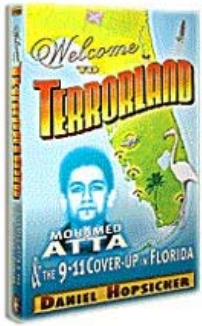
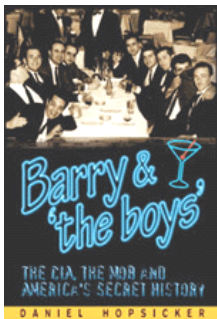


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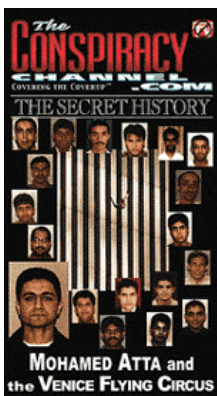
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"Mohamed Atta &

## Four More American Drug Planes Seized

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February 7, 2008  
by Daniel Hopsicker

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**Four more American-registered drug planes** have been seized from the 50-plane fleet of drug running aircraft amassed by Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel, according to documents filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida.



Figures of interest in the transactions, the [MadCowMorningNews](#) has learned, include financial backers of two of this year's Republican candidates for President, as well as, unsurprisingly, an aviation company in St. Petersburg, FL. which can justifiably be called "**one of the usual suspects.**"

Coincidentally or not, the American owners of the four planes (like the two busted earlier) were largely people and companies with '**special relationships**' with U.S. political movers and shakers, including the CIA and the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security.

Yet, despite this inconvenient fact, the FBI persists in referring to the aircraft's American owners as "**legitimate aircraft brokers**" and "**unwitting sellers**"

**"This is Your GOP. This is your GOP... on drugs."**



Dennis Nixon (left) left his hat at home

**The Republican connection** begins with the statement in [court filings](#) that the money to purchase the planes was laundered through a bank which is almost invariably described as "fast-growing" in admiring business news articles.

The drug money was wired, usually from Mexico, to an account at **Commerce Bank in Miami**, whose Chairman, **Dennis Nixon**, is the South Texas Co-chair of John McCain's campaign.

Nixon was also a Bush Pioneer and Ranger in George W. Bush's two Presidential campaigns, raising \$300,000 in one night for Bush's re-election bid in Texas border town Laredo.

High-profile Texas businessman Dennis Nixon's bank is even— in one of the sales—involved on both ends. Money was wired from Mexico, first to an account at Commerce Bank in Miami, then on to International Bank of Commerce (IBC) in Oklahoma to complete the sale.

Dennis Nixon's International Bancshares of San Antonio owns **both**

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banks.

## "Abuse of power comes as no surprise."

The second transaction with apparent Republican 'ramifications' involves a Grumman Albatross (**N7027Z**) seaplane apparently sold to the Sinaloa Cartel.

N7274Z, reported El Nuevo Herald, had been "purchased, with several twists between August to September 2006, from the **HSBC bank** in Mexico by **Jorge Barraza**, a resident of Tamil Nadu, Jorge Medina and Daniel Medina on behalf of Insured Aircraft Title Service in Oklahoma."

El Nuevo Herald identifies the plane with the "N" number **N7027Z** as a Beech King Air. However, the grand jury indictment identifies the plane only by its N number, N7027Z.

A check of FAA records revealed that that "N" number was assigned to a Grumman Albatross seaplane. An FAA spokesman told us, when we inquired, that that N number has been used exclusively by the Grumman Albatross for the past 15 years.

Moreover a reliable source in Fort Lauderdale stated to us recently that seaplanes have recently become all the rage in drug trafficking circles.

## A seaplane would seem an excellent idea



The seaplane, or "**warbird**," as aircraft broker sites call planes decommissioned from the military, was owned by **Jay Koven**, whose construction company built Rudy Giuliani's Emergency Command Center in Building 7 of the World Trade Center.

The decision to locate New York City's Command Center high above the **one** site in NYC which had **already** been attacked by foreign terrorists was controversial... even before it had to be abandoned on September 11.

