

# 9/11 and what we know about Iran's Connections



by Jerry Gordon

On that brilliant late summer day, 21 years ago, September 11, 2001, my son and I witnessed the Al Qaeda attack on the former site of World Trade Center (WTC) in lower Manhattan. I had been attending a Board Meeting of the American Jewish Committee New York Chapter at the group's headquarters in mid-Town, when an aide burst in saying that a plane had hit one of the towers of the World Trade Center (WTC). I was concerned about a fellow board member, whose law firm was the located on the 84<sup>th</sup> Floor of North Tower of the WTC. I would later learn from a cousin in Israel that they heard an interview with him and that both he and his staff were alive.

I immediately called my son at his law firm just six blocks away. He invited me to his office complex on the 38<sup>th</sup> floor as

it had a southern vantage point to view the unfolding events at the WTC. On the way down to my son's law offices, I passed a store with a large video beam projector showing smoke rising from the towers of the WTC where two hijacked airliners had been deliberately crashed. A man sidled up to me as we watched the devastation. He asked me what was going on, I said "the WTC had been attacked by Muslim terrorists." He said he was Egyptian, and that "no Muslim would do that. "

When I arrived at my son's law offices a large group of his partners and visiting attorneys from across the US were aghast at the curling smoke rising from both towers of the WTC. We speculated about how many tens of thousands might be killed as the attack had taken place just as the business day had started. The WTC had a complex of subway and Path Tube trains underneath it. That day is forever etched in our collective memory as a living nightmare. The experience was deep, somber, and sobering.

We witnessed more than 2,977 deaths and more than 6,000 injured in a planned terrorist action perpetrated by 19 Saudi, Egyptian and Yemeni Al Qaeda operatives. They hijacked commercial American Airlines Flight 11 and United 175 in Boston, United Flight 93 in Newark, and American Airlines Flight 77 in Washington. They overcame crews and passengers aboard turning the aircraft into air fuel bombs attacking the World Trade Center in Manhattan, the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia and crashing Flight 93 into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. The 40 passengers and crew aboard Flight 93 knew what had happened in New York and Washington and conspired to attack the Al Qaeda terrorists at the controls. They engaged in what David Beamer, father of one of the Flight 93 heroes Todd Beamer, deemed "the first counterterrorism action "that mournful day.

There was a discussion among the group of lawyers in my son's offices about what caused this planned terrorist attack. One firm partner said it was the failure to achieve peace between

the Palestinians and Israelis at the Camp David meetings in July 2000 between then Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak under the aegis of Former President Clinton. Arafat had made up his mind to perpetrate a Second Intifada after Israel had abandoned the security zone in Southern Lebanon to Iran Proxy Hezbollah in a veritable rout. The trigger for that was a Temple Mount visit by Barak's successor the late Israeli PM Ariel Sharon on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2000.

Fast forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> commemoration of 9/11, the parallels are eerily familiar. Witness what happened in August 2021 with the Biden Administration debacle abandoning Afghanistan to the Taliban suggesting that after two decades, Al Qaeda had been defeated. President George W. Bush after 9/11 in the final months of 2001 dispatched US Special Forces who with anti-Taliban Afghan warlords in defeated the medieval Jihadist Taliban. who had given Osama Bin Laden, safe haven only to become mired in "national building" in Afghanistan and letting Bin Laden escape in the Tora Bora. Bin Laden had been forced to leave the Sudan in 1998 where he had established a terrorism base under the protection of now deposed Islamist President Omar Bashir who made connections for him with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Bin Laden would be killed in May 2011 in a US Navy Seal attack at his complex in Abbottabad, Pakistan. Bin Laden's deputy, Egyptian Ayman Zawahiri was "neutralized" in a CIA drone missile strike, while airing himself on the balcony of a Taliban safe house in Kabul, Afghanistan in August 2022. Yet, despite these losses, Al Qaeda persists, its epicenter shifting to the Sahel with Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al Shabab in Somalia in the Horn of Africa, Mozambique in East Africa and across the Red Sea in Yemen with Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as Palestinian Islamic Jihad fomenting rocket war against Israel in Gaza and another Intifada in Judea and Samaria.

