

Release the 28 Pages, Expose Saudi 9/11 Role

The following interview was conducted with former Sen. Bob Graham in Naples, Fla., by LaRouchePAC's Matthew Ogden, on Nov. 11. Senator Graham served as co-chair of the Congressional Joint Inquiry into 9/11 (see above). The subject of the interview is the urgency of declassifying the redacted 28 pages of the Congressional Joint Inquiry's report to expose the role of Saudi Arabia in financing not only the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, but also in continuing to finance ISIS and related terrorist organizations today.

*Investigative reporter Dan Christensen of the *Broward Bulldog*, as well as Miami-based First Amendment attorney Tom Julin participated in the interview. Christensen and Julin have been instrumental in combating persistent stonewalling by the FBI in pursuing crucial leads pertaining to connections between a prominent Saudi family, and a cell of 9/11 hijackers in Sarasota, Fla., prior to the 9/11 attacks.*

Matthew Ogden: Senator Graham, you've stated that releasing the 28 pages is not only a matter of setting the historical record straight and bringing justice for the families and the victims of 9/11, but also has direct bearing on the foreign policy of the United States today, as well as preventing any future 9/11s from occurring, God forbid. For example, you said in your recent interview with the CBC in Canada, that perhaps we never would have reached the point at which we're now facing the threat of ISIS, had the Saudis been exposed for their role in the original attacks of 9/11.

In light of the fact that it's now been announced that there will indeed be a vote on a new AUMF [Authorization for Use of Military Force] concerning our efforts to combat ISIS, can you speak to the urgency of, not only every member of Congress who will be casting a vote on this matter reading the 28 pages immediately, but also, the necessity that they be declassified and released to the public to inform the public debate among the American people generally?

Senator Graham: The chain that I see, is that what



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Sen. Bob Graham, interviewed by LaRouchePAC, stated, "I believe the most significant initial step that can be taken to dampen the ability of Saudi Arabia to feed the fire of extremism, is to let the American people and the world know what the Saudis have done, and are doing."

has happened over the past 15 or 20 years, is a series of organizations starting with al-Qaeda, now ISIS, which have been the product of an extreme form of Islam, supported by the enormous wealth of Saudi Arabia. If we are going to deal with this, and more than just the consequences, we've got to go to the root cause. And I believe the most significant initial step that can be taken to dampen the ability of Saudi Arabia to feed the fire of extremism, is to let the American people and the world know what the Saudis have done, and are doing.

I believe that that would result in substantial global condemnation of the Saudis, and is the best hope that they would stop their feeding of extremism. We can crush ISIS—that's within the military capability of the United States and the Europeans and other allies—but, it will be a Pyrrhic victory if shortly thereafter another group emerges, because it has been fed in the same trough that brought us al-Qaeda and ISIS.

Why the Obama Administration Cover-Up?

Ogden: You've said previously that although the close relationship between the Bush family and the House of Saud maybe sheds some clarity on why the Bush Administration decided to classify the 28 pages, the question remains as to what the Obama Administration stands to gain by continuing the Bush Administration's coverup. Can you share with us any thoughts you



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Dan Christensen, editor of the *Broward Bulldog* (speaking), and Tom Julin, an attorney who specializes in the First Amendment (right), joined Senator Graham for an interview with *LaRouchePAC*. They are shown here addressing a Veterans Day event in Florida.

might have as to what might be the reasons for Obama to perpetuate this coverup, even though he's repeatedly pledged to do otherwise?

Graham: To me, that's an enigma. There was a history with the Bush family and the kingdom of Saudi Arabia that gave you at least some basis of reasonable speculation as to what might be the motivation for treating Saudi Arabia with such soft hands. Why the Obama Administration continues that policy is a mystery.

One explanation may be that we have decided that it's better to deal with the enemy that you know than the enemy that you don't know, and that we don't want to disrupt Saudi Arabia and further deepen the entanglements in the Middle East. Personally, I think, if that's the reason, it's a shallow reason, because what it's really doing is, it's allowing for these entanglements in the Middle East to not be just the result of a single leader like Osama bin Laden, or an organization like ISIS, but rather to become a broader and broader and more permeating influence of extremist Islam throughout the society in the Middle East.

Ogden: We know that there were numerous members of the Senate in 2003 who spoke out for the declassification of the 28-page chapter of the Joint Inquiry when it was originally published. Many of those members are still serving today—Senator Shelby, for example, as well as Nancy Pelosi in the House. Seeing as these members of the Senate were so vocal then, why

do you think there has been so much reluctance to move on getting a companion resolution to H. Res. 428 introduced into the U.S. Senate today?

Graham: Well, members of Congress have a lot of things on their plate at any given time. One possibility is that time has moved on, and other issues are now concentrating their attention. That's one of the problems with the delay in the release of this information. There is the tendency that, as an event—even an event as searing as 9/11—recedes in people's memories, and is replaced by newer events, it gets forgotten.

