Able Danger and DIA had advanced knowledge of 9/11

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(WMR) -- A source with close ties to the highest echelons of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) told WMR that personnel who worked for the DIA on the classified counter-terrorism data mining operation known as Able Danger were aware of the planned attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and other major facilities in Washington, DC, on 9/11 but their information was permitted, on purpose, to languish in the intelligence and law enforcement bureaucracies without any proactive measures being taken.

Able Danger began during the Clinton administration but was sidelined by order to DIA from the Bush White House, the FBI, and the CIA.

In fact, Able Danger personnel were able to pinpoint the planned time and date of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington and that some journalists working for ABC News were aware of the information from DIA sources but failed to report on the story. In 2006, a year after the Able Danger details first came to public light, ABC aired a docudrama called "Path to 9/11," which echoed the 9/11 Commission Report's shallow findings and absolved the Bush administration of any intelligence bungling in failing to prevent the attacks. President Obama's Middle East special envoy, George Mitchell, served as the chairman of ABC's parent corporation, Disney, at the time of the docudrama's airing in September 2005.

On October 3, 2002, PBS's "Frontline" series ran a program titled "The Man Whio Knew." The program concentrated on the FBI's top counter-terrorism special agent, John O'Neill, who was hamstrung in his investigation of "Al Qaeda" and was eventually forced to retire from the FBI. O'Neill was only a few days on the job as the head of security for the World Trade Center when he told New York ABC News producer Chris Isham, "I'm head of security at the World Trade Center." Isham said in the PBS interview, "And I joked with him and said, 'Well, that will be an easy job. They're not going to bomb that place again.' And he said, 'Well actually -- he immediately came back and he said, 'actually they've always wanted to finish that job. I think they're going to try again.'"

On the night before 9/11, O'Neill told some of his friends over drinks, "We're due for something big." The next morning, O'Neill died in the World Trade Center collapse.

ABC News reporter John Miller, who had an interview with Osama Bin Laden in May 1998 in Afghanistan, was also close to O'Neill. Miller eventually became an assistant director of the FBI. Miller covered the 9/11 role of the Israeli Urban Moving Systems "movers," all of whom reported to Mossad agent Dominic Suter, for ABC News 20/20 program. The "movers," some of whom

showed up in a joint CIA/FBI database of known Mossad agents, were allowed to return to Israel after being arrested and jailed by the FBI for taking pictures of the World Trade Center from Liberty State Park in Jersey City and from a parking garage tier in Union City, both in New Jersey, before the first plane hit the North Tower. Suter was also permitted to flee abroad after being interviewed by FBI agents and told to stick around for follow-on interviews. Miller's investigation for ABC News concluded the Israelis had nothing to do with the attacks, which was cheerfully echoed by anchorwoman Barbara Walters.

WMR also learned from the DIA source that links between lead hijacker Mohammed Atta and some of his hijacking team members, on one hand, and CIA and Israeli intelligence assets and agents, on the other, were also discovered by the Able Danger operation in 2000.

Able Danger began to suffer pressure from the Clinton administration in 2000 and, according to Army Major Eric Kleinsmith, LIWA's intelligence head, during May and June of 2000 some 2.5 terabytes of data, equivalent to all the holdings in the Library of Congress, collected on the "al Qaeda" cell was ordered destroyed by the general counsel for the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command. U.S. Army Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer, the DIA's liaison to the Able Danger effort at the U.S. Army's Land Information Warfare Activity (LIWA) at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, was later retaliated against when he publicly stated that Able Danger was completely terminated by the Bush administration some four months before the 9/11 attacks.

Another highly classified DIA program that was monitoring "Al Qaeda" operatives and was shut down in the months prior to 9/11 was code-named Dorhawk Galley. Dorhawk Galley may have involved surveillance of U.S. and Israeli intelligence operatives who were coordinating their efforts with the lead hijackers and their cells in the United States and abroad.

Shaffer's job, as the head of the DIA's Stratus Ivy program, was to provide Able Danger with top secret, code word intelligence derived from DIA's Integrated Database (IDB) on intelligence from foreign military organizations around the world and the National Security Agency's signals intelligence (SIGINT) and geo-spatial databases, including Anchory, Oilstock, and Texta.

