

The mind-numbered, volition-devoid MASSES

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9/11 Mind Swell

As we approach the eighth anniversary of 9/11 consider this paradox. In the post 9-11 years the scientific evidence for disbelieving the official government story has mounted incredibly. And the number of highly respected and credentialed professionals challenging the official story has similarly expanded. Yet, to the considerable disappointment of the international 9/11 truth movement, the objective fact is that there are no widespread, loud demands for a new government-backed 9/11 investigation. The 9/11 truth movement is the epitome of a marginalized movement, one that never goes away despite not achieving truly meaningful results, which in this case means replacing official lies with official truth. What has gone wrong?

Akin to the definition of insanity, the hallmark of entrenched but marginalized movements is that they continue to pursue exactly the same strategy and tactics that have failed to produce solid results. They indulge themselves with self-delusion, defensive thinking and acting as if the world at large must surely and finally wake up, see the light and embrace the Truth. Years and, potentially, decades go by, but this quixotic status quo remains embedded, as if set in intellectual concrete. There is no brain tumor to blame. Nor any mass hypnosis of true believers to prove. There is just monumental disinterest among the dominant culture, political establishment and the broad public that is far more engaged with other issues, problems and movements.

The 9/11 truth movement, at best, gets meager public attention when it is derided and insulted, used as an example of persistent conspiratorial insanity.

Make no mistake; I concluded a few years back, after using my professional engineering and materials science background to study the evidence, that the official government story is a lie. As a former full professor of engineering, I firmly believe that elements of the US government were involved with contributing to (not just allowing) the 9/11 tragedy, but that does not necessarily eliminate the role of those terrorists publicly blamed for the events. Science, logic, evidence and critical thinking told me this.

Who should we blame for the failure of the 9/11 truth movement to fix the historical record and, better yet, identify those in the government who turned 9/11 into an excuse for going to war, getting them indicted, prosecuted, and punished for their murderous acts?

It is too easy to blame the mainstream media and political establishment for refusing to demand and pursue a truly comprehensive and credible independent scientific and engineering investigation. President Obama with his tenacious belief in looking forward, not backward, exemplifies a national mindset to avoid the painful search for truth and justice that could produce still more public disillusionment with government and feed the belief that American democracy is weak at best, and delusional at worst.

Marginalized movements always face competition for public attention. There are always countless national issues and problems that feed new movements and distract the public. There have been

many since 9/11, not the least of which was the last presidential campaign and then the painful economic recession, and now the right wing attacks on health care reform. The 9/11 truth movement illustrates a total failure to compete successfully with other events and movements.

This can be explained in several ways. The 9/11 movement has not been able to articulate enough benefits to the public from disbelieving the official government story and pursuing a new investigation. What might ordinary Americans gain? Would proof-positive of government involvement make them feel better, more secure, and more patriotic? Apparently not. In fact, just the opposite. By its very nature, the 9/11 issue threatens many things by discovering the truth: still less confidence in the US political system, government and public officials. Still more reason to ponder the incredible loss of life and national wealth in pursuing the Iraq war. In other words, revealing 9/11 truth offers the specter of a huge national bummer. Conversely, it would show the world that American democracy has integrity.

The second explanation for failure is that the truth movement itself is greatly to blame. It has been filled with nerdish, ego-centric and self-serving activists (often most interested in pushing their pet theory) unable to pursue strategies designed to face and overcome ugly, challenging realities. The truth movement became a cottage industry providing income and meaning for many individuals and groups feeding the committed with endless websites, public talks, videos, books and paraphernalia. They habitually preach to the choir. Applause substitutes for solid results. In particular, it embraces the simplistic (and obviously ineffective) belief that by revealing technical, scientific and engineering facts and evidence the public and political establishment would be compelled to see the light. Darkness has prevailed.

Proof of this are the views expressed days ago on the truth movement by Ben Cohen on the Huffington Post: "I have done some research on the topic, but stopped fairly quickly into when it dawned on me that: 1. Any alternative to the official account of what happened is so absurd it simply cannot be true. 2. No reputable scientific journal has ever taken any of the 'science' of the conspiracy seriously. 3. The evidence supporting the official story is overwhelming, whereas the 9/11 Truthers have yet to produce a shred of concrete evidence that members of the U.S. government planned the attacks in New York and Washington ." Similarly, in the London Times James Bone recently said a "gruesome assortment of conspiracy theorists insists that the attacks on the US of September 11, 2001 were an inside job. It is easy to mock this deluded gang of ageing hippies, anarchists and anti-Semites." Truthers continue to face a very steep uphill battle.

A common lie about the truth movement is that there have been no credible scientific articles in peer reviewed journals supporting it. But those opposing the truth movement will and do find ways to attack whatever scientific evidence is produced and published. It takes more than good science and facts for the movement to succeed.

Besides the movement having too many genuine crackpots (possibly trying to subvert it), a larger problem is what has been missing from it: effective political strategies. Besides pushing scientific results and more credible supporters, it did nothing successful to make a new 9/11 investigation a visible issue in the last presidential campaign. It did nothing effective to put pressure on a new, Democrat controlled congress to consider legislation providing the authorization and funding for a new, credible investigation. It seems that people who want to blame the government are often unable to also see the political path forward that requires the government to fund a new investigation.

To its credit, Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth does have a petition aimed at Congress, demanding a new investigation, but has fewer than 5,000 signers. The petition effort in New York

City to get a new investigation is commendable, with just under 75,000 signers, but national action is needed. Pragmatically, both efforts are unimpressive compared to other campaigns seeking political action. To get both media attention and political support the movement needs a hundred times more documented supporters, willing to do a lot more than sign a petition.

The tenth anniversary of 9/11 will come fast. The opportunity is making 9/11 an issue in the 2012 presidential campaign. The least delusional and defensive in the truth movement should think deeply and seriously on what needs to change to accomplish the prime goal: having an official investigation that compels most people and history to accept the truth, no matter how painful it is, including the possibility that it finds no compelling evidence for government involvement.

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