According to "**The Real Rudy**," a Giuliani expose in American Prospect magazine in September 2006, Koven and his partner gave \$4,000 to Giuliani at a party given in 1998 at the behest of WTC lessor Larry Silverstein, at the Fifth Avenue home of his public relations guru.

Silverstein had signed the lease for the command center just two weeks earlier, not nearly enough time to avoid charges of a **quid pro quo**. And sure enough...

"Attendance was obligatory," recalled Jay Koven's partner in Ambassador Construction. "The invitation meant we were expected to give a contribution."

## Queasy Rider



Concluded the magazine, "The timing couldn't have been queasier."

We were somewhat surprised when Koven returned a phone call made to his home in Larchmont.



## Records

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## Election Fraud

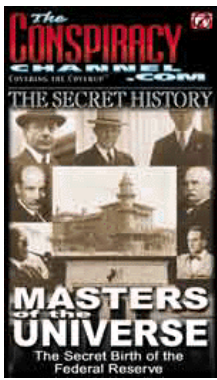
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"The plane was not seized," he told us. "I still own the airplane. I can't really tell you anything, and I'm not at liberty to say more about what little I do know. But I can tell you... I'm just a normal guy with an airplane I'm trying to sell."

He gave the phone number for an aircraft broker who's currently advertising the Albatross for sale, and the broker confirmed that the plane has **not** been seized, and **is** for sale.

There are many who feel, and Mr. Koven may be one, and with some justification, that we are adrift on a vast sea, in a tiny boat, in a world we never made.

But what of the owner's of the other planes on the list?

**"Round up the usual suspects... again."**

At least one company involved in the sale of the four seized American planes can by now be justifiably called one of the **"usual suspects."**

Amazingly, **SkyWay Aircraft** is once again among the drug running airplane's sellers.



Skyway Aircraft, located at the small Alfred Whitted Municipal Airport in downtown St. Petersburg, is not to be confused with the notorious and now-defunct **other SkyWay Aircraft**, which owned the DC9 whose bust with **5.5 tons of cocaine** aboard kicked off the scandal.

SkyWay's owner, **Larry W. Peters**, has vociferously denied any involvement between his company and the other Skyway, Brent and Glen Kovar's, which was located 15 minutes away at St-Pete Clearwater Int'l.

And no wonder. The **Kovar's SkyWay** increasingly looks like nothing more than an elaborate front for drug smuggling.



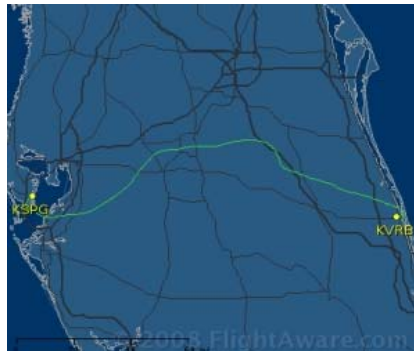
But being (undeservingly?) tarred with the same name, if not the same brush, may not be Peter's biggest problem.

His SkyWay sold a **Cessna Conquest II (N5113S)**, suspected of being used to fly drugs from South America to Africa, according to a [report in the Tampa Tribune](#), making this the third plane "sold" by Larry Peters' hapless SkyWay Aircraft to "buyers" later determined to be drug traffickers.

No three strikes law, apparently, applies.

**Bible Institute: Good book provides good 'cover'**

The very first plane seized was an older **Beech King Air (N1100M)** exported to Venezuela on October 23, 2006. The plane was supposedly owned by a company in Doral, located northwest of Miami, close to Miami International Airport, called Plans and Parts Enterprises LLC, but the State of Florida's Division of Corporations has no company doing business in the state listed by that name.



Another of the three **Beech King Airs (N50AJ)**, may have been flown by

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controversial Moody Bible Institute's Summer Institute of Linguistics, widely accused in the Latin American press of being funded by American intelligence, and suspected of involvement in the 2003 CIA-backed coup in Haiti.

The plane also made numerous flights to Albert Whitted (KSPG) Airport, the small St. Petersburg airport where SkyWay Aircraft is located.

