



International Center for
9/11 JUSTICE

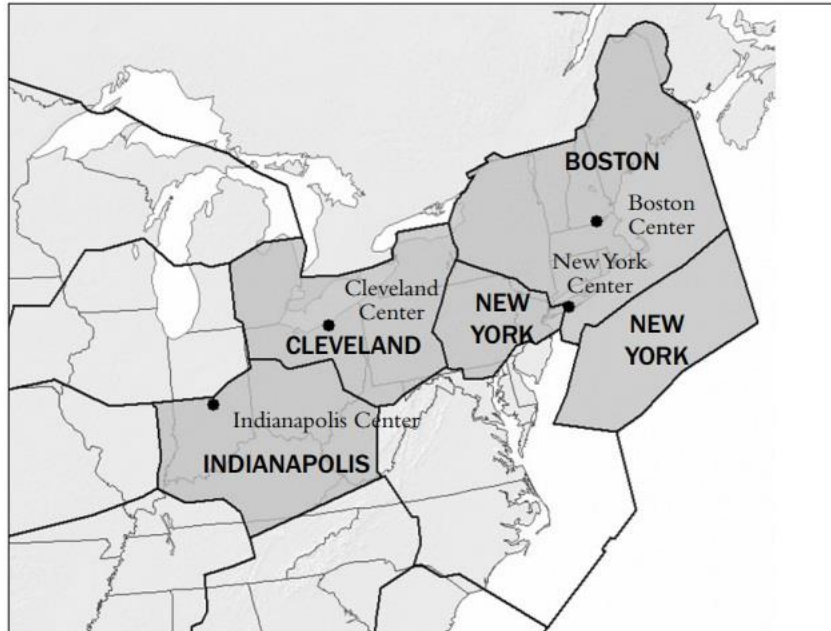
Lies and Obstruction: Indefensible Air Defenses on 9/11

Kevin Ryan, September 8th, 2024

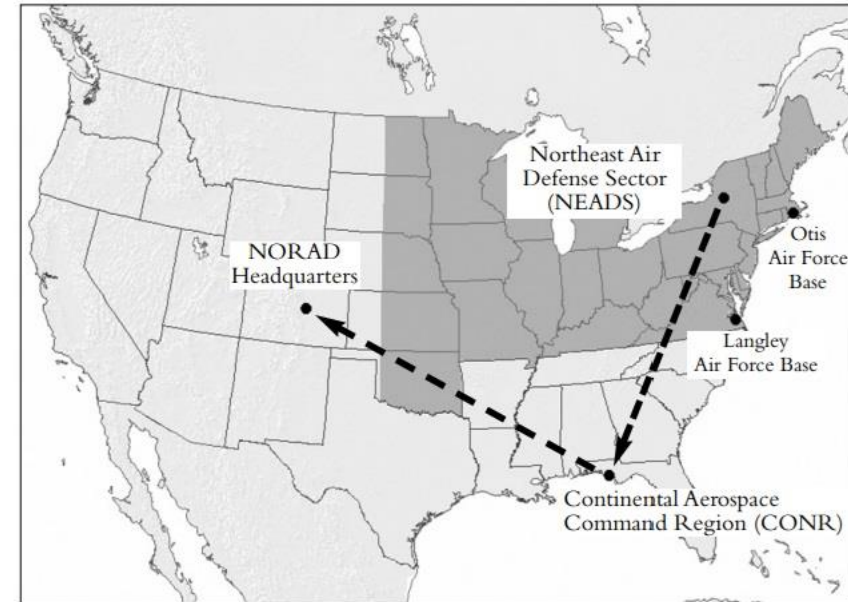
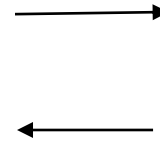
Four hijacked flights



What should have happened?



