

Fact or Fiction? What Senator Graham Really Knows

by Jeffrey Steinberg and EIR Staff

Keys to the Kingdom

by Senator Bob Graham

New York: Vanguard Press, 2011

Why has the present and prior Administration engaged in such a comprehensive, sustained, and, to date, largely successful cover-up?

*Sen. Bob Graham,
"Keys to the Kingdom," June 7, 2011*

...[We] will crush al-Qaeda. That has to be our biggest national security priority.

*Sen. Barack Obama,
Presidential campaign debate, Oct. 7, 2008*

On Sept. 11, 2012, just hours before the assassination of Amb. Christopher Stevens in Benghazi, Libya, at the hands of an al-Qaeda grouping that had been supported by the United States, Britain, France, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, former Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.) published an op-ed in the Huffington Post that began:

"The passage of time since September 11, 2001, has not diminished the distrust many of us feel surrounding the official story of how 9/11 happened and, more specifically, who financed and supported it. After eleven years, the time has come for the families of the victims, the survivors and all Americans to get the whole story behind 9/11.

"Yet the story of who may have facilitated the 19 hijackers and the in-

frastructure that supported the attacks—a crucial element of the narrative—has not been told. The pieces we do have underscore how much more remains unknown."

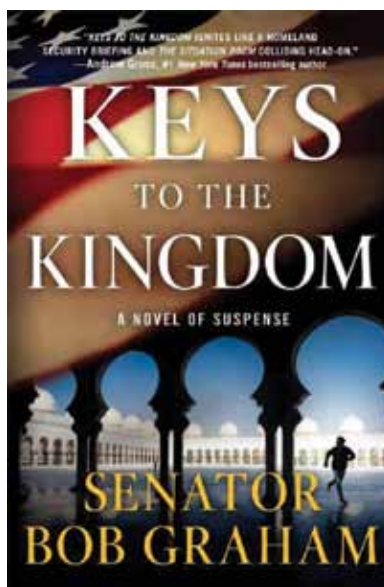
Graham also demanded that President Obama declassify a 28-page chapter dealing extensively with the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in logistical, practical, financial, and political support for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda.

It was that editorial, combined with the killing of Ambassador Stevens; the cover-up by the Obama Administration of the al-Qaeda role in the Benghazi killings; the unfolding of the Syria war, in which the U.S./British/Saudi imperial nexus is *again* building up al-Qaeda with weapons and fighters; and a massive political cover-up, that led us to look again at Graham's work on the Senate Intelligence Committee which produced an 800-page investigative report full of leads that were never followed up.

We looked at Graham's Sept. 11, 2008 non-fiction book, *Intelligence Matters: The CIA, the FBI, Saudi Arabia, and the Failure of America's War on Terror*, a valuable, but less-than-groundbreaking analysis of how the U.S. government mishandled the follow-up investigation of the original 9/11.

Stranger than Fiction?

Then we stumbled upon *Keys to the Kingdom*, a thriller, in which Sen. John Billington, the fictional former head of the Senate Intelligence Committee that looked into 9/11, probes an "off-the-reservation" inquiry of the leads that the two U.S. administra-



tions would not allow. But the investigation takes place at the cost of Billington's life. A few months after publishing an op-ed about the Saudi role in 9/11, and the Kingdom's secret development of a nuclear weapons arsenal, Billington is assassinated.

Despite his death, the investigation continues, based on a detailed memorandum that he had written to his protégé on the committee, a former special operations soldier and State Department intelligence officer. The investigation is littered with dead bodies, killed by Saudi agents and their network of bankers and black-money financiers.

Graham's novel is not just a rehash of the Senate Intelligence Committee investigation of the 9/11/2001 attack—it is a far-reaching *roman à clef* that brings to-

gether the known information about “the Golden Chain”—the Saudi network of wealthy princes and others who finance al-Qaeda—and much-later revealed secrets, especially the scandal of British Aerospace's (now called BAE Systems) bribery of the Saudi government and its princes, particularly the Saudi Ambassador to Washington. The story also places former British Prime Minister Tony Blair in a central role in the cover-up of the financing of al-Qaeda. While it is far from a complete story, Graham's investigative novel is the best outline of how to examine 9/11/2001, aside from the ongoing investigative work being published by *EIR*.

Keys to the Kingdom is a warning and an appeal to U.S. governing institutions to finish the inquiry into

The Remaining Secrets of 9/11

At the conclusion of our investigation in December of 2002 and the issuance of the final non-classified report in July of 2003, three unanswered questions remained:

What was the nature and extent of participation by the Kingdom and its entities of Saudi Arabia in the preparation for and execution of 9/11?

What are the will and capabilities of the Kingdom to assist in future attacks within the United States?

Why has the present and prior Administration engaged in such a comprehensive, sustained, and, to date, largely successful cover-up to keep the answer to those questions from the American people?

These questions represent the keys to the Kingdom. If we can answer them, we will have gone a long way toward furthering American security and justice.

This we know. . . .

- Before the First Persian Gulf War, OBL [Osama bin Laden] had been on amicable terms with the Kingdom, and his family had benefited from the largesses of the royal family. After Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, he offered his Afghanistan war-hardened mujahideen to defend the Kingdom and thus avoid the necessity of foreign troops on sacred ground. He

was rebuffed. This resulted in bin Laden's departure from the Kingdom and his subsequent threats to topple the royal family.

- The war, and particularly the stationing of large numbers of U.S. and other foreign troops in Saudi Arabia, was seen by many Islamic clerics and followers as a sacrilege.

