

Interview

“Islamic Terrorism” is A Myth

Ludwig Watzal Interviews Elias Davidsson

Not many people have the guts to question the official narrative of the attacks committed on 9/11 in the United States of America, in London, Madrid, Mumbai or elsewhere, which governments attribute to Islamic terrorists. Elias Davidsson is one of those, who in 2002 became skeptical of the official account on 9/11 and later more generally of the widely held belief that Islamic terrorism exists as a real and distinct threat.

Elias Davidsson was born in Palestine in 1941. His parents left Germany due to the persecution of Jews. He lived in Jerusalem in his childhood and then in Haifa. After short periods of living in France, Germany and the USA during his teens, he settled in Iceland in 1962 where he lived until 2008. For the first 22 years he worked as a computer specialist with IBM and in a hospital. He then spent 3 years in Switzerland, where he earned a piano-teacher degree and spent thereafter 15 years working as a piano teacher, church musician and composer. His political activities, conducted in parallel to his professional life, centered on human rights and international law. He was also a founding member of the Association Iceland-Palestine. Since 2002, Davidsson concentrated his efforts in trying to understand the events 9/11 and similar events. His first book “Hijacking America’s Mind on 9/11”, published in the United States in 2013 reveals facts that had not been published before. His latest book “The Betrayal of India”, critically examining the Mumbai attacks of November 2008, is expected to be published in 2016.

The interview was conducted by Ludwig Watzal, Editor and Journalist in Bonn, Germany.

Ludwig Watzal: At a conference of the German Free thinkers Union (“Deutsche-Freidenker-Verband”) in Frankfurt on 12 September 2015, you termed “Islamic Terrorism” a “myth”. For an ordinary media consumer, this sounds quite provocative. Could you explain why consider it a “myth”?

Elias Davidsson: My designation of “Islamic Terrorism” as a myth represents the conclusion of more than 14 years research into the major terrorist acts since 2001. Because it was a conclusion derived from facts, I prefer to address this question after describing the various cases that led me to this conclusion.

LW: Having studied your publications, I stumbled over a similarity between all these “terror” incidents: There was no wish for a public inquiry. Even the terrible attacks of September 11, 2001 did not prompt the US government to allow a thorough and independent investigation, although such investigations are carried out almost immediately after every national calamity. After 15 minutes, the official account of this mass murder was almost fixed in stone and the “terrorists” were identified. How could this happen?

ED: Well, the “terrorists” were not “identified” after 15 minutes. The names of 19 people designated as “hijackers” were published by the FBI on September 14. Remember: A name does not represent an identity. What stands behind the name can be either fiction or a person whose real name is different. On September 27, 2001, the FBI released photographs of the named 19 individuals on its website. They are not affirmed to be, only “believed” to be the hijackers of the four airliners that crashed on September 11, 2001. At least six of the listed persons reported being alive in various Arab countries, claiming that their names and birth dates had been stolen. To be on the safe side, the FBI added on its website, that “attempts to confirm the true identities of these individuals are still under way.” This is still the official position of the FBI.

It is true that the official account was almost fixed in stone by a Congressional declaration, not though within 15 minutes, but within 24 hours. The Congress had at the time no evidence on which to base the factual assertions included in its declaration. Thus, the official account on 9/11 was not

established on the base of an investigation, but on political expediency. Actually no member of Congress, who participated in the debate on September 12, 2001, asked questions about the events themselves.

John Ashcroft, then US Attorney General (equivalent to German's Minister of Justice) made it clear on the morning of September 12, 2001 that the task of the day for the FBI was NOT to investigate the mass-murder but to prevent another attack, for which there was no evidence. To emphasize this message, it was repeated four weeks later, as reported by the New York Times. FBI employees were actually ordered to stop the investigation of 9/11, should they receive the faintest indication of a terrorist threat. The anthrax attacks at the time provided the necessary pretext to downgrade the investigation of 9/11. Mass media showed no interest in reporting on FBI's investigation: the first and only media account on this investigation appeared in 2004. The FBI never released any report about its criminal investigation of 9/11. The White House fiercely opposed for more than a year the establishment of a congressional investigation of 9/11 and then reluctantly allowed such investigation but ensured that it would remain a whitewash by limiting the investigation's scope and the Commission's pre-rogatives, access to information and budget. To ensure that the Commission would act as the White House desired, President Bush appointed a person it could trust, Dr. Philip Zelikow, as the Executive Director of the Commission.

When a government, on whose soil a mass-murder occurs, refuses to adequately investigate the crime, the logical conclusion is that it has something sinister to hide.

LW: Let's start with your latest book "The Betrayal of India". Why was India betrayed and from whom?

