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The families of the victims of September 11, 2001

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Members and Friends of 9/11FSA:

I want to take the occasion of this terrible day to express my belief that the families of the victims of 9/11, including those of 9/11Families for a Secure America, are continuing to fulfill their commitment to their loved ones, that something good will result from their murders.

The recent release of the Independent 9/11 Commission report has given us considerable ammunition in our fight for immigration reform and secure I.D. There is particular personal satisfaction for me in this. Sally Regenhard, one of our 9/11 FSA members has been one of the central figures responsible for the legislation creating the Commission over the opposition of Pres. Bush. She has been a member of the Family Steering Committee that worked with the Commission and its staff, and has been privy to much that has transpired in the Commission's development of its final report.

Sally told me that the Commission's expression of the dangers of insecure I.D., and its recommendations for reform of this situation, are due directly to the work of 9/11 FSA. I have reproduced below part of page 390 of the Report. It is particularly gratifying to me to see it use the following sentences:

"Acquisition of these [US-issued] forms of identification would have assisted them in boarding commercial flights, renting cars and other necessary activities." "At many entry points to vulnerable facilities, including gates for boarding aircraft, sources of identification are the last opportunity to ensure that people are who they say they are and to check whether they are terrorists."

These phrasings are virtually identical to those which 9/11 FSA has used for the past two and one half years, and which I used in my statement for the Commission which it incorporated into the official record.

Further, the Commission staff has released two supplemental non-classified monographs. The second of these is entitled "Monograph on 9/11 and Terrorist Travel." The opening words in the Preface to that document reads:

" It is perhaps obvious to state that terrorists cannot plan and carry out attacks in the United States if they are unable to enter the country. Yet prior to September 11, while there were efforts to enhance border security, no agency of the U.S. government thought of border security as a tool in the counterterrorism arsenal. Indeed, even after 19 hijackers demonstrated the relative ease of obtaining a U.S. visa and gaining admission into the United States, border security still is not considered a cornerstone of national security policy. We believe, for reasons we discuss in the following pages, that it must be made

one.”

From page 390 of the Report:

It is elemental to border security to know who is coming into the country. Today more than 9 million people are in the United States outside the legal immigration system. We must also be able to monitor and respond to entrances between our ports of entry, working with Canada and Mexico as much as possible.

There is a growing role for state and local law enforcement agencies. They need more training and work with federal agencies so that they can cooperate more effectively with those federal authorities in identifying terrorist suspects.

All but one of the 9/11 hijackers acquired some form of U.S. identification document, some by fraud. Acquisition of these forms of identification would have assisted them in boarding commercial flights, renting cars, and other necessary activities.

**Recommendation: Secure identification should begin in the United States. The federal government should set standards for the issuance of birth certificates and sources of identification, such as drivers licenses. Fraud in identification documents is no longer just a problem of theft. At many entry points to vulnerable facilities, including gates for boarding aircraft, sources of identification are the last opportunity to ensure that people are who they say they are and to check whether they are terrorists.<sup>41</sup>**

The Commission’s report should alter the entire balance of force for FAIR and its allies in our coming battles in Congress, in the states and localities, as well as with politically dominated law enforcement and bureaucracies. No longer will officials be able to claim that illegal immigration and drivers’ licenses issued to illegal aliens are not connected to terrorism. I am very proud of the role that 9/11 Families for a Secure America has played in affecting the Commission’s proceedings.

Regards,

Peter Gadiel