

9/11 Documentary Delayed Due to CIA Threats

Austin, Texas -- September 13, 2011 – On Thursday, the CIA threatened the journalists behind *Who Is Rich Blee?* with possible federal prosecution if their investigative podcast reveals the names of two CIA analysts at the center of a pattern of obstruction and mishandling of intelligence that many feel would have stopped the 9/11 attacks.

Like FBI agent Ali Soufan and Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer before them, the podcast team, including John Duffy and Ray Nowosielski, are being subjected to intimidation and censorship by government officials over blowing the whistle on the true story surrounding two alleged 9/11 hijackers, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar.

The podcast originally scheduled for September 11th presents a narrative of how three CIA analysts working under Richard Blee, the long unknown former head of CIA's Bin Laden Station, deliberately misled colleagues and withheld key intelligence from the FBI and the White House regarding the presence of two Al-Qaeda operatives in the U.S.

Four government investigations into CIA handling of pre-911 intelligence included personal details of the two CIA analysts and their actions. Nowosielski and Duffy deduced the identities of the two as yet unnamed CIA employees from internet research based on details provided from these and other open sources. When the producers used their full names in interviews, interviewees offered no correction. The CIA response provided the final confirmation.

In project updates posted at SecrecyKills.com the producers announced the delay of the podcast and posted background of a complicated case that involves dozens of violations of protocol, intimidation, and incidents of obstruction by the CIA, with the two yet named CIA analysts at the center of many of them.

Author and expert on the subject, Kevin Fenton, documents 35 such incidents between January 2000 and September 11th in his book, *Disconnecting the Dots: How 9/11 Was Allowed to Happen*.

Pulitzer-prize winner Lawrence Wright, interviewed for the podcast, told producers the actions of one of the unnamed CIA analysts still employed at CIA amounts to obstruction of justice in the FBI's criminal investigation of the deaths of 17 seaman aboard the *USS Cole*.

The producers are not the first subject to government censorship over this case. Last month The New York Times reported on CIA efforts to censor an autobiography by Ali Soufan, a front-line FBI counter-terrorism special agent. Prior to 9/11, Soufan was interested in Mihdhar and Hazmi because of links to the bombing of the *USS Cole* in Yemen. The CIA censored references to a passport photo of Mihdhar the CIA had withheld from Soufan, despite three written requests.

Scott Shane of *The New York Times* reports today that, "Mr. Soufan accuses C.I.A. officials of deliberately withholding crucial documents and photographs of Qaeda operatives from the F.B.I. before Sept. 11, 2001, despite three written requests, and then later lying about it to the 9/11 Commission."

Lt. Colonel Anthony Shaffer, interviewed for the podcast, was himself intimidated, demoted and smeared by the Pentagon after he came forward to the 9/11 Commission with details of how, on three occasions, unnamed DoD officials prevented his Able Danger operation from meeting with the FBI prior the attacks.

In 2000 the Able Danger data-mining program placed Mohammed Atta in a Brooklyn terrorist cell but had also placed Hazmi and Mihdhar in a San Diego cell, the epicenter of intrigue around Alec Station's Rich Blee, Tom Wilshire and the two as yet unnamed subordinates who themselves repeatedly withheld intelligence from the FBI. Though Shaffer was interviewed by 9/11 Commission's Director Philip Zelikow and staffer Dieter Snell, the Commission left any mention of Able Danger from its final report.

In the planned podcast, 9/11 Commission Chair Tom Kean is asked about a scant footnote to Chapter 6 of the 9/11 Report referring to an intelligence cable, seen by 50 at the CIA, but prevented from reaching the FBI. For Kean the incident was not a case of bungling or intel 'stovepiping': "Oh, it wasn't careless oversight. It was purposeful. No question about that in mind. It was purposeful."

Whereas Kean explains it as a penchant for secrecy, Richard Clarke, the former head of counter-terrorism at the Bush White House, goes farther suggesting malfeasance and the possibility of illegal CIA-led domestic spying activity. Comments by Clarke released in a video in August led to a formal statement from George Tenet, Cofer Black and Richard Blee, and a response from the producers.

"This was perhaps the closest U.S. intelligence got to foiling the 9/11 plot," explains Nowosielski, "but instead of stopping the attack, the CIA stopped intel on two high-value targets from getting to the right people, repeatedly. And still the CIA protects the individuals responsible by intimidating those who simply want to know the truth behind a shocking and possibly criminal pattern of obstruction"

In an email Thursday the CIA warned Nowosielski he could be subject to prosecution under the Intelligence Identities Protection Act, a law intended to apply to government employees who violate their security clearance and never used to convict journalists.

The producer's online response: "The Society of Professional Journalists' code of ethics states that 'journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know' and should 'be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.' The day that journalists' exposés of wrongdoing within government agencies require the approval of those government agencies before release, that is the day that transparency and accountability are lost."

John Duffy and Ray Nowosielski, both graduates of Chicago's Columbia College Film School, produced the critically acclaimed 2006 documentary "9/11: Press for Truth."

Contact:

Ray Nowosielski
317-698-464
ray@bandedartists.com

###