

Government Twists Science of 9/11: “New Theory” on the WTC Towers’ Collapse

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Government Twists Science of 9/11 - Just As With Iraq, the Gulf Oil Spill and Fukushima - to Promote Its Policy Objectives

Governments Sometimes Twists Science to Promote Policy Objectives

Anyone who paid any attention to the claims of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, the Gulf oil spill or the Fukushima nuclear accident knows that the government often twists science to promote certain policy objectives, such as drumming up support for the invasion of Iraq or becoming a booster for nuclear power and big oil (and thus downplaying the damage from nuclear accidents and oil spills).

President’s National Medal of Science [winner](#) Lynn Margulis [notes](#) that the scientific method is to follow the facts where they lead, to adopt the theory which has the most proof, and to discard theories which are contradicted by the facts.

Margulis says that - in the case of 9/11 - the government has adopted theories which are backed by very little evidence, and refused to look at the most likely theory - the one backed by overwhelming evidence.

New Theory on Towers’ Collapse

Live Science [reported](#) last week:

A materials scientist has come up with a more scientific explanation for the mystery booms, and says his model of the Twin Towers collapse leaves no room for conspiracies. “My model explains all the observed features on 11th September: the explosions, molten metal coming out of the window, the time passing between the crash and the collapse, the fact that the explosions took place in a floor below the place it was burning, and the rapid collapse,” Christen Simensen of SINTEF, a research organization in Norway, told Life’s Little Mysteries.

As detailed in the new issue of Aluminum International Today, Simensen argues that molten aluminum from the airplane bodies chemically reacted with water in the buildings’ sprinkler systems, setting off the explosions that felled the Twin Towers. [[Did Nostradamus Really Predict the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks?](#)]

When each jet cut its way into a building, it took with it parts of walls and ceilings, Simensen said. Steel bars in those walls would have gashed its fuel tanks, which would have caught fire. With the plane positioned somewhere in the middle of the building, blanketed in debris and with no route for heat to

escape, the temperature would have rapidly escalated, reaching 660 degrees Celsius (1,220 degrees Fahrenheit), the melting point of aluminum — of which there was 30 tons in each plane fuselage — within an hour. The molten aluminum would then have heated up further to between 800 and 850 C (1,470 and 1,560 F).

“Then molten aluminum becomes [as liquid as] water and has so much heat that it will flow through cracks in the floor and down to the next floor,” Simensen explained in an email. There was an automatic sprinkler system installed in each ceiling, and it was [filled with water](#). “When huge amount of molten aluminum gets in contact with water, a fierce exothermic reaction will take place, enormous amount of hydrogen is formed and the temperature is locally raised to 1,200 to 1,500 C,” or 2,200 to 2,700 F.

Chaos rapidly ensues: “A series of explosions will take place and a whole floor will be blown to pieces,” he wrote. “Then the top part of the building will fall on the bottom part, and the tower will collapse within seconds.” This is what Simensen believes happened in the two World Trade Center towers.

This isn’t obscure chemistry, Simensen says; the U.S. Aluminum Association has recorded 250 accidental molten aluminum/water explosions worldwide since 1980. “Alcoa in Pittsburgh [the worldwide leader in aluminum production] has done a series of such explosions in special laboratory in order to understand what can prevent such explosions and what are the most dangerous situations,” he wrote. “For instance they let 30 kilograms [66 pounds] of aluminum react with 20 liters [5.3 gallons] of water, which resulted in a large hole 30 meters [98 feet] in diameter, and nothing left of the laboratory.”

Why Do We Need a New Theory?

Simensen’s theory has received [wide-spread media attention](#).

Most of the coverage focuses on the theory having the potential to explain the explosions and sudden collapse of the Twin Towers, and thus to debunk the conspiracy theories that the Twin Towers and World Trade Center Building 7 were brought down by controlled demolition.

But this means that the official explanation for why the trade centers collapsed on 9/11 is inadequate ... and doesn’t take into account the explosions or sudden collapse of the 3 buildings. In other words, the very fact that there is such a buzz about this theory shows that many don’t believe the “official” explanation really explains the collapse of the 3 buildings.

The New Theory Contradicts the “Official” Explanation

The “official” explanation assumes that the aluminum from the airplanes which crashed into the Twin Towers formed hundreds of thousands of shotgun-like blasts, pointed in all directions, to which sheared off all the fireproofing in a broad section on several floors.

That would have to happen quickly – before the metal was heated. Instead, Simensen’s theory hinges on the assumption that the aluminum from the planes cascaded down all at once – causing explosions when it hit water.

