

# The Wargames of September 11th (beta)

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The [Complete 9/11 Timeline](#) hosted by [The Center for Cooperative Research](#) recently published a revised set of entries on [the military exercises of September 11](#), providing a goldmine of well-sourced information. Compiled by Paul Thompson, the 9/11 Timeline long ago became the leading resource of mainstream news reports about September 11. Available in book form as [The Terror Timeline](#) (2004), it continues to evolve online.

The latest material for the first time casts light on what may have been the day's master wargame: Global Guardian, run out of Offutt Air Force Base by the US Strategic Command (Stratcom) under Admiral Richard Mies ([official bio](#)). He has since retired and taken up a gig as the CEO of Hicks & Associates, a "strategic consultant" to the federal government dealing in "military transformation."

Our New York correspondent, Nicholas Levis, has written a review.

**UPDATE:** Filmed in January 2000, and aired on 3/4/2001, the makers of "The Lone Gunmen" show that the idea of crashing planes into buildings isn't anything new. As a matter of fact, their representation is eerily familiar given what we know today about the Wargames taking place on September 11th, 2001. (The Lone Gunmen Clip: [Click Here](#))

Aug. 2005:

As the day dawns over the East Coast on September 11th, 2001, the US Strategic Command headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska is on full alert, busily dispatching warplanes around North America in a rehearsal for Armageddon.

Stratcom directs the US nuclear arsenal. A number of interrelated air-defense wargames are underway around the country, under the overall umbrella of Global Guardian. This is the designation for the annual combined exercises run by Stratcom in conjunction with the US Space Command and NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defense Command. The man officially in charge of Global Guardian is Admiral Richard Mies, Stratcom's commander-in-chief.

The crash-bombings of New York City and Washington unfold starting at around 8:15 am, when Flight 11 out of Boston ceases communications with ground stations and diverts radically from its planned route. The often-contradictory official accounts are more or less in agreement that the diversions of Flight 175 and Flight 77 began about 27 and 41 minutes later, respectively.

Ample evidence gathered from mainstream news sources and compiled by Thompson in the new timeline entries indicates that the wargames served to confuse and stymie air defense response to the simultaneous crash-bombings. Although Thompson avoids conclusions and merely presents a long series of verifiable facts, confusion appears to have been the exact result intended by at least some of the wargame planners. This was already a central thesis of Mike Rupperts's 2004 book *Crossing the Rubicon* ([click here for a summary](#)), but Thompson's timeline update adds new pieces to the puzzle.

Thompson cites multiple reports (see [8:30 am](#)) indicating that Global Guardian is normally held in October, and that the run-through in 2001 was in fact originally scheduled for late October and then re-scheduled for early September at some point after March 2001. Who made that scheduling decision? That may be the most crucial question of all in determining the criminal culpability for 9/11 among US officials.

In the period after March 2001, military planners discussed various possible exercises that would have involved hijacking simulations, including live-fly (FTX) exercises using real planes with actors playing passengers. It is known that the idea of rehearsing air defense against a hijacked plane aimed at the Pentagon was at least temporarily considered in [April 2001](#) and postponed. Meanwhile, the planners of [Amalgam Virgo II](#) were discussing a simulation for simultaneous hijackings of passenger planes out of Utah and Vancouver, with military people and FBI agents acting in the roles of passengers and hijackers. As of spring 2001, Amalgam Virgo II was scheduled for July 2002. The idea was hardly new. A mass casualty (MASCAL) exercise of the Pentagon's command and emergency services, using the scenario of a plane hitting the building, had already been conducted

by hundreds of personnel at the Pentagon in **October 2000** . Two clinics at the Pentagon rehearsed the same script in **May 2001** .

All this activity, combined with the many past precedents of kamikaze attack attempts using civilian planes, completely demolish the lie frequently propagated by Condoleezza Rice and Donald Rumsfeld that “no one could have imagined” simultaneous hijackings or planes used as weapons against buildings. (See [“Bush, Rice and the Genoa Warning”](#) )

But a more ominous question obviously presents itself: Were any of these hijacking scenarios under discussion that spring finally incorporated into the scripts for the wargames of September 2001?