FAA Air Traffic Control Centers



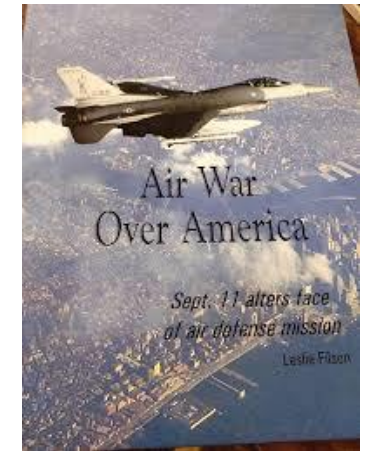
Reporting structure, Northeast Air Defense Sector
Graphics courtesy of ESRI

Air defenses depend on communication between two federal agencies: the FAA and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

Off-course aircraft were intercepted 129 times in 2000, and 67 times in the first half of 2001

The changing account of the response

- September 13, 2001 - No fighter jets were scrambled to intercept any of the hijacked flights until after the Pentagon was hit.
- September & October, 2001 – NORAD notified about the hijacking of Flight 11 at 8:38 am and notified about Flight 175 at 8:43 am.
 - A book released in January 2003, reviewed by all USAF leadership, further confirmed this second account of the military’s response.



Flight	Hijack time	FAA aware	NORAD aware	Crash time	Jets scramble
11	8:14	8:15	8:38	8:46	8:46- Otis
175	8:42	8:43	8:43	9:03	
77	8:51	8:54	9:24	9:37	9:24 - Langley
93	9:16	9:16		10:03	

Military Airbases Involved on 9/11

- At 8:46 am, NORAD scrambled two F-15 jets from Otis Air Force Base in Massachusetts.
- At 9:24 am, NORAD scrambled three F-16 jets from Langley AFB in Virginia.
- Andrews Air Force Base, only ten miles from the Pentagon, did not scramble until 10:38 (after all planes had crashed)



Jets scrambled	Time to target	Available time
8:46 – Otis	8 minutes to NYC	13 minutes (United 175)
9:24 – Langley	7 minutes to Pentagon	39 minutes
	13 minutes to Shanksville	

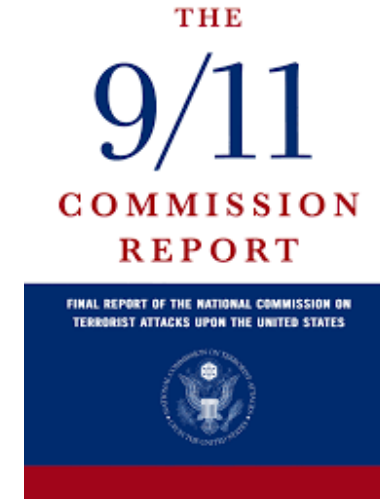
The changing account of the response

- Account #3: May 2003 – Two changes made:
 - NORAD not notified of Flight 175 until three minutes after it had crashed into the South Tower.
 - NORAD was notified about Flight 93 at 9:16 am — 47 minutes before it allegedly crashed in Pennsylvania, at 10:03 am.

Flight	Hijack time	FAA aware	NORAD aware	Crash time	Jets scramble
11	814	815	838	846	
175	842	843	843 905	903	0846- Otis
77	851	905	924	937	
93	916	916	916	1003	0924 - Langley

The changing account of the response

- Fourth and final account: July 2004 - The *9/11 Commission Report* claimed that NORAD was not told about the last three planes until it was too late.
 - NORAD got 8 minutes' notice on Flight 11
 - No advance notice on Flight 175
 - No advance notice on Flight 77
 - No advance notice on Flight 93



Flight	Hijack time	FAA aware	NORAD aware	Crash time	Jets scramble
11	814	815 825	838	846	0846- Otis
175	842	843 855	843 905	903	
77	851	905	924 934	937	0924 - Langley
93	916	916 934	916 1007	1003	

Apparently the FAA was lying too

- An FAA memo entitled “FAA Communications with NORAD on September 11, 2001,” sent to the 9/11 Commission:
 - “Within minutes after the first aircraft hit the World Trade Center, the FAA immediately established several phone bridges that included FAA field facilities, the FAA Command Center, FAA headquarters, DOD [meaning the NMCC in the Department of Defense], the Secret Service. . . . The US Air Force liaison to the FAA immediately joined the FAA headquarters phone bridge and established contact with NORAD. . . . The FAA shared real-time information on the phone bridges about the unfolding events, including information about loss of communication with aircraft, loss of transponder signals, unauthorized changes in course, and other actions being taken by all the flights of interest. .”
- FOIA-released transcripts of communications by Air Traffic Controllers and handwritten controller notes indicate the hijacked planes were being tracked.