ED: Between 26 and 29 November 2008, attacks were committed in the financial and film centre of India, i.e. in Mumbai, killing 162 persons and injuring more than 300. The attacks took place at several locations, including the main railway station, a hospital, a popular café, two luxurious hotels and a Jewish religious centre. The Indian government immediately accused Pakistan, or more precisely elements from Pakistan, to have orchestrated and carried out these attacks. According to the official account, ten Pakistani terrorists took part in the attacks of which nine were killed and one remained alive and was brought to trial. He allegedly confessed to the crime.

The huge media coverage on these events and the availability of English-language court documents permitted me to thoroughly examine the dossier. A number of books covering these events, also contributed to my investigation. During my work I discovered not only a huge cover-up by the Indian authorities, including by the judiciary, but that the entire official account was a fraud. I cannot enter here into the details of an investigation that took me more than two years work and filled a book of over 500 pages. My conclusion is that the Mumbai mass-murder, like 9/11, had been a state-authorized operation, probably helped by US governmental or private entities.

LW: Why do you question the official version of the Mumbai attacks? And how did the US react?

ED: There is a staggering number of anomalies and contradictions in the official account. The court that presided over the trial of the "sole remaining terrorist" ignored numerous substantive witnesses, accepted at face value testimonies by manifestly unreliable witnesses, failed to establish the circum-stances of death of most of the 162 victims and who killed them and relied on a confession made behind closed doors. The authorities failed to explain how 10 young "terrorists", divided into four locations could for three days keep at bay more than 1,000 elite commandos and police forces. I also considered the question of motive and discovered that the major loser in this operation was Pakistan, while the Indian and the US governments, the Indian military as well as the Indian business community, gained substantially from the attacks.

As the book has not yet been released, there have been no reactions.

LW: Do you think that the international community and, especially India, has been led astray about the real instigators of the Mumbai attacks like it has been with 9/11?

ED: If you mean by “international community” and “India”, the general population, my answer is yes: Mass media deceived the public by publishing disinformation and by omitting to follow-up serious anomalies. However, I have no doubt that the Indian government and part of India’s political class were not deceived. Some of them must have been accomplices to the crime. In my book I do not assign guilt to any specific individual. However, the well-documented cover-up of the crime by certain constituencies vindicates the conclusion that these events, and other similar events imputed to Islamic fanatics, have been orchestrated by state agencies.

LW: Let’s switch to “the” terrorist attack that happened on 9/11. Your book “Hijacking America’s Mind on 9/11”, in which you focused on transcripts of the telephone conversation, which the people on board the airplanes conducted with their loved ones. Because of the strangeness of the recorded voices you questioned that these calls were made by the people on board the airplanes. Could you elaborate on that?

ED: In my book, I did not indicate from where the calls had been made. According to the official account, they were made from hijacked aircraft, partly from cruising altitude. I do not consider this claim plausible. It is more likely that the calls were made from ground level, but have no definite opinion on that particular aspect. What I consider strange in the phone calls is (a) the contents of the calls; (b) the casualness with which callers reported murder from the plane; and (c) that none of the callers explained how the alleged hijackers entered the cockpit. After analyzing all 51 phone calls – an effort manifested by 150 pages of meticulous details – I concluded that no hijackings had taken place. In order to reconcile what some callers said with this conclusion, an explanation was needed. In my book I offer an explanation that I still consider the best hypothesis for these calls.

LW: How do you explain the reticence of US critical and leftist media to tackle 9/11?

ED: This reticence actually applies to most critical and leftist publications in Europe and possibly worldwide. There could be several explanations for it. One is the fear to be labeled “conspiracy theorists” or simply lose one’s job. Another reason may be sought in the Marxist thought that attempts to explain political phenomena as resulting from anonymous social forces. It is a structural explanation. This perspective ironically mirrors the legend of the “Market’s invisible hands”, dear to liberal economists. A prominent protagonist of this structuralist explanation is Noam Chomsky, who consistently refuses to look into the forensic details of 9/11. Such view disregards the existence within the modern state apparatus of an unelected and unacknowledged “deep state”, that is a network of loyalists within the bureaucracy, the army, the police and the judiciary, that the state uses to carry out “dirty” tasks.

LW: The same journalistic indifference can be attributed to the German media. Could you say something about the attitude of German journalists or terrorism experts toward the 9/11 account? How do they react to your questions?

ED: In most cases, journalists and academics that have approached on the theme of 9/11 do not respond to my queries. But even those who do respond, refuse to engage in a scientific examination of the evidence. The emphatic, and sometimes hysterical, refusal to know the facts suggests that many of these individuals privately suspect that the official account is a fraud, but prefer not to acknowledge their suspicion. While the desire not to know about state crimes, was a life-saving tactic during the Nazi regime, today 9/11 denial represents cowardice.

