

The inquiry for the needle in the haystack

Benjamin Zyla*


It was a sunny Tuesday morning that I started into very early. I had plans to go to Ottawa, the capital of Canada. The air was very humid, as every day is. The sun tried her best, but she didn't succeed at this time of the day. It was 7 a.m., the streets were empty and peaceful, no traffic jam, which is very popular here in North America, no red lights at all. Finally I got on the bus and this heavy, huge silver Greyhound bus rolled onto highway 416 to Ottawa. The Canadian landscape with its huge wild rivers and lakes was passing by until we reached the capital. For political science students it almost seems to be mandatory visiting the parliament, especially here in this mixed Anglophone - Francophone country. How does it work together having a small Big Ben right in front of the parliament building and the flair of smaller Paris down-town Ottawa and the Americans as neighbours?

This report, there's no doubt, is a personal view on the incidents on September the 11th in New York. This short report tries to describe what happened to me personally while I was visiting a good friend in King-ston, Ontario, Canada. I am trying to avoid too much detailed information, because by the time you read this article this information will be obsolete. This does of course not mean that this report doesn't contain any information at all. My article is more a personal feature than an investigative report. All my thoughts and all my sorrow goes to the families, fathers, mothers, children and loved ones who got involved in this tragedy.

Coming out of the parliament the answer was quite clear: it works together, nobody explained in detail, but it works. So there I was, right in front of the parliament building and trying to open one of these huge tourist maps with one hand and holding the tour guide in the other hand. I was paving my way to the upper town, crossing the street right in front me when suddenly a police car was honking at me. The blue and red lights on top of the car were running and making loud noises. Seconds later another car passed me and the map was fluttering away. "What the fuck is this?", I asked myself. Within minutes the houses of representatives and the senate were evacuated. All the streets around the parliament, all the embassies, actually all public and government buildings were shut down for the public within minutes. The financial district of Ottawa: locked up with yellow police bandage. The head of the police gave the order to abandon all pedestrians from the streets. Ottawa, originally a quiet city this particular morning became a loud and noisy one. The sound of police cars and firefighters were in the air, friendly police officers explained to the nervous public what was going on. Their faces were covered mostly with black sunglasses, but you could see their nervous and serious faces. But what happened? The parliament and the senate were under bomb threat. A white van loaded with packages was suspicious. Everything around it had been evacuated. Minutes before two airplanes crashed into the World Trade Centre in New York. I went around the building and talked to some journalists awaiting a speech of the Canadian prime minister the Honourable Jean Chrétien. I asked a reporter from The Toronto Star, one of the major newspapers here in Canada, what is going on here. He got the newest information about what happened in New York and explained it to me. I couldn't believe it that two airplanes crashed into the World Trade Centre. He said "go to this café over there, they have nice coffee and a TV-screen." So I went there, getting a coffee watching the news on CNN, of course live. Since that morning until now CNN is live on the screen the entire time, 24 hours round the clock. I just arrived and one of the twin towers collapsed. I noticed a small murmur in the atmosphere and CNN didn't fail to replay this situation.

"This guys who decided to make war against the US have chosen their own destruction" (George W. Bush, Camp David 15.9.)

From this time on Ottawa was turned around. I went into the National Gallery to get a break from the nervous happenings in downtown Ottawa. I couldn't believe it. One week before I went to New York, visited the Empire state Building and went up to one of the twin towers. I had a very bad German sausage in the park right in front of the World Trade Centre. I sat down on a couch and my thoughts were weird. I looked back to my time in New York. Questions were coming up: How did it happen? And who the hell did this thing? How many people died? My view was moving around and finally stopped at a mass of police cars. Later I noticed that the national gallery was on the opposite side of the American embassy. Police officers with sniffing dogs were ensuring the property of the American embassy, which stood under bomb threats the whole day. Other police officers armed with submachine guns and protected



with bulletproof vests and helmets were securing situation and guiding the traffic: state of emergency in Ottawa. Employees were running off, the house had been evacuated. The streets around the embassy were painted in white and red, the colours of the police cars and the emergency lights. My day in Ottawa was more or less over, all the major shops and shopping malls closed, because everyone feared bomb attacks. The gallery had to close as well so my silent time was over. Dismaying for me is the fact that the investigation pulled out. It is likely that the basis for this attacks was (and probably still is) in Germany. Terrorists went to German schools, got socialized in my country. Obviously not enough!

“We’ll run a crusade to liberate the world from this wrongdoer.” (George W. Bush in Camp David 16.9.)

This fear is still going on. At the time the attack happened Bush was in Florida to visit a school. Ten minutes after the attack the North American airspace was closed for all commercial airplanes. The government and the FBI feared more threats and the president had to come back to the White House Office. It was a national security issue and the life and safety

The inquiry for the needle in the haystack

This report, there’s no doubt, is a personal view on the incidents on September the 11th in New York. This short report tries to describe what happened to me personally while I was visiting a good friend in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. I am trying to avoid too much detailed information, because by the time you read this article this information will be obsolete. This does of course not mean that this report doesn’t contain any information at all. My article is more a personal feature than an investigative report. All my thoughts and all my sorrow goes to the families, fathers, mothers, children and loved ones who got involved in this tragedy.