It is apparently owned by Communications International Inc, a telecom company in Vero Beach, FL. But as recently as 2004 it may have been flown in South America by the Moody Bible Institute. It is pictured on [the website of Robert Peterson](#), one of Moody's pilots, but it is unclear whether he was flying it for Moody.

### Nasty Venezuelans keep pulling Uncle Sam's chain.



News of four new planes seized—three Beech King Air twin-engine turbojets and a Grumman Albatross seaplane decommissioned by the U.S. military—was first revealed in a story last Friday in [Spanish-language El Nuevo Herald](#).

Under a headline loosely translated as "US dismantles flotilla of drug trafficking planes," the paper unearthed documents filed in Federal Court in Miami last October revealing new details of what apparently is an ongoing U.S. multi-agency operation to dismantle the huge fleet of American-registered aircraft amassed by the Sinaloa Cartel during the past several years.

The main actor, at least in the court filings and criminal complaint, appears to be Venezuelan businessman **Pedro Jose Benavides Natera**, who ran a system used to purchase American planes for use by Mexican drug cartels which the FBI characterizes as "a complex international money laundering scheme."

The 51-year old Benavides, who goes on trial in Miami next month, is charged with laundering drug profits to buy U.S. aircraft to smuggle cocaine, using accounts at Commerce Bank in Miami to acquire aircraft for the drug trafficking organization (DOT.)

Mexican newspapers reported over the weekend that Judicial Police in Mexico City may have become aware of the scheme as early as 1998, when they arrested "**Cambio de Change Puebla**" owner Pedro Alatorre after one of the "customers" at his money exchange overnight went from financial transactions totaling \$100,000 per month to over \$800,000 per week.

Alatorre, who began rubbing elbows with Mexico City's elite as a tennis pro at a racquet club there, spent five months in jail at the time before being released.

### Maybe its the red beret. Raspberry might be better.

The ringleader of the operation was... you guessed it. A **Venezuelan...**

Drug kingpin **Carlos Ayala Lara**, according to the FBI, was responsible for funneling money from drug traffickers in Venezuela installed to indicted Sinaloa cartel money man Pedro Alatorre Dany's chain of money exchanges at major airports in Mexico, **Cambio de Change de Puebla**.



Reported El Nuevo Herald, "The traffickers are operating in Venezuela and Mexico. Several planes have already been confiscated, others are under

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observation, and there have been numerous arrests of suspects in Mexico and the United States.”

In the court documents, FBI agent Michael Hoenigman cites “a confederation of individuals” whose job was to scout out U.S. aircraft desired by Venezuela-based drug traffickers, and then buy them for use in ferrying cocaine shipments around the globe.

The operation—or at least the publicity surrounding it—seems aimed directly at Venezuela. Authorities from both the United States and Colombia allege Venezuela has become a sanctuary for Colombian drug traffickers, which Venezuela denies.

### Its a war on *some* drugs. Not *theirs*.



But evidence in the case of one of the two planes already caught, the Gulfstream business jet which went down in Mexico in September carrying four tons of cocaine, indicated that the plane never touched down in Venezuela.

Instead, it took off from the Medellin International Airport in Rio Negro, Colombia, currently the strong-hold of Colombian President Alvaro Uribe.

The four seized planes join two CIA-and Dept. of Homeland Security-linked planes already linked to the Sinaloa drug fleet. A **DC-9 (N900SA)** registered to former SkyWay partner Frederic Geffon’s Royal Sons Inc from St. Petersburg FL was busted in Mexico carrying 5.5 tons of cocaine, and a **Gulfstream II business jet (N987SA)** crash-landed carrying 4 tons in September in the Yucatan after failing to land at airports in Cancun and Merida.

Finally, another bank cited in the court filings for moving Sinaloa cartel drug money is HBSB Bank in Mexico City. Curiously, this is also the bank used by Chinese drug trafficker **Zhenli Ye Gon**, whose Mexico City home was discovered to be stuffed with over \$200 million in cash.

Ye Gon claimed he was merely “holding” the money, which literally filled his home in Mexico City, for Mexican politicians, who threatened him with death if he demurred. What U.S. and Mexican officials are hoping to avoid is the question...

### Who can say 'no' to a deal like that?



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