Not the First Novel Theory

As I [noted](#) in 2008, this is not the first novel theory about the collapse:

First it was the [“new phenomenon”](#) of “thermal expansion”.

Now, Sergei Dudarev, of the UK Atomic Energy Agency, says the Twin Towers collapsed due to [“unusual magnetic forces”](#).

Specifically, as described by the BBC, Mr. Dudarev argues that:

“The peak in this pliability is at 911.5C, but begins at much lower temperatures, at around 500C (932F) – a temperature often reached during building fires.

The steel backbone of the Twin Towers was probably exposed to temperatures close to this, when insulating panels – meant to protect the buildings’ structural frame – were dislodged by the impacts of the hijacked planes.

The roaring fire mid-way up the building heated the steel struts, and once temperatures rose above 500C the structure became elastic, and collapsed under the force of the floors above.”

Is he right?

Well, as noted in Appendix A of [The World Trade Center Building Performance Study](#):

In the mid-1990s British Steel and the Building Research Establishment performed a series of six experiments at Cardington to investigate the behavior of steel-framed buildings. These experiments were conducted in a simulated, eight-story building. Secondary steel beams were not protected. Despite the temperature of the steel beams reaching 800-900 C (1,500-1,700 F) in three of the tests (well above the traditionally assumed critical temperature of 600 C (1,100 F), no collapse was observed in any of the six experiments.

And Underwriters Laboratories tested the steel components at the Twin Towers and found they could withstand fires for hours without failure:

“NIST contracted with Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. to conduct tests to obtain information on the fire endurance of trusses like those in the WTC towers.... All four test specimens sustained the maximum design load for approximately 2 hours without collapsing... The Investigation Team was cautious about using these results directly in the formulation of collapse hypotheses. In addition to the scaling issues raised by the test results, the fires in the towers on September 11, and the resulting exposure of the floor systems, were substantially different from the conditions in the test furnaces. Nonetheless, the [empirical test] results established that this type of assembly was capable of sustaining a large gravity load, without collapsing, for a substantial period of time relative to the duration of the fires in any given location on September 11.” (NIST, 2005, p. 140).

Other fire tests have also failed to cause failures, collapses or “unusual magnetic forces” at high temperatures.

[And no previous office fires – even ones which burned much hotter and much longer – caused the collapse of a modern steel-framed building]

The 2005 Madrid skyscraper fire [“reached 800 degrees Celsius \(1,472 F\), said Javier Sanz, head of Madrid firefighter”](#) (see pictures [here](#)), and lasted some 20 hours. Indeed, the fires in the Twin Towers were much cooler than many office fires, as indicated by the color of the flames and the black smoke pouring out of the windows.

As Steve Watson [notes](#):

We have previously pointed to the [innumerable number of buildings](#) that have suffered roaring fires across the majority of their floors for hours and remained standing. Seemingly the steel beams in these buildings were not subjected to the same “unusual magnetic forces”.

Furthermore, a far more extensive fire occurred in WTC 1 itself, prior to enhanced fireproofing of the building, on [February 13, 1975](#). The fire burned at much higher temperatures for three hours and spread over [six floors](#), including 65% of the 11th floor and the building core, yet it caused no significant damage to the steel structure and no trusses had to be replaced. There were no “unusual magnetic forces” present on that day.

Furthermore, referring to the collapses, the original NIST report [concluded](#) that ‘the existing condition of the fireproofing prior to aircraft impact and the fireproofing thickness on the WTC floor system did not play a significant role’.

Any “thermal expansion” at the World Trade Center was not a new phenomenon, but something that building designers and fire safety engineers have taken into account for decades if not hundreds of years.

Likewise, any “magnetic forces” at the WTC should have been less severe than those present in fire safety tests and actual office building fires, which have never before led to complete collapses. Indeed, despite the apparently advanced science which Mr. Dudarev hints at, he actually admits this is nothing new:

“He said blacksmiths had exploited this property for hundreds of years”.^{22*}

Is the New Theory Right?

So the previous “novel” theories didn’t pan out. But what about Simensen’s new theory?

Initially, Simensen admits that the new theory doesn’t explain the destruction of World Trade Center building 7, which wasn’t hit by an airplane and [which suffered only minor fires before mysteriously falling on 9/11](#).

And the above-quoted Live Science article notes:

Simensen's new collapse model has not gained immediate acceptance by proponents of earlier models.

"Occam's Razor says that the simplest explanation is usually the best," said Thomas Eagar, a materials scientist at MIT who has also studied the fall of the towers. "I do not see any merit to this new, more-complex explanation.

