



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on May 19, 2016

Graham Presses for Release of Report Implicating Saudis in 9/11 Attacks

Former Democratic Florida Governor (1979  to 1987) and U.S. Senator (1987 to 2005) Bob Graham (shown), who has been trying since 2003 to get 28 classified pages of the famous 9/11 Commission Report released, has gone on national news programs frequently in recent weeks to make his point.

The latest of these interviews was on May 18 with host Stephanie Sy on *Yahoo News Live*. During that interview, Graham discussed the 28 pages, and also the Senate's passage of a bill on May 17 allowing families of 9/11 victims to sue the Saudi government for its potential involvement in the terrorist attacks. Graham said regarding the 28 pages:

I think [they're] a smoking gun. I think the linkages are so multiple and strong and reinforcing that it's hard to come away from reading all this material and not feel that there was a support network and that support network came from Saudi Arabia.

Continuing the interview, Graham said there is more to evaluate than what is found on the redacted pages themselves and posed an interesting question:

[Declassification of the 28 pages] will also open the path to other materials. There are thousands of pages of documents, which speak to the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the 19 hijackers. Could those 19 people have carried out a plot as complex as 9/11 while maintaining anonymity in some cases for more than a year and a half while they were in the United States without having some support?

Graham also commented on the bill passed on the May 17, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act sponsored by senators Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and John Cornyn (R-Texas) that would allow the families of 9/11 victims to sue the Saudis:

It not only is going to open up the courts of justice to the families and the victims of 9/11. It also has the potential of exposing a tremendous amount of information relative to Saudi Arabia's involvement in 9/11.

Graham called the passage of the bill by the Senate "a very big victory."

Following the bill's Senate passage, Schumer announced, "Today the Senate has spoken loudly and unanimously that the families of the victims of terror attacks should be able to hold the perpetrators even if it's a country, a nation, accountable. It will serve as a deterrent and warning to any other nation who assists in terror attacks against America."

The legislation must still be passed by the House and then signed by President Obama. However, when asked during a May 17 press conference if a prior White House threat to veto that bill still stood, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest suggested that Obama would veto it:

I know that the advocates of this legislation have suggested that they have taken into account our



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concerns by more narrowly tailoring the legislation. But, unfortunately, their efforts were not sufficient to prevent the longer-term, unintended consequences that we are concerned about. This legislation would change longstanding international law regarding sovereign immunity. And the President of the United States continues to harbor serious concerns that this legislation would make the United States vulnerable in other court systems around the world....

So the administration strongly continues to oppose this legislation.

When the reporter pressed further and asked Earnest if the “serious concerns that [he] just cited [are] strong enough to lead to a veto of the bill,” Earnest answered, “Yes, as I think I mentioned before, given the concerns that we have expressed, it’s difficult to imagine the President signing this legislation.”

In addition to the objections that Earnest mentioned, some observers believe that the Saudi government’s threat to sell off \$750 billion in U.S. Treasury securities and other assets if the legislation passes may be a factor in the administration’s hesitancy to allowing the 9/11 victim families to sue Saudi officials.

In addition to the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, bills have been introduced in both the Senate and House calling for the declassification of the 9/11 Commission Report’s redacted pages. A bill currently pending in the House, H. Res. 14, sponsored by Representative Walter Jones (R-N.C.), urges “the president to release information regarding the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks upon the United States.” It specifically refers to the 28 pages of the Joint Inquiry Into Intelligence Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 2001 that were ordered classified by President George W. Bush. The bill urges President Obama to declassify those 28 pages, noting, “The families of the victims and the people of the United States deserve answers about the events and circumstances surrounding the September 11, 2001, attacks.”

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) has introduced S. 1471, the Transparency for the Families of 9/11 Victims and Survivors Act of 2015, in the Senate, “to require declassification of certain redacted information from the Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 2001 and for other purposes.” Paul’s bill also has bipartisan support, having been cosponsored by Democrats Ron Wyden of Oregon and Kirstin Gillbrand of New York.

At the time the 9/11 Commission Report was completed and partially classified, Graham was chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and co-chair of the bipartisan joint congressional inquiry into intelligence failures surrounding the attacks. The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, which compiled the 9/11 Commission Report, was established on November 27, 2002 and the final report was issued on July 22, 2004.

Although the commission determined that 15 of the 19 hijackers who carried out the attacks were from Saudi Arabia, they “found no evidence that the Saudi government as an institution or senior Saudi officials individually funded the organization” to conspire in the attacks, or that it funded the attackers. They reached this conclusion despite the fact that the “report identifies Saudi Arabia as the primary source of al-Qaeda funding.”

Graham has talked about the Saudi connection to 9/11 on other talk shows recently, including a CBS News *60 Minutes* program with correspondent Bob Kroft that aired on April 10 called “28 Pages.” During that interview, Graham 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 —



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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," and said, "I remain deeply disturbed by the amount of material that has been censored from this report."

While Graham has not discussed the classified information in the 28 pages, he did say that they outline a network of people that he believes supported the hijackers while they were in the 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.

Photo: AP Images

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