**Evidence of Iran's involvement in 9/11**

But what of evidence of Al Qaeda's connections with Iran in 9/11 and the following two decades of global terrorism? Jonathan Schanzer, in an article published on the eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> commemoration of Al Qaeda's terror attack on America: [Are Al-Qaeda and Iran really at odds? – JNS.org](#), noted:

A photo, first posted on an anonymous [Twitter account](#), circulated last week among terrorism watchers here in Washington. It received scant attention in the mainstream media. The [now authenticated](#) photo, dated 2015, shows three of Al Qaeda's top leaders smiling casually. Their names: Saif al-Adel, Abu Muhammad al-Masri, and Abu al-Khayr al-Masri. Their location: Tehran.

All three men served in key leadership positions for the world's most dangerous terrorist organization. And all three men were apparently circulating freely in Iran.

Saif al-Adel is now believed to be on the short list of candidates to lead Al-Qaeda after the American [assassination](#) of Ayman al-Zawahiri in Afghanistan in early August. Abu Muhammad al-Masri was a senior Al-Qaeda leader who was [gunned down](#) on the streets of Tehran, presumably by the Israeli Mossad, in November 2020. Abu al-Khayr al-Masri, another senior al-Qaeda leader, was felled in Syria by a U.S. [drone strike](#) in 2017.

The photo questions—yet again—the notion that Al-Qaeda and the Islamic Republic were at odds. If anything, they appear to cooperate, even if Sunni-Shi'ite sectarian tensions prevent a full-blown alliance.

Schanzer cites as further evidence the following:

The [9/11 Commission Report](#) (released in 2004) states: "Iran facilitated the transit of al Qaeda members into and out of Afghanistan before 9/11... some of these were future 9/11 hijackers."

In 2009, the U.S. Treasury department [issued sanctions](#) against four al-Qaeda leaders based in Iran. One of them was Sa'ad bin Laden, the son of Osama bin Laden.

In 2012, the U.S. Treasury sanctioned Adel Radi Saqr al-Wahabi al-Harbi, a top Al-Qaeda operative in Iran. According to the Treasury [press release](#), "Iran continues to allow al-Qaeda to operate a core pipeline that moves al-Qaeda money and fighters through Iran to support al-Qaeda activities in South Asia. This network also sends funding and fighters to Syria."

This came on the heels of a designation the year prior in which the Treasury sanctioned "Ezedin Abdel Aziz Khalil, a prominent Iran-based al-Qaeda facilitator, operating under an agreement between al-Qaeda and the Iranian government." Treasury targeted Khalil (aka Yasin al-Suri) along with five other Al-Qaeda operatives, [noting](#) how Iran was a "critical transit point for funding to support al-Qaeda's activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This network serves as the core pipeline through which al-Qaeda moves money, facilitators, and operatives from across the Middle East to South Asia..."

Schanzer drew attention to the investigation of files taken in the raid by the US Navy Seal Team from the Bin Laden complex in Abbottabad in 2011 by his Foundation for Defense Foundation (FDD) *Long War Journal* colleagues:

Among the documents was [a video](#) which revealed that bin Laden's son Hamza was married in Iran, with senior Al-Qaeda figures in attendance. In 2019, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo [renewed](#) the allegations of Iranian collusion with Al-Qaeda. In early 2021, he charged that Iran was the new [home base](#) for Al-Qaeda.

This did not stop the incoming Biden administration from pursuing a return to the nuclear deal that Trump exited in

2018. The deal currently being negotiated in Vienna could yield Iran an estimated [\\$275 billion](#) in the first year, and as much as \$1 trillion over the ensuing decade. Once again, the regime's ties to Al-Qaeda are not addressed.

In 2022, a federal judge [found in favor](#) of victims and families that sued Iran for providing "material support" to Al-Qaeda, among other groups that perpetrated terrorist attacks against American servicemembers and civilians in Afghanistan. The case offered new insights into this dynamic.

But what of Iran's involvement in 9/11? In [2019](#) and [2020](#), we interviewed [on Israel News Talk Radio- Beyond the Matrix](#), noted investigative journalist and *New York Times*, best-selling author Kenneth Timmerman, that were published in *The New English Review* and other publications.