Eagar also objects to the notion that the aluminum, if it did melt, would definitely have reacted with the water it encountered. Most of the time when water is sprayed on molten aluminum, "there is no explosion because the water turns to steam and excludes the oxygen, preventing the growth of the combustion," he said.

Roughly 1,600 architects and structural engineers across the country, who have banded together in a group called "Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth," say it does not fully account for the buildings' collapses. With so many people looking for answers, Simensen's alternative theory is likely to receive further attention and study.

Moreover, while Simensen talks about explosions at or below the level of the planes, there is credible eyewitness testimony of explosives well above the floor hit by the planes:

- The Chief of NY Fire Department (Citywide Tour Commander) said "there was what appeared to be at first an explosion. It appeared at the very top, simultaneously from all four sides, materials shot out horizontally. And then there seemed to be a momentary delay before you could see the beginning of the collapse" (page 4)
- A police officer stated "you would hear a loud boom go off at the top of tower one. As the building continued to burn and emergency equipment kept on responding stirring up the dust and debris in the streets. After approximately 15 minutes suddenly there was another loud boom at the upper floors, then there was a series of smaller explosions which appeared to go completely around the building at the upper floors. And another loud earth-shattering blast with a large fire ball which blew out more debris and at that point everyone began to run north on West Broad Street." (page 5, which is page 2 of a hand-written memorandum)(
- The Chief of the NY Fire Department (Citywide Tour Commander) said "there was what appeared to be at first an explosion. It appeared at the very top, simultaneously from all four sides, materials shot out horizontally. And then there seemed to be a momentary delay before you could see the beginning of the collapse" (page 4)
- A paramedic captain stated "somewhere around the middle of the world trade center there was this orange and red flash coming out initially it was just one flash then this flash just kept popping all the way around the building and that building had started to explode the popping sound and with each popping sound it was initially an orange and then red flash came out of the building and then it

[would just go all around the building on both sides as far as could see these popping sounds and the explosions were getting bigger going both up and down and then all around the building”](#)

Simensen’s theory can’t explain these explosions. (See hundreds of extra eyewitness statements [here](#) and [here](#))

In addition, scientists say that the lower section of the Twin Towers was [designed to support several times the weight of the upper block](#), that the upper section of the North Tower [did not, in fact, crush the lower portion](#), and that the crushing theory is even more improbable with the South Tower.

And peer-reviewed scientific papers claim that military-grade explosive materials known as nano-thermate were found in the rubble and dust from the World Trade Center. See [this](#) and [this](#).

Michael Rivero [argues](#):

“The reaction [Simensen] is talking about is one in which hot aluminum will ‘steal’ oxygen from water, leaving hydrogen gas. There are two problems with this theory, of course.

The first is the hydrogen gas is very light and floats upward even faster than helium. The ruins of the World Trade Towers were ‘porous’ and as the smoke trails prove, there was a strong wind from the side. This means that hydrogen could not collect together anywhere in any amounts enough to cause an explosion, certainly not down in the basements, where some explosions were reported.

Second, even under the most ideal of circumstances of perfect mixture of hydrogen and oxygen, impossible in the natural atmosphere and under those conditions, hydrogen may burn fast but does not detonate. Recall the destruction of the Hindenburg. Huge fire, no ‘bang.’

So this latest official ‘explanation’ is a desperate attempt to reconcile eyewitness reports and video recordings of explosions (like the one that initiates the collapse of building 7) with the rapidly collapsing official story.

Finally, given that aluminum is a rather common building material, why have we not seen such water and aluminum explosions before or since 9-11?”

And [officials admit that the fires in the Twin Towers were not very hot, and yet dozens of firemen, structural engineers and emergency responders say that they saw molten steel in the rubble of the World Trade Center for months after 9/11, even though it was sprayed with enormous quantities of water](#). Steel melts at a much higher temperature than aluminum, and the government admits that the fires were not hot enough to have melted the steel (and a professor emeritus of physics has shown that [the collapse of the buildings could not have melted the steel](#)).

So how does a government spokesman explain the molten steel? He denies its existence:

This shows once again that the government is twisting the science around 9/11 to meet its policy objectives.

The introduction of novel theory after novel theory to explain what [many top structural engineers, mechanical engineers, architects and physicists](#) say can only be a controlled demolition shows the desperation of the government to explain away the most probable hypothesis.

And see [this](#).

Note: This essay is not necessarily arguing that controlled demolition brought down 3 buildings on 9/11. It is, however, arguing that - just as with Iraq, the Gulf oil spill, and Fukushima, wild-eyed scientific theories are being promoted which have no basis in fact, and the most likely hypotheses are not being examined by the government.

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