

PREFACE

Like many, I remember September 11, 2001, vividly and thought a great deal about it and its aftermath—a transformative world event from virtually any perspective.

Our October 2001 bombing of Afghanistan, which was trumpeted as going after the terrorists of 9/11 seemed like the right thing to do, so I spent little time thinking about it.

In 2002 and 2003, my ears perked up trying to follow and digest the vast amount of emotional and contradicting talk about our need to attack Iraq, and by the time we invaded them in March 2003, my mind was buzzing with unanswered questions about the invasion and related issues.

I did little about the issues surrounding 9/11 until 2007, when I read Richard Clarke's book, *Against All Enemies* and noticed the Bush Administration's pounding of Mr. Clarke's intentions and character, which seemed odd, given little was said about the content of his book.

I spent the next year thinking about the increasing unanswered questions I had about 9/11, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In August 2008, I decided to compile this reference book so I and others could better understand and address the many questions that seemed to beg answers from events leading up to 9/11, our subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and the aftermath.

Questions this compendium of quotes from published books and articles addresses include:

1. What decisions were made (or not made) by the U.S. government that contributed to 9/11? Were those decisions adequately understood when they were made? Were they in the best interest of our nation?
2. Given the intelligence and information the U.S. had or that was "out there," could we or should we have prevented 9/11?

3. What is the history and background of Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda and why have they and other extremists been so committed to hurting the U.S. and other Western countries?
4. Who and what are Muslim extremists and how do they think and react?
5. How and why did the U.S. originally pick and support Saddam Hussein in Iraq and why did we subsequently overthrow his regime? Was our March 2003 invasion of Iraq necessary to protect our country? Has it made us or will it make us safer?
6. What has been our involvement with Saudi Arabia, their government, their people and their oil? Has that relationship been understood by congress and the American public, and has that relationship been good for America?
7. After our invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, did we do what we reasonably could to catch Osama bin Laden?
8. To what extent has oil been a substantial contributor to the decisions that led to 9/11 and to our subsequent invasion of Iraq?
9. What changes in our laws and their interpretations has 9/11 brought?
10. What are the lessons and insights to be learned from our decisions leading up to 9/11 and our subsequent invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq that will better secure our future and enhance the quality of our lives?

Let me further explain.

Most Americans and millions around the world were affected by 9/11. Laws and rules were fundamentally changed. Personal privacy was sacrificed and diminished, which continues today.

I'm told that the average American after 9/11 is now filmed by ubiquitous cameras a reported 200 times a day in major U.S. cities. Social programs and day-to-day operations of our local, state and federal governments have been cut back by our federal government's need for billions of dollars for security, the military, by our wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and our global "war on terror."

The huge sums borrowed by our government for “terror funding” have come with vague promises of financing or repaying them in the future.

After we invaded Iraq in March, 2003, I began reading and focusing on Iraq and on our previous involvement with and support of Saddam Hussein. The closer I looked, the more perplexing events with Iraq seemed.

For example, in the 1980's, our government sent Saddam Hussein and Iraq hundreds of "dual-use" technology shipments (technology that could be used for civilian or military purposes), including technology for missiles, nuclear reactors, and strains of West Nile virus, anthrax and botulism.

Our government continued to support Saddam in the late 1980's even while we knew he was gassing his own people. In August 1990, our Diplomat to Iraq, April Glaspie seemed to give Saddam Hussein mixed signals that may have led him to conclude that we wouldn't interfere if he attacked Kuwait.

Then, in March 2003, we attacked Saddam Hussein and his government ostensibly for having and threatening to use weapons of mass destruction, some of which we previously provided him—and then for being a threat by invading Kuwait and for gassing his own people.

As I looked further into the surrounding issues, the huge Iraq oil reserves seemed to pop up often.

My interest in these events deepened when in early 2007, after reading Clarke's book, *Against All Enemies*, and following the attacks on Mr. Clarke by the Bush administration, I noticed those attacks seemed to be aimed mainly at Clarke's character, not at the troubling statements in his book.

It then occurred to me while Mr. Clarke's book was informative, the information in his and other books on 9/11, Iraq, Afghanistan and related areas (which I'm collectively calling "9/11 plus") were by necessity limited by each authors personal knowledge and bias—each author seemed to be a kind of a 9/11 plus “information island.”

Because I wanted to understand 9/11 in a larger context, and because I knew from prior experience that recollections of the same event by different people often yielded conflicting recollections of the event (the "Rashomon" effect), I decided to build a timeline of 9/11 events as reported and quoted by a diverse group of writers, reporters and others.

I theorized that when combined, a timeline of quoted information from different sources would produce a more complete mosaic (or puzzle) of the 9/11 event. Even as incomplete as the final compilation of the 9/11plus quotes might be, the compilation and timeline should at least give the reader the broadest foundation from which to draw their own conclusions about the areas related or tangential to 9/11. At best, the timeline would encourage readers to look even closer into the information presented—or even at information “holes” in the work.

Increasing our collective knowledge of the events set out in the following timeline should encourage us all to be more thoughtful and analytical in our views, and more importantly to seriously question and debate our elected representatives and others about important issues.

Decisions reached through openness and enhanced scrutiny should produce better decisions in our lives, better protect our security, and lighten the burden of millions of Americans and others around the world who want to live in peace.

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