



Former Senator Says 9/11 Commission Report Implicates Saudis

During a CBS News *60 Minutes* program aired on April 10 called “28 Pages,” correspondent Bob Kroft asked former Democrat Florida Governor and Senator Bob Graham (shown) about whether he thinks that 28 pages of the famous 9/11 Commission Report should be declassified. Many have speculated that the censored portions of the report might implicate high Saudi officials in supporting the 9/11 terrorist attacks.



The White House is reviewing whether to declassify the 28 pages of the report, but it is unlikely that such a decision will be made before President Obama visits Saudi Arabia for a summit of Gulf leaders on April 20. Graham said that the White House had informed him that the decision will be made in 60 to 90 days.

At the beginning of the *60 Minutes* program, it was noted that the 28 pages of the 9/11 Commission report that are still classified “have to do with 9/11 and the possible existence of a Saudi support network for the hijackers while they were in the U.S.”

For the past 13 years, stated the narrator, the classified pages “have been locked away in a secret vault” and “only a small group of people have ever seen them.”

One of those people, Bob Graham, was invited to appear on the program. He said:

I think it is implausible to believe that 19 people, most of whom didn’t speak English, most of whom had never been in the United States before, many of whom didn’t have a high school education — could’ve carried out such a complicated task without some support from within the United States.

After Kroft asked Graham if he believes that the 28 pages are crucial to understanding how the 9/11 hijackers managed to carry out their attacks, Graham replied: “I think they are a key part.”

60 Minutes noted that Graham has been trying to get those 28 censored pages released since they were classified back in 2003, during a time when he was chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and co-chair of the bipartisan joint congressional inquiry into intelligence failures surrounding the attacks.

CBS News reported that the Joint Inquiry reviewed a half a million documents, interviewed hundreds of witnesses and produced an 838-page report, the final chapter of which was blanked out — redacted by the Bush administration for reasons of “national security.”

Graham told Kroft: “I remain deeply disturbed by the amount of material that has been censored from this report.”

CBS reported that while Graham will not discuss the classified information in the 28 pages, he could say that they outline a network of people that he believes supported the hijackers while they were in the



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United States. The interview continued:

Kroft: You believe that support came from Saudi Arabia?

Graham: Substantially.

Kroft: And when we say, "The Saudis," you mean the government, the ...

Graham: I mean ...

Kroft: ... rich people in the country? Charities ...

Graham: All of the above.

Kroft also spoke with former Representative Porter Goss (R-Fla.), who was Graham's Republican co-chairman on the House side of the Joint Inquiry, and who later became director of the CIA.

CBS News reported that Goss also felt strongly that an uncensored version of the 28 pages should be included in the final 9/11 Commission Report. The two committee chairmen approached then-FBI director Robert Mueller in a face-to-face meeting at the time to press their case, but were unsuccessful.

Kroft asked Graham if he and Goss had asked the FBI director why the report was classified and Graham answered, "We did, in a general way, and the answer was because, 'We said so and it needs to be classified.'"

Another guest on the program, Tim Roemer, a former Democratic congressman from Indiana and U.S. ambassador to India, had read the 28 pages multiple times — first as a member of the Joint Inquiry and later as a member of the blue-ribbon 9/11 Commission which continued the investigation where Congress left off.

When Kroft asked Roemer if there was information in the 28 pages that would surprise people if they were declassified, the former congressman said:

Sure, you're gonna be surprised by it. And, you're going to be surprised by some of the answers that are sitting there today in the 9/11 Commission Report about what happened in San Diego, and what happened in Los Angeles. And what was the Saudi involvement.

L.A., San Diego, that's really you know, the hornet's nest. That's really the one that I continue to think about almost on a daily basis.

Roemer's focus on Southern California relates to the presence there of two of the 9/11 hijackers, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar, who arrived in Los Angeles in January of 2000, after attending an al-Qaeda summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

CBS News reported that witnesses reported seeing the two future hijackers, who were Saudi nationals, at the King Fahd mosque in Culver City, California, in the company of Fahad al-Thumairy, a diplomat at the Saudi consulate. Following 9/11, investigators into the attacks suspected Thumairy of having ties to terrorist activity and in 2003, he was denied reentry to the United States.

During the interview, Roemer said that Thumairy was "a very interesting person in the whole 9/11 episode of who might've helped whom — in Los Angeles and San Diego, with two terrorists who didn't know their way around."

Kroft and Graham also discussed another Saudi national, Omar al-Bayoumi, who received a paycheck from the Saudi government while being listed as an employee at Saudi aviation contractor outside Los Angeles, although he apparently never showed up at that job.



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When Kroft asked Graham if he believed that Bayoumi was a Saudi agent, and if so, why, the former senator said, “Well, for one thing, he’d been listed even before 9/11 in FBI files as being a Saudi agent.” The connection between Bayoumi and Thumairy — who, as we noted, was seen in the mosque with two of the hijackers — was reported by CBS News as follows:

On the morning of February 1, 2000, Bayoumi went to the office of the Saudi consulate where Thumairy worked. He then proceeded to have lunch at a Middle Eastern restaurant on Venice Boulevard where he later claimed he *just happened* to make the acquaintance of the two future hijackers. [Emphasis in original.]

Roemer did not accept this meeting as mere coincidence, stating, “Hazmi and Mihdhar magically run into Bayoumi in a restaurant that Bayoumi claims is a coincidence and in one of the biggest cities in the United States.... Those are a lot of coincidences, and that’s a lot of smoke. Is that enough to make you squirm and uncomfortable, and dig harder — and declassify these 28 pages? Absolutely.”

The statements made by Graham and Roemer were far from the first suggesting Saudi involvement in supporting the 9/11 hijackers. An [article posted by The New American](#) on February 5, 2015, cited a statement made under oath by Zacarias Moussaoui — the convicted terrorist who has been dubbed the missing “20th hijacker” in the 9/11 attacks — that members of the Saudi royal family were financially supporting al-Qaeda, the terrorist organization founded by 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden.

Moussaoui’s statement, made in November 2014 at the supermax prison in Florence, Colorado, where he is serving a life sentence without parole, was contained in a brief filed in a civil suit against Saudi Arabia by families of the 9/11 victims.

Moussaoui was allegedly one of 20 conspirators planning to hijack planes for the September 11 attacks, but he was arrested by FBI and INS agents on August 16, 2001 for immigration violations and was still in custody when the 19 others carried out the infamous operation.

The article quoted statements made by Graham: “I am convinced that there was a direct line between at least some of the terrorists who carried out the Sept. 11th attacks and the government of Saudi Arabia.”

If the Obama administration finally approves declassification of the redacted 28 pages, the truth may finally become better known.

Photo: AP Images

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