The story of Global Guardian and the breakfast activities of its director Mies has long been in the public domain, published on military news sites and the Omaha press among other venues. But until recently the vast-but-scattershot investigations of the last four years by the hundreds of 9/11 researchers working cooperatively via the Internet had missed these snippets.



As the timeline relates, Mies was having breakfast on the morning of 9/11 with a group of business leaders, as part of a charity event hosted by Offutt Air Force Base and sponsored by Warren Buffett, the second-richest man in the United States. We have no way of knowing what communications Mies was receiving about the crisis that began at 8:15, but soon after 8:46 am, the entire party would have learned that a plane had crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Mies remained with the civilians until after they all heard that the second WTC Tower had also been hit. (The second crash occurred at 9:03 am.) Based on the new timeline entries, it is apparently only then that Mies went to his command post, and that Global Guardian and related wargames were suspended.

Mies thus joins the growing list of men in key positions at the top of the US military chain of command who managed to absent themselves from any decision-making capacity during the opening hour of the 9/11 crash-bombings. That list includes:

George W. Bush, who asked his staff chief Andrew Card for no clarification on the whispered message that “America is under attack” (9:05), but instead remained seated, listening to children read in a classroom, until around 9:16; and whose large White House entourage remained in the Florida school until 9:34.

Gen. Richard Myers, the acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who says he heard about the first crash, thought it was an accident, went into a Senate meeting, and only became aware of the second crash just a few minutes before the Pentagon was hit at 9:37.

Donald Rumsfeld, who was sought for an hour by the Pentagon command center and first appeared there at around 10:30 am, according to *The 9/11 Commission Report* .

Gen. Montague Winfield, head of the National Military Command Center at the Pentagon, who on the evening of Sept. 10th arranged to be replaced on his scheduled shift the next morning for the two hours starting at 8:30 am by his rookie deputy, **Capt. Charles Leidig** (since promoted to admiral).

(See **“AWOL Chain of Command”** )

Is all of this attributable to nonchalance? At what point are we allowed to discern a pattern in the behavior of the men who topped the military chain of command and who were responsible for responding to the unfolding events?

Rumsfeld's case is particularly flagrant, given that he had signed off on a June 1, 2001 Pentagon order that for the first time inserted the Secretary of Defense into the chain of response for issuing military intercept orders for errant planes. His story is that he reacted to news of the first and second WTC crashes by continuing his routine morning briefings, and that after the Pentagon was hit (at 9:37 or 9:41 am, depending on which official timeline one prefers), he decided to assist in rescue efforts instead of taking his place at the command center.

The official story of 9/11 holds that four passenger planes were diverted and that none of them were intercepted for reconnaissance and response, which constitutes a massive and unprecedented failure of standard operating procedures. The story of how and why that happened has changed repeatedly since 9/11, and no official has ever been held accountable for the failures. On the contrary, many of the key figures involved received promotions, among them Myers, who was confirmed in that position soon after 9/11, and Gen. Ralph Eberhart, the NORAD director who was appointed to head the new Northern Command (since retired).

During the last four years we have seen a **plethora of contradicting timelines** and testimonies presented by NORAD, the US Air Force (in its official history *Air War Over America*), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), press reports citing official sources, and, finally, *The 9/11 Commission Report*. Each of these versions of what happened on 9/11 was upheld in its turn for months or years without revision. The contradictions mean that at least some of the responsible officials must have been promoting falsehoods, but again, no move has been made to hold anyone accountable for that.

