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From Communism to Terrorism

by Jacob G. Hornberger

[A front-page article](#) in the June 10, 2005, issue of the *Los Angeles Times* reported another disturbing feature about the 9/11 attacks:

A chilling new detail of U.S. intelligence failures emerged Thursday, when the Justice Department disclosed that about 20 months before the Sept. 11 attacks, a CIA official had blocked a memo intended to alert the FBI that two known Al Qaeda operatives had entered the country.... If the FBI had received the official communique from the CIA's special Osama bin Laden unit when it was ready for transmittal in January 2000, its agents likely could have tracked down the men, according to U.S. intelligence officials familiar with a newly declassified report of the Justice Department's inspector general.... But the report's conclusion that an agent had written a memo specifically designed for transmittal to the FBI to alert the bureau to the men's presence — and that a supervisor deliberately had prevented it from being sent — is new.

So, let's see what we have here:

1. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the federal government no longer had an official enemy to justify the big government expenditures of the warfare state, including the Pentagon's military enormous budget. For a time, illegal drugs and an "unsafe world" became new official enemies.

2. Throughout the 1990s, the federal government began stirring up hornets' nests abroad, especially in the Middle East, despite repeated warnings that an interventionist and pro-empire foreign policy would ultimately result in retaliatory terrorist attacks on U.S. soil.

3. Through massive incompetence and even conscious indifference, both the CIA and the FBI failed to prevent the attacks on 9/11, which should cause any reasonable observer to ask: What good are these "intelligence-gathering" agencies anyway? 4. The 9/11 attacks were then blamed on hatred for America's "freedom and values" rather than on U.S. foreign policy and used to justify the federal government's "war on terrorism."

5. The “war on terrorism” was used to justify a huge federal assault on the civil liberties of the American people, primarily through the so-called USA PATRIOT Act, along with “patriotic” suggestions to support the “war on terrorism” by withholding criticism of the federal government.

6. The “war on terrorism” was used to justify a bombing campaign in Afghanistan that killed thousands of innocent people, thereby inciting even more anger and hatred against the United States, while resulting in the non-capture of the principle suspect in the 9/11 attacks — Osama bin Laden. Also, the “regime change” achieved in Afghanistan succeeded in converting that country into a opium-producing narco-state whose exorbitant drug-war profits are financing Osama bin Laden and terrorist activity against the United States, thereby justifying even more stringent U.S. efforts (and higher budgets) to fight both the “war on drugs” and the “war on terrorism.”

7. The “war on terrorism” was then used to incite massive fear within the American people about Saddam Hussein’s WMD in order to garner support for an invasion and occupation of Iraq, a country that had never attacked the United States and that had nothing to do with the 9/11 attacks.

8. The war on Iraq, including the resulting horrific death and destruction caused by the invasion and occupation, have given rise to even more anger and hatred against the United States, which will likely result in even more terrorism, which will lead to renewed efforts to win the “war on terrorism,” along with more assaults on civil liberties and renewed calls to support the government and the troops.

9. The never-ending “war on terrorism” and the indefinite occupation of Iraq have given rise to perpetually growing big-government budgets for the Pentagon, bigger even than when communism was the official threat during the Cold War.

10. How many federal officials have been fired, punished, or disciplined for any of this? It would seem that most, if not all, of them, have had nothing but praise, adoration, promotion, power, and ever-growing heaps of U.S. taxpayer money heaped upon them. Whatever else might be said about U.S. officials, you can’t say these people are dumb. In fact, I’d say they are brilliant.

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