

How the World changed after 9/11

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*On the day of September 11, **Charlie Skelton** attends a symposium of critical thinkers in New York*

The heavy syllables of the victims' names boomed out along the streets around Ground Zero. The public were patted down, then allowed up a cramped side road to peer at a distant video screen of the memorial. They filmed the video screen on their mobile phones, filmed each other filming, and film crews filmed them filming.



It was hardly fertile ground for grief, you'd think. And yet, the weird detachment of the moment was severed by the chanting of the names and the brief tributes of the readers. It was the daughter who said her father's friends tell her that she reminds them of him that did it for me. That, and the list of victims called Jones. Jones after Jones after Jones. Too many Joneses. I took my sniffles back up the street to Starbucks.

And from Starbucks, I went down the rabbit hole. I found myself at a conference on Walker Street called 'How The World Changed After 9/11'. It was packed, but I managed to slide in at the back, to hear a guy called Webster Tarpley chant his own list of names. The names of the 46 military exercises and hijack drills (called things like 'Vigilant Guardian') that were actually taking place on the morning of September 11. "The greatest density of drills in US military history," Tarpley said.

Fake radar blips, dummy hijacks, dummy attacks, fighter jets sent off to Turkey, the skies left unprotected, with the FBI's top anti-terror experts stuck on a training exercise in California. The drills, said Tarpley, were important, because not only did they weaken and confuse US air defence, but there was also a military drill for each major component of the

9/11 attacks. The drills were cover, and the dummy threats were made real.

September 11, he argues, was a coup carried out by a rogue network within the US military and government. A cabal of fascists, working with (and for) a banking oligarchy, “the old boys of Wall Street”.



Webster Tarpley

“You want to blame Saudi Arabia, or Israel, or Pakistan? You can’t. There isn’t the evidence.” The evidence, Tarpley says, points towards 9/11 as a false flag attack, carried out by a high level clique, that forced a shocked and awestruck US public into a vast and still ongoing war. It was America’s very own Reichstag fire. And the official version of the event? “A racist, militaristic, and fascist myth that we must reject.”

What I heard, from speaker after speaker, was a heartfelt desire to turn away from the path of destruction, militarism and lies that America has been set upon after 9/11. Ray McGovern, a former [CIA](#) analyst, mourned for Iraq: “One million dead, 4m displaced, and that’s a victory?” He sees the failure of Americans to comprehend the scale of the destruction wrought under their flag as nothing less than racist. “In America, we are very good at segregating our tears. Racism is our original sin.”



Ray McGovern

McGovern quoted from [Martin Luther King’s letter from Birmingham jail](#): “Like a boil that can

never be cured so long as it is covered up, but must be opened with all its ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must be exposed, with all the tension its exposure creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.” And 9/11, for McGovern, is a “big boil” that needs lancing.

He drew attention to an extraordinary story, barely touched by the mainstream press, that Richard Clarke, who was the White House counter-terrorism czar at the time of the attacks, has [recently accused the CIA of deliberately suppressing information before 9/11](#), information that might have prevented the attacks. Clarke claimed: “There was a high-level decision in the CIA ordering people not to share information.” And who made this decision? “I would think it would have been made by the director”.

[So that would be George Tenet](#). Director of the CIA from 1997-2004, now a managing director of an investment bank. The former CIA man, McGovern, ends his speech by saying: “Of all the people who should be put in prison, he’d be top of my list.”

Another speaker, Mike Rivero, addressed the outrage, which he often felt when the “false flag” analysis of 9/11 is presented. The idea that “we would never do such a thing” or “it’s not the sort of thing governments do.” He gave a whistlestop tour of state-sponsored attacks and hoodwinkings: the Lusitania, the Maine, the Dodgy Dossier, Saddam’s nuclear weapons, the staged burning of the Reichstag, and the notorious Gleiwitz incident in which the Nazis faked an attack on a German radio station to justify the invasion of Poland. His point being that 9/11 was “not unique”. There’s a historical context.

History, documentation, facts. A respect for life, and a respect for truth. This is what I heard, over and over again, at this remarkable conference. Wayne Madsen – a former naval officer and NSA operative – spoke of the atmosphere of “hype and fear” that still grips America, 10 years after 9/11. A fear that’s pumped into us, relentlessly, through our flatscreen HD Orwellian “telescreens”.



Wayne Madsen

Madsen called for the release of the commission findings [that Ludkowski told me about last night](#): “Let’s get those documents out of the National Archives!” But he noted that the man whose job it is to decide what gets released, the administrator of the White House office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, is [one Cass Sunstein](#). The same Cass Sunstein that in 2008 urged the government to [“cognitively infiltrate”](#) alternative groups like the 9/11 Truth

Movement. So releasing those documents probably isn't top of his to-do list.

He's also the same Cass Sunstein that [wrote the first op-ed about Julian Assange](#) - the CIA asset and "child of MK Ultra", as Tarpley dubs him. But that's a whole other can of worms ...

I found myself blinking back tears for the second time when McGovern read out a poem - in his polished CIA Russian - about a mother mourning the loss of her child. This thread of grieving ran throughout the conference. Wayne Madsen grieved for the loss of "shoeleather journalism", McGovern mourned the death of the fourth estate, while Tarpley spoke of the hollow memorial at Ground Zero - the two "abysses": the reflecting pools, or "voids", as they're often called. He sees these memorials as an appropriately empty vision of "nothingness. Nihil. No ideals, nothing." A nothingness at the heart of America. "But we have to do something."

We have to do something. Even if that something is simply to Google 'Cass Sunstein' and start from there.

Begin your own cognitive infiltration. Google 'Vigilant Guardian' or 'Able Danger'. Crosscheck 'Abdel Hakim Belhadj' and 'Al-Qaida'. Begin digging. Begin thinking. And stop believing.

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