Already in the first year after 9/11, when next to nothing was known about the exercises, researchers skeptical of the official story developed the hypothesis that wargames could have been used as the device to subvert standard operating procedures and allow the attacks to proceed unmolested. A wargame pretext can allow false-flag attacks to be rehearsed or prepared without arousing suspicion; and divert resources or block communication lines on Day X. After the fact, the idea that the wargames *were* subverted by Arab hijackers with inside information (or a lot of luck!) might serve as a military-fiasco story (read: piece of wishful thinking) that engenders embarrassment and silence among that vast majority of US military people who were not involved in any conscious wrong-doing or facilitation of the 9/11 events.

Hard evidence for the hypothesis first began surfacing in August 2002, when it was revealed that the CIA had scheduled an **evacuation drill** at the National Reconnaissance Office on the morning of Sept. 11, based on the script of an "errant plane" hitting the NRO headquarters. The drill was cancelled when the real-world events began, and most of the NRO staff, who control the military-intelligence establishment's surveillance satellites, were sent home. One man who helped plan the drill, John Fulton, actually put it on his resume as an example of his prescience.

The Kean Commission hearings occasionally touched upon past exercises (also compiled, to far more devastating effect, in Thompson's new timeline), but entirely avoided the issue of the wargames on Sept. 11 itself. These were finally mentioned in a single note to *The 9/11 Commission Report* (Chapter 1, Note 116). This acknowledged only a "cold war"-style exercise, and was based entirely on a brief quote from Eberhart. He claimed that the exercises enhanced air defense response, an incredible statement given the failures to intercept. While quoting Eberhart that "it took about 30 seconds" to make the adjustment from the wargames to the ongoing real-world situation, the note significantly avoids specifying *the time* when the wargames were suspended.

The known NORAD wargames of 9/11, which were apparently incorporated into the larger framework of Global Guardian, include Northern Guardian, Vigilant Guardian and Vigilant Warrior. The most innocent-seeming of these, Northern Guardian was announced in advance and dispatched air force assets to the Arctic Circle in response to the Russian maneuvers also scheduled for that day. (The **NORAD press release of 9/9/01** is still online.)

However, **Vigilant Guardian** appears to have scripted simulated attacks within the continental United States. NORAD personnel in Rome, New York who received first reports of hijackings within NORAD'S Northeastern sector, including Col. Robert K. Marr and Lt. Col. Dawne Deskins, are reported to have asked if this was "real world or exercise." This implies that the scenarios for the

wargames on September 11 were strikingly similar to the actual attacks that unfolded that morning—as was the supposedly unrelated CIA/NRO exercise.

How much strain can a “coincidence hypothesis” sustain before it becomes untenable?

As reported by the wire service **Newhouse News (1/25/02)** :

At 8:40, Deskins noticed senior technician Jeremy Powell waving his hand. Boston Center was on the line, he said. It had a hijacked airplane.

“It must be part of the exercise,” Deskins thought.

At first, everybody did. Then Deskins saw the glowing direct phone line to the Federal Aviation Administration.

On the phone she heard the voice of a military liaison for the FAA’s Boston Center.

“I have a hijacked aircraft,” he told her.

Six minutes later, at 8:46, the wargames were still causing confusion, apparently in the form of a craft (or at least a radar-blip) thought to be heading for JFK Airport in Queens: “Deskins ran to a nearby office and phoned 1st Air Force Chief Public Affairs Officer Major Don Arias in Florida. She said NEADS had a hijacked plane no, not the simulation likely heading for JFK.”

So much for Eberhart’s “30 seconds” to adjust to real-world events. Again, the new supporting evidence provided by Thompson suggests that no move was made to suspend the wargames until well after the second crash at 9:03 am, by which time the worst of the attacks had occurred and the Pentagon flight was well under way.

The use of “injects” (phantom blips projected onto radar screens electronically) is a technique employed to test the defending side in air defense exercises ( *Toronto Star* , 12/09/01, see **9:00 am** ). The US military has over the decades developed many counter-command and counter-control techniques for jamming and confusing enemy radar installations, as well as stealth technologies. Did the wargames also use such techniques against the FAA, as a test of its response to potential hijackings? If such an element was scripted into the wargames, military units likely would have had child’s play in causing confusion among unsuspecting air traffic controllers.

