

# COMMENTARY

## Why the FBI got away with the first WTC bombing

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On February 26, 1993, a gray snowy day in Manhattan like the one I write on 14 years later, the FBI and US government failed to stop the van-bomb explosion in the World Trade Center's basement garage, just as NORAD and the US government failed to stop the airliner blitz on the Twin Towers and Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

I remember crowds fleeing from the Towers in '93, choking with smoke, exhaustion, and disbelief. But as James Bovard points out in [FBI Blunders and the First World Trade Center Bombing](#), events that led to that infamy started years earlier.

On November 5, 1990, Rabbi Meir Kahane was giving a predictably anti-Arab speech at a New York hotel. Kahane had founded the radical Jewish Defense League (JDL), which passionately preached expelling all Arabs from Israel and the "occupied territories" by force. The Knesset, Israel's Parliament, actually banned Kahane's political party for "inciting racism" and "endangering security," which indeed it was doing.

To make matters worse, as Kahane finished his speech on that night, El Sayyid Nosair, a 36-year old Egyptian immigrant, walked up to Kahane, pulled out a .357 and shot him to death in the neck. Nosair belonged to a group of Muslims that avowedly hated Israel and the Egyptian government of Hosni Mubarak. When police searched Nosair's residence, they walked off with 47 boxes of documents such as paramilitary manuals, maps, diagrams of buildings (including the World Trade Center).

Yet as the September 2002 congressional Report on Federal Failures *Before 9/11* stated, "The NYPD and the District Attorney's office resisted attempts to label the Kahane assassination a 'conspiracy' despite the apparent links to a broader network of radicals. Instead, these organizations reportedly wanted the appearance of speedy justice and a quick resolution to a volatile situation. By arresting Nosair, they felt they had accomplished both."

Thus, the "lone gunman" trial of Nosair, starting in late 1991, brought crowds of angry Muslim supporters outside the courthouse, death threats against the judge and lawyers, cries for 'blood' revenge against Nosair, and shouts of 'Death to Jews!' A small band of Muslims circled the sidewalks each day in front of the courthouse, trashing Israel, the US, supposed persecution of Nosair. As observed in a July 4, 1993, *Los Angeles Times* article, *N.Y. Trial in Rabbi's Death Planted an Explosive Seed*, "Out of those loud demonstrations of contempt for the US judicial system would emerge what authorities now say was a clandestine cell of "terrorists" [quotation marks mine] who conspired to set off the World Trade Center bomb blast, plotted an unparalleled wave of attacks on US landmarks and political figures and shattered America's image of invulnerability to terrorism." That is, with a little help from their friends.

### Enter FBI informant Emad Salem

The FBI put an informant named Emad Salem, a 43-year old former Egyptian military officer, smack dab in the middle of the Muslim protestors. Salem worked the group and became bodyguard for the blind Sheik Abdul Rahman, radical Muslim cleric and group leader. The sheik, coincidentally, had been heavily subsidized by the US government while in Pakistan in the late 1980s, helping to pump up Muslims to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan, sort of a sheik for all seasons and reasons.

Though the evidence that Nosair killed Kahane was damning, the jury somehow found him not guilty for murder but guilty on a firearms charge, i.e., possessing the murder weapon. Work on that one. And Salem, after the trial, continued to work the "terrorist" room as an FBI informant, receiving \$500 a week plus expenses.

Right after Nosair was convicted, Salem met regularly with other members of the "cell," "cadre," "conspiracy" -- hard-line Muslims who banded together during the Kahane trial. As a result, in 1992, Salem warned the FBI repeatedly that the group was planning to pull off a catastrophic bombing in New York City. But the FBI, in its own strange wisdom, was convinced Nosair was making up tall tales and canned him. Work on that one.

### Presenting the first World Trade Center bombing

When on February 26, 1993, a 1,200-pound bomb in a van exploded in the parking garage under the World Trade Center, purportedly in a government agency parking spot; it was the most destructive terrorist attack on US soil to that time. Its achievement is now supplanted by the 9/11/01 attack. What's next, a whole city, a region, a blue state?

That dark question aside, the '93 attack killed six people, injured more than a thousand, and racked up a half billion dollars in damage. It is said that if the van had been parked a few feet closer to one of the pillars, it could have collapsed at least one of the towers onto the other, thereby collapsing both and killing tens of thousands.