'Keys to the Kingdom'

Ogden: Let me ask a question that refers to the fiction book that you published, *Keys to the Kingdom*.¹ In that book, your character Carol Watson is pursuing an investigation of a weapons-for-oil deal between Saudi Arabia and the British company BAE. I believe this was called Al-Yamamah, or the Dove. And it is indicated by Prince Bandar, former head of Saudi intelligence and Ambassador to the United States, that in the past, money generated from this deal was used to create an off-the-books slush fund to provide financing for the creation of the mujahideen in Afghanistan and other covert operations. When this Al-Yamamah deal was brought under investigation in Great Britain, the probe was shut down under the Official Secrets Act by then-Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Graham: That is, the investigation that would have disclosed the relationships between BAE and the Saudis was shut down, not the continued relationship.

Ogden: Exactly, and the relationship continues today, for all we know. My question is, why do you think that Tony Blair and others inside Great Britain would have gone to such lengths to prevent this crucial lead from being fully investigated?

Graham: Well, in addition to some of the same reasons that I suggested might be why Obama has been so

1. For a review of Graham's book, see *Fact or Fiction? What Senator Graham Really Knows*, *EIR*, Jan.18, 2013.

soft on the Saudis, they might apply to the U.K. as well. Plus the fact this was a very large defense contract for BAE—it was in the tens of billions of dollars for the sale of British fighter jets to the Saudi Air Force—and Blair might have felt that he didn't want to disrupt the economic benefits and the jobs that were coming from the BAE-Saudi relationship. But again, we're dealing with speculation. If we had access to the full information, we would be dealing with truth.

The Sarasota Connection

Ogden: Let me ask one question to Mr. Christensen. Your publication, the *Broward Bulldog*, has done a lot of breakthrough work with your FOIA suit for the FBI documents with regards to the Sarasota families and connection. And I understand that you're also now pursuing a similar thing with the 28 pages as a parallel avenue with the Congressional bill [HR 428]. Is there anything you can say about your efforts, and the outcome of both past and future efforts that the *Broward Bulldog* is undertaking?

Dan Christensen: Well, there are no outcomes yet. Everything is pending. There are two: there's the Freedom of Information Act lawsuit, and then there's a procedure called Mandatory Declassification Review. Our attorney, Tom Julin, discovered this process; I had never heard of it before. I think Tom would be best to explain how this procedure has gone on for over a year now, I believe.

Basically, the Justice Department and FBI blew us off completely, and now it's before an interagency panel that will ultimately make the decision. But Tom has told me, after he's done considerable research about this, that this is not a rubber stamp panel; is that correct?

Thomas Julin: That's right.

Christensen: What's their history, and is there a decent chance they may suggest or recommend to the President to declassify?

Julin: They're an advisory body to the President; and this is after you've gone through all of the administrative attempts to have the pages declassified. The FBI would not do it, the Justice Department would not do it, and then it goes to this interagency panel that has representatives from [the Department of] Justice, the State Department, from the intelligence community, from the National Archives.

They meet on a bi-monthly basis to review requests for declassification, which is part of the Executive Order that establishes the declassification process. And

they have a pretty good record of giving independent analysis as to whether classification is still required. They then make a recommendation to the President; they can say yes or no. It's not reviewable by the courts, just an advisory body to the President. And we're expecting a decision by sometime this Winter—that's what the staff has told us is the likely scenario. But there are no rules, there's no timetable. They can do whatever they'd like to do.

The Next Step

Ogden: One final question for Senator Graham: Where do we go from here? What's the next thing that the American public has to do?

Graham: I think we need to continue to aggressively pursue all of the options that have as their end result the release of information so that the American people know the truth. In addition to the Congressional legislation to declassify the 28 pages, and the administrative review that Tom Julin and Dan Christensen have just described, there also is a third channel, where the President has asked the Director of National Intelligence, Mr. [James] Clapper, to do a review of the 28 pages and make a recommendation as to whether they should be declassified. So, all three of those are possible means to achieve the objective of the release of the 28 pages.

I'd like to underscore that the 28 pages, while they are important and will be very illuminating, are only a part of the information that, to date, is being withheld. There's the experience in Sarasota, where there are very strong indications of a tie between three of the hijackers and a prominent Saudi family, but we don't know the details, because thus far, the FBI has stonewalled the release of that information. There were major blocks of time in which several of the future hijackers lived in different places in the United States, such as Falls Church, Va.; Patterson, N.J.; Palm Beach County, Fla., and we know very little about what happened in those places. Were there people there, like the ones that we suspect were in Sarasota, and know were in San Diego, who were supporting the terrorists in those areas?

So, those are all parts of what we don't know. I think when we do know the full facts—unless it's delayed so long that the only people who care about this are historians—it will cause a major reassessment of our relationship with Saudi Arabia, and a strategy for how to deal with this wave after wave of extremist organizations.