LW: On 27 May 2004, the Final Report of the 9/11 Commission of Inquiry was released. What do you think of the report’s findings?

ED: I tend to agree with Prof. David Ray Griffin’s conclusion that the most distinguishing feature of the 9/11 Commission’s Final Report are its omissions. The report is essentially an attempt to provide a sense of legitimacy to the US government’s official account. It is remarkable that even the chairman and vice-chairman of the Commission subsequently published a book, in which they admitted that the Commission they led had been “set up to fail” and that they were deceived by government agencies. The only practical use of the Final Report I could identify is to provide a document that can be cited as the “official account” on 9/11. I want to add that many of the underlying

working documents of the 9/11 Commission, now stored at the US National Archives, have been released. These provide far more insight into what might have happened on 9/11 than the Final Report.

LW: Not only was this report riddled with contradictions but the whole circumstances surrounding the 9/11 incidents are more than questionable. One would assume that after the publication of this report, the US public, and the media would have gone berserk because of contradictions and outright lies in the report. Even the chairmen distanced themselves from the findings. How do you explain this silence? Could you say something about the executive director of the commission, who wrote the report?

ED: US media have published some moderate criticism of the Final Report, including op-eds by the chairman and vice-chairman of the Commission. So, I cannot say that there had been a “silence” regarding the performance of the Commission. The Executive Director of the Commission, Dr. Philip Zelikow, was appointed by President Bush. His academic specialty is the study of “public myths.” One may muse whether his specialty rendered him particularly useful in contributing to the 9/11 myth. As a White House insider, Dr. Zelikow had serious conflicts of interest being Executive Director of the 9/11 Commission. For that reason, victims’ families opposed his nomination and demanded his resignation, but to no avail. It was later revealed that before the Commission began its work, Dr. Zelikow had already secretly drawn the outline of the Final Report, with headings and subheadings. Thus, the work of the Commission was limited to fill in facts that would fit Zelikow’s outline.

LW. To date, rumors circulate on the internet that the Israeli secret service Mossad “did it”. Could you elaborate on the pros and cons of these rumors? Who were the real organizers or planners of this colossal crime? Was it really masterminded in the caves of Afghanistan?

ED: Let me begin by the last question. To suggest that an operation such as 9/11 could be masterminded in caves in Afghanistan is absurd. This operation could only have been orchestrated by operatives with access to the main scenes and tools of crime and who could ensure the departure of specific aircraft at exact times.

We can also consider this issue from the perspective of the alleged masterminds in the Afghan cave. How could they have planned an operation that could easily be disrupted by the US air force, if the day would be cloudy or if one of the alleged hijackers would get entangled in traffic on the way to the airport? Now, to your question about possible Israeli, or Mossad, complicity in 9/11, it is true that some constituencies believe or promote the view that 9/11 was a Mossad operation. I will divide my answer into two propositions.

First, for Mossad to mastermind or direct 9/11, it would have had to control the U.S. air force and the entire air traffic control in the Eastern United States. In addition to the absurdity of this proposition, it would be politically a national suicide for any Israeli agency to carry out a mass-murder on US soil behind the back of the US government. Those who believe that Israel is capable to do so, often refer to the attack by Israel on the USS Liberty in 1967. As shown by author Peter Hounam, Israel carried that attack as sub-contractor for the U.S. government.

On the other hand, it is conceivable that the Mossad, as well as intelligence agencies from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Germany, had been tasked by the United States to carry out certain preparatory tasks linked to 9/11, without knowing the overall purpose of these tasks. The US would benefit from delegating certain tasks to other states for jurisdictional purposes and in order to dilute its own responsibility.

LW: Let’s move on to the London Transport Bombings of 2005. You wrote also a lengthy paper on these incidents. Did the British authorities behave differently from the American or the Indian ones?

ED: Yes, there have been some differences. First, the four alleged London terrorists were no phantoms, as were the 19 individuals who allegedly carried out the hijackings of 9/11. The four were identifiable persons, whose families were interviewed. Secondly, the British authorities finally allowed

an Inquest to take place, which did look at the forensics of the case and published its hearings, verbatim. In that respect, they showed a higher degree of accountability than their US colleagues. The Indian authorities did not carry an open inquiry, let alone an inquest, and no verbatim reports of court proceedings are available. Yet, with respect to the London Transport Bombings of 2005, my conclusions are that the official account cannot be true. It contains far too many incongruities, anomalies, and omissions. There is, as with 9/11, sufficient evidence to presume the complicity of state agencies in the mass-murder.

LW: After “Gladio” came to the open, any so-called terrorist attack must be questioned. Cui bono? 9/11 served as a pretext for the Bush administration to turn the whole Middle East and parts of Africa topsy-turvy. Besides the devastation of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia and other African states, and at its consequences the refugee crisis. What did the US Empire gain from it?