But note how the event is clearly an underground explosion. Explosions from under, within, and on top of the Towers that led to their pulverization would be disguised in the 2001 hits as effects of the plane hits and

subsequent fires that melted building frames and caused their nine to 10-second, speed-of-gravity free falls. See [911Mysteries](#) and [LooseChange](#) for details on how well those infamous hoaxes have been dispelled.

The '93 case, like the 2001 case, was quickly cracked. Mohammad Salameh, one of the alleged bombers, had repeatedly gone to the Ryder rental office in Jersey City and demanded that Ryder refund his \$400 deposit for the van, which he claimed to be stolen. Why didn't he just confess and ask to be arrested? You remember Mohammed Atta conveniently left a suitcase, in a Maine airport, full of documents in Arabic, maps, plans to destroy buildings, along with wills of fellow conspirators. Also, Atta's passport miraculously surfaced from the smoldering debris at Ground Zero, shouting look at me, look at me.

Of course back in '93, 'law enforcement' agents had already figured out from fragments at the WTC that the van was the bomb delivery vehicle. Salameh was shuffled off to jail and the FBI quickly snared other plotters. Similarly, the FBI identified almost immediately after the 9/11 hits the 19 Muslim perpetrators and declared that planes were the sole instruments of death. In the first case, *Time* magazine in all its wisdom, announced that the FBI "looked supremely capable in speedily rounding up suspects in the World Trade Center bombing." Hurrah, and let's get back to those basketball and football games.

Assistant US Attorney Andrew McCarthy boasted to a New York jury that the first World Trade Center attack was one of the FBI's finest hours: "To the rest of the world out there, [the] explosion in all its tragedy was actually a high-water mark for the FBI." And the *New York Times* told us that FBI agents had been monitoring two mosques in the New York City area, as well as Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, although . . . "Federal guidelines had limited their ability to tail them or conduct other close surveillance. Nothing suggesting the purchase of explosives or the assembling of a bomb was detected, the officials said. Even close surveillance might not have picked up a surreptitious act, they said."

A few months later, FBI director William Sessions said, "Based on what was known to us at the time, we have no reason to believe we could have prevented the bombing of the World Trade Center." Are these guys kidding or they kidding? They had Emad Salem on the inside in 1992, a year before, warning them a catastrophe was cooking, and they canned him.

### **The secret tape recordings**

After the bombing, the FBI further played Keystone Cops and stumbled over themselves to rehire Salem, offering him a million bucks to discover evidence of more terrorist plots. Salem, being a reasonably smart guy, did not trust the boyz to pay up. So he secretly recorded his conversations with FBI agents. In August, as the case approached its trial, news leaked Salem had made tapes of more than a hundred hours of his conversations with FBI agents and handlers. Yet somehow the transcripts were not helpful to the prosecution.

In a call to an FBI agent shortly after the bombing Salem complained, "We was start already building the bomb, which is went off in the World Trade Center. It was built, uh, uh, uh, supervising, supervision from the Bureau [FBI] and the DA [district attorney] and we was all informed about it. And we know that the bomb start to be built. By who? By your confidential informant. What a wonderful great case. And then he 'the FBI [supervisor]' put his head in the sand and said, o no, no, no that's not true, he is a son of a bitch, okay."

Not elegant rhetoric, but we get the point. The FBI is playing Salem and he is fully aware of it.

Frustrated, Salem told one FBI agent, "You were informed. Everything is ready. The day and the time. Book. Lock them up and that's that. That's why I feel so bad." Another tape revealed Salem asking an FBI agent, "Do you deny your supervisor is the main reason of bombing the World Trade Center?" The agent did not deny Salem's charge. Shortly after the bombing, FBI agent Nancy Floyd confided to Salem that her supervisors botched the case: "I felt that the people on the squad, that they didn't have a clue of how to operate things. That the supervisors didn't know what was going on. That they hadn't taken the time to learn the history."

Purportedly, it was never totally clear to what degree Salem instigated the bombing, in contrast to just reporting on the plot to his FBI controllers. Yet, as James Bovard reports, Salem offered to do a switcheroo on the bombers and substitute harmless powder for deadly explosives and prevent any real catastrophe. The FBI turned down his offer. Why? Salem wasn't committed to explosives. Why were they?