Lies of the U.S. Military (if one is to believe the final account)

- General Ralph Eberhart testified to Congress in October 2001. When asked by a U.S. Senator about “the second hijacked plane somewhere up there” (Flight 175), Eberhart replied that “Yes, sir. During that time, we were notified.”
- Eberhart added that NORAD was notified about Flight 77 coming into Washington at 9:24 am, fourteen minutes before it impacted the Pentagon. He told the Senate Armed Services Committee repeatedly that this was a “documented notification.”
- General Larry Arnold: “We were concerned about Flight 93 and Delta 1989 and were trying to find aircraft in the vicinity to help out...Then we watched the 93 track as it meandered around the Ohio-Pennsylvania area and started to turn south toward D.C.”
- General Arnold made clear to Air Force public relations writer Leslie Filson, that NORAD was tracking both United 93 and Delta 1989.

More Lies from the Military (if one is to believe the official account)

- Colonel Robert Marr repeated, several times, in his January 2004 interview with 9/11 Commission staff members, that he recalled monitoring Flight 93 during the time that it was hijacked.
- NEADS intelligence officer Lt. Col. Mark Stuart, who was standing right next to Marr during the crisis, said that they were tracking Flight 93.
- Air traffic controllers made clear in their handwritten notes from that day, and their personal statements afterward, that Flight 93 was known as a hijacking long before it was destroyed.
- General Arnold clarified in testimony to the Commission that –
 - “It was our intent to intercept United Flight 93... I was personally anxious to see what 93 was going to do, and our intent was to intercept it. But we decided to stay over Washington, D.C., because there was not that urgency. So we elected to remain over D.C. until that aircraft was definitely coming towards us.”

Facts

- Transponders and autopilot
 - Flight 175 never turned its transponder off
 - Flight 77 never turned off its autopilot, even when being hijacked and turning around
 - Flight 93 didn't turn off transponder until 9:40 (24 min after NORAD was notified)
- Radar can track aircraft without transponder data
 - The area of the U.S. where the planes were hijacked has no gaps in radar coverage. One brief and unusual loss of radar coverage affected Flight 77 but none of the others.*
 - If the transponder is turned off, air traffic controllers can still track the aircraft via primary radar coverage and get the aircraft's location, direction headed, ground speed and altitude changes.*
- If the interceptor jets had caught up with the hijacked aircraft, they could have seen who was flying the planes, if anyone.

*See *Journal of 9/11 Studies* articles from Paul Schreyer (April 2013) and Aidan Monaghan (May 2017)

What we know and don't know

- What we know:
 - A couple of questionable characters were brought in at FAA
 - Military exercises were going on that day that obstructed the response
 - The Secret Service did nothing to help
 - The military chain of command went missing
- What we need to know:
 - Were the aircraft hijacked remotely and flown using the latest remote guidance technology?
 - Were defense communications systems hacked and interrupted?

Two questionable characters at FAA

- Benedict Sliney was FAA's Command Center national operations manager
 - His first day on the job.
 - First notified of AA11 hijacking ~ 8:15 am. NORAD allegedly not notified for another 23 minutes.
 - Said he definitely "did not receive a request to authorize a request to the military for assistance."
- General Michael Canavan was the FAA's Hijack Coordinator
 - Started 9 months before 9/11 and left a month after.
 - Commander of the JSOC, where he ran the military's counterterrorism operations and covert missions.
 - At FAA Canavan ran training exercises that were "pretty damn close to the 9/11 plot," according to an FAA intelligence officer.
 - On 9/11, Canavan went missing and was never questioned about it.



Was the military prepared for suicide hijacking in the U.S.?

- NORAD practiced 5 hijack exercise events from Nov 1999 to Oct 2000 -- all included a suicide crash into a high value target.
- NORAD had practiced 28 hijack exercise events in the 20 months leading up to 9/11. At least 6 were focused on hijackings located within the United States.
- Vigilant Guardian in October 2000 practiced interception of an airliner hijacked for a suicide attack against the 39-story United Nations building in New York City.
- Amalgam Virgo, practiced just three months before 9/11, had a planning document with a picture of Osama bin Laden on the cover.