A lengthy passage in *The 9/11 Commission Report* describes one case of confusion at the FAA: the false information, propagated well after 9 am, that Flight 11 had not crashed into the first Tower at 8:46, but was in fact still alive and proceeding south over New Jersey. The Commission says this caused the FAA to request fighters from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia to fly towards New Jersey instead of to Washington, where Flight 77 was headed.

The report says the Commission was unable to reconstruct how this information entered the FAA system and leaves things at that, without noting that of necessity, fighters can only be vectored to a known location, i.e. the “Phantom 11” flight must have corresponded to an actual unknown blip on the FAA radar that was not caused by any of the other hijacked flights, and was therefore either a real aircraft or an “inject.”

Let us recall that FAA head Jane Garvey and Richard Clarke, among others, testified to at least 11 different suspected hijackings at various points during the crash-bombings. With so many assets diverted to wargames, only eight jets were left for a total of four possible interceptions (since they are dispatched in pairs). The number of jets kept ready exclusively for such emergency services had been reduced earlier that year.

Response would have been further complicated by the presence of radar blind-spots after the FAA began dismantling certain primary radar installations in 1999, which means that there were areas where Flights 11, 77 and 93 would have been temporarily invisible, after their transponders stopped broadcasting. It is more than curious that both Flight 11 and Flight 93 took long detours away from their supposed targets, during which they **passed through such areas** .





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Flight 11 route is in bright blue over Massachussetts and New York; Flight 93 is the red plane heading towards Cleveland; Flight 77 is the furthest south, over West Virginia

Reconstructing what really happened among civilian air traffic controllers may be impossible. An invaluable store of evidence—tapes of recollections by the air traffic controllers in Long Island who handled the two New York crash flights, taken *on the afternoon* of Sept. 11—was destroyed in an intimidating fashion by a federal official ( [New York Times](#) , [5/6/04](#) ).

Vigilant Warrior, the most mysterious wargame of all, is mentioned only in a direct quote attributed to Myers by former counterterrorism chief Richard Clarke in his 2004 book, *Against All Enemies* . The NORAD wargame denomination “Warrior” specifically indicates a “live-fly” exercise (Ruppert, *Crossing the Rubicon* , 2004, citing NORAD spokesperson Don Arias, who lost his brother on Sept. 11). The contrast of Vigilant Guardian to Vigilant Warrior not only suggests related exercises, but a red team and a blue team paired as enemies. It has led many researchers to speculate whether one or more of the actual 9/11 crash flights was scripted into a “warrior” scenario that suddenly turned “real.”

In the timeline, Thompson covers Vigilant Warrior as follows:

#### 9:28 a.m.: Myers Updates Clarke Videoconference on Fighter Response

Counterterrorism “tsar” Richard Clarke, directing a video conference with top officials, asks Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Chairman Richard Myers, “I assume NORAD has scrambled fighters and AWACS. How many? Where?” Myers replies, “Not a pretty picture, Dick. **We are in the middle of Vigilant Warrior, a NORAD exercise, but ...** Otis has launched two birds toward New York. Langley is trying to get two up now [toward Washington]. The AWACS are at Tinker and not on alert.” Vigilant Warrior may be a mistaken reference to the on-going war game Vigilant Guardian.

Thompson’s last comment is unwarranted. Note that the ellipsus after Myers’s statement, “We are in the middle of Vigilant Warrior, a NORAD exercise, but ...” occurs in the original of Clarke’s book, the publication of which was delayed for months due to a prolonged vetting process by the CIA and White House. This indicates a redaction by the CIA or White House censors.

What did Myers tell Clarke about Vigilant Warrior that the censors did not want us to know?

This is one of the most sensitive passages in Clarke's book, and it is hard to believe it was not among the most scrutinized. Would the censors have allowed such a mistake to be published, with all its implications for the official story? Clarke's precise statement of the time in the same passage (9:28 am) is unusual in the book, and suggests extreme care about this point.