In an August 12, 2005 press statement, then-Representative Curt Weldon (R-PA) wrote, "Able Danger was about linkages and associations of individuals identified with direct links to Al-Qaeda and not about dates and times. To clarify, Able Danger was a Department of Defense planning effort, tasked to Special Operations Command (SOCOM) by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The task assigned to Able Danger was to identify and target Al-Qaeda on a global basis and, through the use of cutting edge technology (data-mining, massive parallel processing, neural networking and human factors analysis) and enhanced visualization and display tools, present options for leaders (national command authority) to manipulate, degrade or destroy the global Al-Qaeda infrastructure.

"The 9/11 Commission has released multiple statements over the past week, each of which has significantly changed -- from initially denying ever being briefed to acknowledging being briefed on both operation Able Danger and Mohammed Atta. The information was omitted primarily because they found it to be suspect despite having been briefed on it two times by two different military officers on active duty. Additionally, the 9/11 Commission also received documents from the Department of Defense on Able Danger. Despite their varied statements, two critical questions remain unanswered.

"1) Why did the Department of Defense fail to pass critical information obtained through Able Danger to the FBI between the summer and fall of 2000?

"2) Why did the 9/11 Commission staff fail to properly follow-up on the three separate occasions when they received information on Able Danger and Mohammed Atta?

"I will continue to push for a full accounting of the historical record so that we may preclude these types of failures from happening again."

A relatively obscure news report by Emrah Ulker from New York in the Bulgarian Turkish newspaper *Sofia Zaman* on August 22, 2005, stated that "Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer, military intelligence officer from the 'Able Danger' unit, claimed that in mid 2000 his unit had uncovered information about Mohammad Atta and three other terrorists who took part in the 9/11 attacks in the United States. Shaffer reportedly said that the unit he worked for wanted to share the information with the FBI but all three scheduled meetings with FBI agents were cancelled by Pentagon lawyers. According to the report, Shaffer believed 'the military lawyers cancelled the meetings because they were concerned the Pentagon might face allegations of collecting data by illegal means.' Shaffer also reportedly said that he disclosed this information to the 9/11 Commission 'but it was not taken seriously enough.'"

In August 2005, the Pentagon, in an official statement, said that Able Danger had no information identifying Mohammed Atta or any other of the accused hijackers as "Al Qaeda" cell members prior to the 9/11 attacks. The DIA then moved to deny Shaffer access to classified information and deny him his security clearance.

On February 16, 2006, at a joint hearing of the House Armed Service subcommittees on Strategic Forces and Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities, Weldon stated, "We just heard the witnesses state that they destroyed 99 percent of the data, yet we now understand there are libraries of data against which runs were just held as recently as six months ago. The data runs that I'm talking about which were done by a professional employee were done within the last two months and they were done on data that was collected prior to 9/11 but after the attack on the Cole. And in that data set, the name Atta, prior to 9/11, came up over 800 times. The name Mohamed Atta with an O came up five times. The name Muhamed Atta with a U came up three times. The name Mohamed Atif (ph) came up five times." Weldon added that Able Danger had identified five "Al Qaeda" "hot spots" -- Malaysia, Mauritania, Hamburg, Germany, New York [including Brooklyn] and Aden, Yemen -- prior to 9/11.

At the same hearing, Reprsentative Cynthia McKinney asked Stephen Cambone, the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, "does Able Danger have anything to do with Larry Franklin or the passing of classified information to foreign nationals?" Cambone, answering the question about Franklin, who was convicted of passing classified information to two American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) employees and the chief Mossad agent at the Israeli embassy in Washington, responded with a contradictory answer, "I don't know. I don't know. It doesn't have anything to do with Mr. Franklin's case."

Although the Pentagon downplayed the effectiveness of Able Danger, Weldon told UPI in 2000 that the program was effective enough to discover a businessman in Vienna who had close business links to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic during the Kosovo war.

The DIA source, who was present in the Pentagon on the morning of 9/11, said that senior officials in the Donald Rumsfeld Pentagon were well aware of the planned attack on the building but made no effort to evacuate it beforehand.

After 9/11, the Bush administration moved to conduct exactly the type of deep data mining operations conducted by Able Danger prior to the attacks. The controversial program, known as the Terrorist Surveillance Program by the Justice Department and Stellar Wind by the National Security Agency (NSA), conducted wireless surveillance of phone calls, faxes, and e-mails of millions of Americans, without the issue of privacy ever raised by senior White House officials as they had apparently done with Able Danger prior to 9/11.

There were also reports that after scuttling Able Danger in the months prior to 9/11, the Pentagon moved to restore the same program under the code name Able Providence under Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte.

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