It was a sunny Tuesday morning that I started into very early. I had plans to go to Ottawa, the capital of Canada. The air was very humid, as every day is. The sun tried her best, but she didn’t succeed at this time of the day. It was 7 a.m., the streets were empty and peaceful, no traffic jam, which is very popular here in North America, no red lights at all. Finally I got on the bus and this heavy, huge silver Greyhound bus rolled onto highway 416 to Ottawa. The Canadian landscape with its huge wild rivers and lakes was passing by until we reached the capital. For political science students it almost seems to be mandatory visiting the parliament, especially here in this mixed Anglophone - Francophone country. How does it work together having a small Big Ben right in front of the parliament building and the flair of smaller Paris down-town Ottawa and the Americans as neighbours?

Coming out of the parliament the answer was quite clear: it works together, nobody explained in detail, but it works. So there I was, right in front of the parliament building and trying to open one of these huge tourist maps with one hand and holding the tour guide in the other hand. I was paving my way to the upper town, crossing the street right in front me when suddenly a police car was honking at me. The blue and red lights on top of the car were running and making loud noises. Seconds later another car passed me and the map was fluttering away. “What the fuck is this?”, I asked myself. Within minutes the houses of representatives and the senate were evacuated. All the streets around the parliament, all the embassies, actually all public and government buildings were shut down for the public within minutes. The financial district of Ottawa: locked up with yellow police bandage. The head of the police gave the order to abandon all pedestrians from the streets. Ottawa, originally a quiet city this particular morning became a loud and noisy one. The sound of police cars and firefighters were in the air, friendly police officers explained to the nervous public what was going on. Their faces were covered mostly with black sunglasses, but you could see their nervous and serious faces.

But what happened? The parliament and the senate were under bomb threat. A white van loaded with packages was suspicious. Everything around it had been evacuated. Minutes before two airplanes crashed into the World Trade Centre in New York. I went around the building and talked to some journalists awaiting a speech of the Canadian prime minister the Honourable Jean Chrétien. I asked a reporter from The Toronto Star, one of the major newspapers here in Canada, what is going on here. He got the newest information about what happened in New York and explained it to me. I couldn’t believe it that two airplanes crashed into the World Trade Centre. He said “go to this café over there, they have nice coffee and a TV-screen.” So I went there, getting a coffee watching the news on CNN, of course live. Since that morning until now CNN is live on the screen the entire time, 24 hours round the clock. I just arrived and one of the twin towers collapsed. I noticed a small murmur in the atmosphere and CNN didn’t fail to replay this

situation.

“This guys who decided to make war against the US have chosen their own destruction” (George W. Bush, Camp David 15.9.)

From this time on Ottawa was turned around. I went into the National Gallery to get a break from the nervous happenings in downtown Ottawa. I couldn't believe it. One week before I went to New York, visited the Empire state Building and went up to one of the twin towers. I had a very bad German sausage in the park right in front of the World Trade Centre. I sat down on a couch and my thoughts were weird. I looked back to my time in New York. Questions were coming up: of the president had priority in this situation. I couldn't believe it, as I saw the story on CNN, but it was true. Air Force One, the plane of the president, was immediately protected and monitored by armed jet fighters. His vicepresident, Richard B. Cheney, was carried to Camp David, so that not both the president and the vice president are under attack. Later investigators found out that Air Force One as well as the White House were targets of the terrorists. Americans running crazy?

Bush: “We are at war!”

Rather not! The other day George W. Bush announced that some terrorists still might be inside the country. He said the attack is not over yet, more attacks on cities, buildings or landmarks are at least somewhat likely-soon. Canada was one of the most affected countries beside the U.S. All the planes with destinations to New York or Washington were diverted to Canadian airports. The airspace was shut down for almost three entire days with a loss of more than 300 billion dollars already. As a result almost 30,000 people were stranded in Canadian airports. Canadians offered free accommodation, trying to and from tried to make the passengers as comfortable as possible (Canadians are so good as the airports more than 300 Canada were cancelled was a for-The Canadians who provided firefighters and support. As a result attacks on September American Airlines already 40,000 jobs, their Boeing and Airbus All in all 100,000



organized travel to the airport and life of the passengers as possible as nice!). As soon as the airports were reopened flights just in cancelled. Back to the original word. The Canadians were the first medical help, investigative response to the September 11th the and United laid off about suppliers like are following. people are

without jobs at the end of this month. The airlines are expecting a reduction of flights and bookings of 30-40 percent. This of course, affects the Canadian economy as well. People who are in their final year of University are now looking for a job; the recruiting of the companies has begun. But the job-expectations are lower than ever before. How many people and how much intelligence were killed through this attack shows the example of Morgan Stanley. This company is a pre-eminent global financial services firm that maintains leading market positions in each of its businesses. Morgan Stanley had its headquarter in the World Trade Centre and rented almost 50 floors. Hundreds of lives are gone, the company pretty much lost its entire headquarter. The Chairman Philip Purcel just survived this day because he went to the school enrolment of his son. He arrived after nine o'clock at the World Trade Centre when the towers were already on fire. In an advertisement this week (Newsweek September 24, 2001) he thanked “the hundreds of fire-fighters, police officers and individuals for their courageous efforts.” The Chief Executive Officer of Morgan Stanley was famous for his harsh management style in the past. This week he said “We mourn their (the victims) loss and extend our hand to all those in need of our help.” The human face of a top-manager.

*Born in 1977 and studies Political Science, journalism and business at Uppsala University and Goettingen