This is not surprising, because Clarke must have been aware that the passage contradicts Myers's own accounts of what he was doing at 9:28 am. According to Clarke, Myers is surrounded by generals and colonels at a video conference; according to Myers, he would have just been leaving his meeting with Senator Max Cleland and learning about the second WTC crash for the first time.

In March 2005, Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) gained a confused but revealing admission from Gen. Myers when he testified to the Armed Services Committee (alongside Rumsfeld) that NORAD was holding at least four different exercises on the day. "But they were two CPXs" or command-post exercises (not involving actual planes), he hastened to add. A moment later, two exercises turned into three, then four: "There was one Department of Justice exercise that didn't have anything to do **with the other three** ; and there was an actual operation ongoing because there was some Russian bomber activity up near Alaska..." The "operation" refers to Northern Guardian, as an actual response to the Russian maneuvers. That leaves three other exercises, and Myers clearly evades the question of whether one of these involved live-fly aircraft simulating attacks within the lower 48 states.

Myers then hopped away from the question without explaining what any of these exercises were actually *doing* .

(The "Department of Justice exercise" may be a reference to [Tripod II](#) , a simulation of a biowarfare attack on New York City due to be held at Pier 92 on Sept. 12. After the evacuation of WTC Building 7, Pier 92 was instead used as the mayor's command center for the emergency.)

As Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter moved to block her, McKinney pressed on. Myers resorted to echoing Eberhart's claim that the wargames actually enhanced defense response:

CMK: Let me ask you this, then: who was in charge of managing those wargames?

DH: General, why don't you give the best answer that you can here in a short a period of time and we'll – the gentlelady wants to get a written answer anyway, and then we can move on to other folks.

RM: The important thing to realize is that North American Aerospace Defense Command was responsible. These are command post exercises; what that means is that all the battle positions that are normally not filled are indeed filled; so it was an easy transition from an exercise into a real world situation. It actually enhanced the response; otherwise, it would take somewhere between 30 minutes and a couple of hours to fill those positions, those battle stations, with the right staff officers.

CMK: Mr. Chairman, begging your indulgence, was September Eleventh declared a National Security Special Event day?

RM: I have to look back; I do not know. Do you mean after the fact, or

CMK: No. Because of the activities going on that had been scheduled at the United Nations that day.

RM: I'd have to go back and check. I don't know. **Transcript**

McKinney pursued the Secret Service angle because she was aware that under the conditions of a National Security Special Event (which might have been declared in advance due to the convening of the General Assembly in New York), the Secret Service takes on extraordinary executive powers that supercede those of military authorities.

Myers appears to pass the buck to Eberhart, head of NORAD, but makes no mention of Global Guardian and the larger framework of exercises headquartered out of Offutt Air Force Base. This may be an incendiary point because Offutt was, of course, the place where George W. Bush and his

entourage went after they finally took off from Florida. It seems like a logical destination during a crisis (or a coup d'état), because Stratcom is well-secured and commands the nuclear arsenal. But before proceeding there, Bush also stopped at [Barksdale Air Force Base](#), Louisiana, a further important node within the Global Guardian exercise. This trail also seems to lead back to the wargames.

While at Offutt, Bush held the teleconference with his war cabinet that decided on the guilt of Osama Bin Ladin and the global doctrine of a war on terror to be formulated at his speech that evening after returning to the White House. Dick Cheney, Rumsfeld, CIA Director George Tenet, Clarke, Rice and other principals were patched in as Bush sat, with Andrew Card on one side and Admiral Mies on the other.