Key NORAD and defense personnel

- General Ralph Eberhart — Commander of both NORAD and U.S. Space Command
 - Sponsored all the military exercises occurring on 9/11. In the middle of the attacks, he decided to go for a drive for nearly an hour.
- Eberhart was responsible for setting Infocon levels.
 - 12 hours before the 9/11 attacks, Infocon was set to its least protective level, making it easier to hack into or compromise DOD computer networks, including communications and air defense systems.
- Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was Eberhart's boss.
 - Like a dozen others at the Pentagon, he was a PNAC signatory
 - He went missing for > 30 minutes and never helped
 - The entire chain of command was missing: President Bush, Rumsfeld (DOD), Gen. Hugh Shelton (CJCS), Gen. Montague Winfield (NMCC)

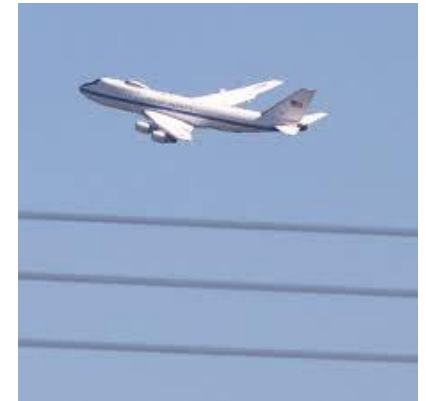


Vigilant Guardian exercise on 9/11

- **Vigilant Guardian 01**
 - September 9 -- scenario in which terrorists hijacked an airliner to attack NYC.
 - September 11th -- the exercise was to begin at 9:00.
- Conducted “sim over live,” meaning the simulated hijackings were inserted into the live air control system.
- Run “Real World,” meaning using real aircraft in live-fly exercises.
- NEADS staff confused the actual hijackings on 9/11 with the exercises.
 - Staff said that the “exercise” appeared to be starting an hour early. Everyone at NEADS, including Colonel Marr, thought the actual hijackings were exercises. They even joked about it.
 - Radar scopes were displaying simulated inserts until the time of the Pentagon attack.
 - The disruptive effect of the exercises continued until after all the hijacked planes had crashed. One military newspaper said VG continued until 30 minutes after attacks.

Other military exercises on 9/11

- Another war game called **Apollo Guardian** was running on 9/11. This was an exercise conducted by the U.S. Space Command, meaning Eberhart was in control of that too.
 - Involvement of U.S. Space Command suggests the possibility of satellite involvement and remote guidance technology.
- Another large-scale exercise that day was **Global Guardian**, a nuclear war simulation involving NORAD. The E-4B (doomsday plane) seen circling the White House during the 9/11 attacks might have been part of this exercise.
- **Amalgam Virgo 02**, allegedly only in planning stage on 9/11, might have been in play.
 - High level of interest in 9/11 Commission
 - Involved multiple, simultaneous hijackings
 - The interceptor jets “never got off on the appropriate heading, and it took them forever to catch up.” Just like on 9/11.



The Secret Service seemed to have foreknowledge

- Standard procedures for protecting the president were not followed.
- Did not request air support for presidential motorcade or Air Force One
- Secret Service had a system that allowed them to see what FAA's radar was seeing called the Tigerwall air surveillance system
- FOIA-released documents show Secret Service had knowledge of Flight 77 and Flight 93 and that those flights were headed toward Washington
- Secret Service had authority to order the scrambling of interceptor jets on 9/11.
 - Andrews AFB called Secret Service and offered to assist with interceptor jets but the Secret Service said it was not needed.
 - Secret Service changed that decision only after all the hijacked planes had crashed



Summary of Key Points

- The official account for failed air defenses changed multiple times and the final account, represented by the *911 Commission Report*, is based on a claim that everyone in the military and the FAA had been lying for years...to make themselves look bad
- NORAD could have easily intercepted at least 3 of the 4 hijacked planes if not for:
 - Questionable characters brought in at FAA who stalled or stopped communications
 - Interceptors sent in the wrong directions and at low speeds
 - Leaders of the military chain of command all being missing
 - Military exercises in play that day obstructed the response
 - The Secret Service failing to do its job and failing to help when it could have



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