ED: Initially, I also believed that the major gain for the US from 9/11 was to attack Afghanistan and perhaps Iraq, as part of a global military policy. My current view is that other aims played an equally, and perhaps greater, role in designing such attacks. A central aim in designing these attacks was the establishment of a police state, or as is commonly stated, a “national security state”. The infrastructure of such a state was set up immediately in the United States in the wake of 9/11, known as the PATRIOT Act. Similar, though not as radical, measures were adopted in most European countries without long debate. Since then, these measures have been strengthened and widened. They now carry the imprimatur of the UN Security Council. The main purpose of such measures is evidently not to discover terrorists, but to monitor efforts to organize popular opposition to the existing capitalist and imperialist order, quash such efforts at the outset and find out who can be coerced and who can be bribed. Such measures are instituted to protect the social and political status quo, i.e. to protect the privileges of the ruling class. Another by-product of the terrorist myth aim are financial benefits accruing to the new security industry: I refer to the industry of mass-surveillance soft- and hardware, airport security equipment, security devices and security services. This industry, spawned by the PATRIOT Act and similar measures, already shows a turnover exceeding \$400 billion a year. The profit of that industry depends directly upon maintaining the terrorist scare.

Ultimately, 9/11 and similar operations serve multiple purposes, including foreign policy objectives, as manifested by military efforts and operations carried out around the world under the banner of the “global war on terror.”

LW: In your lecture you referred to “Islamic terrorism” as a myth. Can you explain why you regard it as myth?

ED: Let me first begin by deconstructing the term “Islamic terrorism”. How about “democratic torture”, that is torture carried under the authority of a “democratic” government, such as that of the United States “in order to “protect the democratic system”? Such expressions imply that certain acts, such as terrorism or torture, are carried in the name of, or in order to further, a certain ideology or religion. The problem is, that even when perpetrators explain their motives (which is rare), they can be expected to ennoble their conduct. Islam certainly does not justify terrorism. For that reason the compound expression “Islamic terrorism” represents primarily a term of propaganda.

Designating “Islamic terrorism” a myth is based on the fact that all major attacks imputed to Islamic terrorists can be presumed to have been carried under the authority of governments. Such presumption can only be rebutted by the accusing governments, who bear the legal burden of proving their accusations beyond reasonable doubt. Unless such burden is discharged, the presumption of government malfeasance remains standing.

But even those who still believe in the official account of 9/11 and of the attacks committed in Madrid, London, and Paris in recent years, are unable to demonstrate that terrorism, or its subset – Islamic terrorism – represents a true threat to any Western country. That is, indeed, the reason why none of the numerous reports issued by the European Union about terrorism includes terrorism victim statistics. The publication of such statistics – in which most figures for most European countries

would be zero – would greatly embarrass politicians and news editors who regularly warn the public of the “terrorist threat.” Considering that an ordinary person is about 100 times more likely to be murdered by his family members than by terrorists, it is correct to designate “Islamic terrorism” as a myth, or you wish a political lie.

LW: In your aforementioned lecture you also introduced the distinction between “authentic” and “synthetic” terrorism. Could you explain?

ED: I designate as authentic terrorism acts committed by bona fide groups who fight for liberating their country from foreign occupation and other legitimate causes. Such acts are characterized by three important features: (1) The acts are committed by members of bona fide organizations, i.e. organizations with known and accessible leaders, known platforms, known objectives and popular support; (2) The acts are accompanied by explicit or implicit demands, based on the group’s objective; (3) The perpetrators are typically hailed or celebrated as martyrs or as heroes by their communities. When acts of terrorism lack these features, the presumption arises that they may have been carried as a covert operation by state agencies. I designate such operations as “synthetic” terrorism, a term coined by author Webster Tarpley. Some people call also such acts “false-flag operations.” In order to distinguish between authentic and synthetic terrorism, I developed a set of eight criteria which include the above three. These can help to tentatively classify a particular event into one of the two types of terrorism.

LW: Finally, which other threats do you see for Western democracies besides the threat by the “Islamic State” (IS)? Or are the Western secret services a much bigger threat for the freedom of liberal societies?

ED: I do not consider the Islamic State as a threat for Western democracies. The Islamic State is primarily a threat to the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa, that is to Muslims. Remember that the overwhelming majority of terror victims are themselves Muslims in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Algeria and Morocco. The threat for the freedom of liberal societies emanates from the structural need of the ruling class to institute a police state, that is to empower the secret services and the police. Without such means, the ruling class may not be able to contain a public uprising against a system that each year increases the gap between the rich and the poor.

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