Salem grouched to one FBI man that an FBI supervisor "requested to make me to testify [in public] and if he didn't push for that, we'll be going building the bomb with a phony powder and grabbing the people who was involve in it. But . . . we didn't do that."

That's right, the real explosives were used and the reason lands square in the FBI's lap.

The FBI was also embarrassed by the 47 boxes of explosive plans and information that had been seized from Nosair and left sitting in storage for two years. In fact, the FBI claimed that part of the reason for that was that no one in the New York FBI office spoke or read Arabic. Like no one, not even a UN interpreter who could be borrowed, or a scholar from one of the many universities in town?

One note on one of the boxes read, "We had to thoroughly demoralize the enemies of God. This is to be done by means of destroying and blowing up the towers that constitute the pillars of their civilization, such as the tourist attractions they're so proud of and the high buildings they're so proud of." In fact, a law enforcement official told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1993 that the materials "described major conspiracies and provided a road map to the bombing of the World Trade Center and the subsequent plot." All that rhetoric and no response? FBI, shame on you again.

## Bottom line: more praise than heads rolling

Somehow the FBI got more credit for "solving" the first World Trade Center bombing than it got "blame" for the fact that its informant may have aided in the bombing, or that they paid no heed to his warning. In the wake of what may be interpreted as sheer incompetence, purposeful negligence or dare I say veiled participation, Congress held no oversight hearings or investigations of how and why the feds goofed. Instead, in the wake of the first WTC devastation, the FBI rode the wave with its new director, Louis Freeh.

The 2002 congressional *Report into pre-9/11 failures* said, "The first attack on the World Trade Center was an unambiguous indication that a new form of terrorism -- motivated by religious fanaticism and seeking mass casualties -- was emerging and focused on America . . . However, the strategic implications of this shift in lethality do not appear to have been fully recognized."

It's ironic that this non-recognition or "system-failure" worked in 1993 as a no-blame explanation. Somehow it became the effective excuse for 2001's tragedy: "massive system failure."

Worse, could it be that what was really emerging was a pattern of false flag attacks on the US, going forward to the Oklahoma City bombings of the Murrah Building on April 19, 1995? That bloody catastrophe was supposedly caused by a Ryder Truck containing an ANFO bomb, driven there by two lone gunmen, Timothy McVeigh, executed for it by lethal injection June 11, 2001, and [Terry Nichols later jailed for life for it](#). As of November 8, 2006, Nichols was still trying to blow the whistle on the FBI's involvement in it and being denied access to reporters.

Also, first responders that awful day found two other live bombs and the remains of an exploded bomb. The live bombs were at each end of the building and subsequently removed and defused. The exploded bomb in the middle of the building was the one that caused the major damage and murder. The ANFO truck-bomb blow-up was basically a ruse.

In fact, witnesses had noticed, earlier in that week, several men in jumpsuits with "Government Agency Personnel" written on the back, working on wiring in the basement garage of the Murrah building. Thus, there seems to be government (FBI) involvement and subsequent cover-ups in all three domestic tragedies, and with "terrorist" patsies of one kind or another to take the raps.

So, when we look back on November 26, 1993, April 19, 1995, or September 11, /2001, let us also look forward to what our "internal terrorists" have planned next and what the basis of their ruthlessness and fanaticism is. Perhaps simply money and power. If we don't learn the lessons of history and correct how we deal with these events soon, we will see them repeated.

We should also look *back* to the classic false flag [Operation Northwoods](#), which was designed to make it look like Cuba was attacking the US, so that the US would attack Cuba and remove Castro. JFK may have lost his life, in part, for stopping the operation cold and firing its author, the chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Lyman Lemnitzer, in September 1962.

Yet, once those same forces found a green light for Kennedy's assassination in 1963, larger and more frequent false-flag attacks on and off US soil could follow. This to make sure that a populace cowed by fear of some external "ism" would keep fighting it to the death. Tragically, the corrosive enemy was a cancer killing from within for its own hungry agenda. And so, a belated conscious WTC anniversary to all. And dare I say "never forget?" all the facts or perps.

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