Timmerman was the lead investigator for plaintiffs in the 2011 New York Southern District Federal Court landmark "9/11-Iran links" case: *Fiona Havlish et al., v. Sheik Usamah bin-Muhammad bin-Laden et al.* The case was brought on behalf of Ms. Havlish's husband who was lost on the 101st floor of a World Trade Center tower on September 11, 2001. Other 9/11 victims' surviving families and loved ones were included as co-plaintiffs. The New York Southern District Federal Court Judge Daniels in the 9/11-Links case handed down upwards of \$10 billion in two awards made to the certified class of 9/11 claimants in 2012 and 2015. In May 2018, a default judgment was entered by the New York Federal Court Judge in the Havlish et. al. case under a 2016 Supreme Court ruling against Iran which was not contested. The total of court awards is more than \$10 billion. The Kenneth Timmerman evidentiary affidavits filed in Havlish et.al. New York Federal court trial and the Bin Laden files released in November 2017 by former CIA Director and Secretary of State under President Trump, Mike Pompeo, attest to the extensive links between Tehran and the perpetrators of 9/11

Timmerman conducted interviews with defectors from Iran's intelligence service that revealed active participation of both Hezbollah's terrorist mastermind Imad Mughniyeh and Iranian Revolutionary Guards Quds Force in training and transport of the 9/11 Sunni perpetrators. Timmerman also discussed how a joint US-Israeli Mossad operation took out Mughniyeh in a bombing of his vehicle in Damascus in 2008. Mughniyeh was responsible for planning and executing the 1983 Marine Barracks bombing in Beirut, the 1992 Buenos Aires Israeli Embassy bombing, the 1994 Buenos Aires AMIA Jewish Center bombing, the 1996 Khobar Towers truck bombing in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia and 1998 US East Africa Embassies bombings. Osama bin Laden had been "intrigued" about the Iranian ordered Truck bombings planned by Mughniyeh.

The 9/11 Links affidavits obtained by Timmerman showed that Iran gave direct material assistance to the 9/11 Saudi perpetrators. Iran provided the simulator for on training of the 9/11 perpetrators on Boeing 747, 757, 767 aircraft. Timmerman noted that the 9/11 Commission did not report about Iran Boeing aircraft simulator training for Al Qaeda perpetrators who received flight training on small aircraft in the US. The Iranian intelligence defector Soliemanpak affidavit revealed a visit by Sa'ad bin Laden in January 2001. Al Qaeda Number 2 Ayman al-Zawahiri met with Ayatollah Khamenei in May 2001 in Tehran. Soliemanpak defected in July 2001. In his meeting with the CIA station chief and translator in Baku, Azerbaijan, Soleimani revealed there was going to be a major attack in the US using aircraft as bombs. Further that no Iranians were involved in the attack. The 9/11 perpetrators were all Sunni Jihadi: 15 from Saudi Arabia, the balance from Yemen and Egypt. Soliemanpak warning on July 26th to the CIA team in Baku was the attack would occur on 10th of Shahrivar, which was misread by the CIA translator as the 10th of September, when in fact it was 9/11. His warning wasn't heeded. Over 3,000 lives were lost as a result of the Al Qaeda jihadi attacks on the Twin Towers in lower Manhattan, the

Pentagon and southwestern Pennsylvania. As of September 7, 2021, 1,647 of the 2,753 World Trade Center victims' remains have been positively [identified](#).

### **Iran's Threat to the US continues.**

Iran's threat to the US continues unabated., despite futile efforts by the Biden Administration and the EU3 to resurrect the nuclear deal with Iran, despite IAEA estimates that the Islamic Republic has sufficient enriched uranium to make at least one nuclear bomb. Moreover, according to Dr. Stephen Bryn in an *Asia Times* [article](#), there are indications that Iran may have a secret plutonium bomb development with North Korea, akin to what Israel destroyed in Syria in [Operation Orchard](#) in 2007. An Iranian Revolutionary Guards official Shahram Poursafi's plot was [revealed](#) in August 2022 by the FBI and Department of Justice to enlist US and Mexican cartel operatives for an attempted assassination of former Trump Administration National Security Advisor Ambassador John Bolton, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, President Trump and other officials allegedly for their roles in ordering the killing of IRGC Quds Force commander Qassim Soleimani and an Iraqi Shiite Militia commander in a drone missile strike at Baghdad Airport in January.