These concerns caused the Kingdom to pursue two post-Persian Gulf War complementary strategies:

The Kingdom increased its support of madrasas, extremist religious schools, and other Wahhabist institutions. It continued to condone private support to extremists, including through a shadowy organization called the Golden Chain—composed of some of Saudi Arabia's wealthiest private citizens who since the 1980s have dedicated their wealth to advancing extremist causes and practices. . . .

This covert financial support, which included funds diverted from charitable accounts maintained by the wife of the Saudi ambassador to the U.S., Mahmood al Rasheed, points most directly to an Administration cover-up. The final report of the Joint Inquiry came to over eight hundred pages. When the declassification process was completed, one chapter of twenty-eight pages was totally censored. This was the chapter relating to the Saudi role in financing the terrorists. . . .

Excerpted from “Keys to the Kingdom,” 2011.



Embassy of Saudi Arabia

Senator Graham has demanded that President Obama declassify a 28-page chapter dealing the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and support for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Here, Obama gets warm and fuzzy with Saudi King Abdullah, June 2009.

the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, and to expose how many threads from that attack lead from al-Qaeda to the highest echelons of governments of the British

Empire, the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. It is also a warning that unless this story is fully uncovered, there will be more attacks.

Bin Laden ‘Irrelevant’

Although Osama bin Laden is still alive and well in *Keys to the Kingdom*, he is not an important figure in the overall story that Graham communicates. Although bin Laden was dead before the publication of the book that was, as Graham says, “five years in the making,” it is, nonetheless, a “passionate” appeal to finish the job of the investigation. What’s clear is that bin Laden’s death is *irrelevant* to the operations of al-Qaeda, as long as the Saudi secrets remain intact and protected.

It is ironic that Graham’s fiction—set in the year of the 2012 election—has the fictional incumbent President refusing to pursue hard intelligence warnings

BAE Financing Of al-Qaeda

I just got handed a case from Justice. . . . There seems to have been a kickback deal going between the Saudis and a British defense contractor. . . .

The big deal leaked out five or so years ago. The British Serious Fraud office was mucking around with some BAE files and realized the company had been making under-the-table payments to several of the princes in the Saudi royal family. It started with toys—a gold Rolls-Royce here, a Mayfair apartment there. Then it turned to cash. . . . [T]he Serious Fraud folks had verified that BAE Systems had forked over about two billion pounds when they had the rug pulled out from under them.

Tony stiffened, “Two billion pounds? Hell, that’s

better than a five percent payoff. And you say they might have found even more if what?”

If Prime Minister Tony Blair hadn’t stepped in and shut them down. He slammed the door on any more snooping around, saying it was a threat to one of Britain’s most important strategic relationships.

Tony leaned back on the bench and recalled a late-night session during the 9/11 inquiry. In the Capitol’s fourth-floor secure room, committee members were questioning an FBI agent. Where did the money come from to support the hijackers? Billington pressed for more details on bank records. The besieged agent spluttered for a while, then finally said that the FBI was restricted in its access to the accounts. The senator blew up, stormed out of the room, got the attorney general on the phone and demanded he get somebody competent on the case. The AG wasn’t happy. . . .

Excerpted from “Keys to the Kingdom,” 2011.

about another Saudi-backed terrorist attack about to take place. The fictional President does not want to jeopardize his election chances by suggesting that he has not been successful in the war against terror, or that he has covered up the misdeeds of a major ally.

Ironic because that *is* what happened in the real election year of 2012 leading up to the Sept. 11, 2012 attack in Benghazi, and the coverup that followed. Today, another Congressional investigation is being stymied, and the roles of Britain, the United States, and Saudi Arabia are again covered up, this time, in the investigation of al-Qaeda in Libya.

Graham calls his novel “informed speculation,” but sources close to the official investigations by the U.S. government into 9/11/2001 say that what Graham calls “informed speculation” is what he knows.

One section of the book, concerning a secret Saudi nuclear arsenal that the U.S. helped to create in order to prevent the Saudis from developing their own nuclear weapons in league with Pakistan, seemed to this reviewer, far-fetched. But well-placed U.S. sources assured us that the author knows of what he speaks.



White House/Eric Draper

Saudi Prince Bandar, former Ambassador to the U.S., shown here with President George W. Bush in 2002, was the key figure the “Golden Chain” network that financed al-Qaeda.

One thing is certain, Graham is right that without a full investigation of the roles of BAE and Tony Blair; without complete transparency of the finances and arms capabilities of the Saudis; and a full opening of the classified U.S. files on al-Qaeda that even Members of Congress are not allowed to see, America is not safe.

Re-Open the 9/11 Investigation Now

What should the United States do now?

The investigation of the extent of foreign support for the 9/11 hijackers ought to be reopened by the president, who has the authority to order the FBI to pursue the existing leads seriously, or he should designate another appropriate entity to do so. . . .

The president should also order the declassification of the relevant documents. They have been hidden from the American people too long. That declassification must include the 28-page chapter that

has been censored from the report of the Congressional Joint Inquiry, as well as the reports cited in the notes of the 9/11 Commission’s Final Report concerning al-Qaeda’s financial and logistical support network.

The Congress should amend the sovereign immunity statute. Those who framed it did not intend that it should shield terrorists or their collaborators from claims against them for the murder of Americans on U.S. soil. . . .

What the Joint Inquiry learned—and has emerged since—shows where the proverbial finger of suspicion points. It points to Saudi Arabia, and we need to know the full truth.

From an op-ed by Sen. Bob Graham, Sept. 11, 2012.