**To be continued: Who is Richard Mies? What happened after the wargames were suspended? Flights 77 and 93, and the role of Cheney.**

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## Tangents & Notes

As long as Myers himself mentioned an apparently related exercise not under the direct purview of NORAD, we should note that the Army was also conducting an exercise in the New York area, at Fort Monmouth Army Base in New Jersey, about 50 miles from the World Trade Center. **Timely Alert II** scripted a possible biochemical attack on the base, which was therefore closed to outsiders starting at 9 am. Thompson summarizes as follows:

Soon after 9 a.m., the exercise director tells a group of participating volunteers that a hijacked plane has crashed into the World Trade Center. The participants pretend to be upset, believing this is just part of the simulation. When they see the live televised footage of the WTC attacks, some people at the base think it is an elaborate training video to accompany the exercise. One worker tells a fire department training officer: "You really outdid yourself this time." Interestingly, the follow-up exercise held in July 2002 (Timely Alert III) does incorporate simulated television news reports to give participants the impression that the emergency is real.

Perhaps it is significant that Fort Monmouth is the headquarters of the Army's Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM), which among its duties handles the communications channels for the Secret Service.

The base is also home to the 754th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, headed on Sept. 11 by Capt. Richard J. Spanard. A newsletter of his college society, **Beta Tau**, innocently reveals that he was at the WTC that morning: "On the morning of September 11, he was enjoying breakfast at a deli 50 feet from the World Trade Center twin towers when the first plane hit. General hysteria inundated the deli. Spanard decided that he and the three soldiers with him should move to number 7 World Trade Center, where they had a scheduled meeting." Wonder what that meeting was about? (Thanks to **John Horne's WTC 7 page** for the catch.)

Spanard's unit was deployed to Ground Zero soon after – charged with finding and clearing any possible explosives in the rubble.

And that is the tip of the iceberg to date. How many different scenarios did the combined wargames rehearse on that day, and who wrote them? Who was aware of which parts? How many elements of the actual 9/11 scenario did the wargames of Sept. 11 include in one or another script? (Who can still believe that the inclusion of such elements was entirely coincidental? Especially given the countless stories of attack foreknowledge and forewarnings, which we have not covered here.) And who were the anonymous true "maestros" of the wargames, i.e. the ones who held command stations while the ostensible commanders-in-chief were busy dallying elsewhere? The softball (or non-existent) treatment by the 9/11 Commission and other investigations to date of the known principals in the day's events—Myers, Rumsfeld, Bush, Winfield, Mies, Eberhart, Rice, Tenet et al., even Clarke—never allowed that such questions were conceivable.



The wargames appear to have been a dominant factor during the first hour of the attacks, until their suspension after 9:03. But a simple circumvention of air defense by wargames confusion does not explain what happened in the next phase, when the Pentagon was hit despite ample warning and Flight 93 went down in Pennsylvania. Suffice to say that at least one central character has yet to be mentioned here: Dick Cheney. And in the case of his activities during the Sept. 11 crash-bombings, we have direct testimony (once again, ignored by the 9/11 Commission) from a man who was in the same room during the second phase of the events: Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta.

For reading that goes into the issues involving Cheney and Mineta's testimony, see Gregor Holland's articles:

**Open Letter to Norman Mineta** (concerning his 9/11 Commission-censored testimony).  
**The Mineta Testimony: 9/11 Commission Exposed**

In the latter, Holland (of [911truthmovement.org](http://911truthmovement.org)) writes:

Unlike Rumsfeld who claimed to be "out of the loop," and Myers who was not disturbed from breakfast with Max Cleland, Mineta was able to provide a full account of his experience that morning to the 9/11 Commission. Mineta testified that he arrived at the PEOC (the underground White House command bunker) at 9:20 a.m. and that Vice President Cheney was already present with his staff. *The 9/11 Commission Report* states that Cheney himself arrived at the PEOC at 9:58, a stunning 38 minute contradiction to Mineta's testimony.

**Mineta's PEOC testimony was also edited out of the 9/11 Commission video archive.**

When questioned about this, representatives at the National Archive stated that the video may have been lost because of a 'snafu'. Following is a **brief summary** of the scrubbed video along with links to recently obtained C-SPAN video...

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