin Laden's brother-in law -- Shaykh Saïid -- as the actual 9/11 paymaster. That week, the Bush Administration also managed to fully bury the money trail story by presenting a new, "sexier" smoking gun -- the Bin Laden Videotape Confession. Also that week, Pakistan and India were brought to the brink of war by a daring terrorist attack on the Delhi parliament -- an attack that would eventually be linked to Omar Saeed.

On January 23, 2002, one day after a terror attack in Calcutta (which would also be linked to Omar Saeed), *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl disappeared off the streets of Karachi. On February 5, Pakistani authorities revealed the prime suspect in Pearl's kidnapping -- Omar Saeed. With Saeed actually being in Pakistani custody on that very day, the authorities then spent the following week on a "hunt" for him, officially announcing his "arrest" on February 12.

With Omar Saeed back in the headlines, his link to the money trail was being gradually resurrected, yet this time it was minimized with the news of his now-publicized links to most of the post-9/11 terror attacks heating up the Pakistan-Indian border. In the meantime, the *Times of India* was now backing away from its October 9 bombshell, cutting General Ahmad out of the picture and connecting Omar Saeed to the money trail by way of an alternative al-Qaida operative (who was linked to the January 22 attack in Calcutta). Omar Saeed was now cast as a Kashmir militant with collateral ties to al-Qaida, employing terrorist attacks to foil Pakistani President Musharraf's collaboration with U.S. authorities in the War On Terror.

With General Ahmad branded as a "rogue" intelligence chief, all the pieces of the cover story were now firmly in place, providing an "alternative" explanation for the history books.

On July 15, 2002, Omar Saeed was sentenced to die for the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl. While some correspondents had briefly touched upon Omar Saeed's alleged additional role as 9/11 paymaster, most persisted in refusing to acknowledge this angle of the story, focusing instead on a 1994 kidnapping which was the subject of a "secret" indictment against Saeed by the Justice Department back in November 2001.

While the media may, one day, present a "plausible" explanation for many of these anomalies, the evidence nevertheless now irrefutably points toward the existence of a vast disinformation apparatus that has managed, manipulated, and obfuscated most of the information being fed to the public -- the true smoking gun of 9/11.

Copyright Chaim Kupferberg 2002. Chaim Kupferberg is a freelance researcher and writer. His previous CRG article, *The Propaganda Preparation For 9/11*, describes a general media campaign, in the years leading up to 9/11, to present al-Qaida as a plausibly sophisticated nemesis with the motive, means, and opportunity to destroy the World Trade Center.

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