



JE KINDLE-NOTITIES VOOR:

The Mysterious Collapse of World Trade Center 7

door David Ray Griffin

Gratis directe Kindle-preview: <https://a.co/3mSDVvw>

111 Highlights

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 184

To enumerate seven of the most obvious features of this similarity: (1) The collapse of WTC 7 started from the bottom; (2) the onset of the collapse was sudden (not gradual, as it would have been if—impossibly—it had been brought on by fire heating the steel);¹⁶ (3) the building came down totally, leaving none of its steel columns erect and intact; (4) it came straight down, symmetrically; (5) it came down in free fall, or very close to it (suggesting that the steel columns supporting the building had been removed); (6) much of the building's concrete was pulverized into tiny particles, resulting in a huge dust cloud; and (7) most of the debris ended up in a relatively small, compact pile. (These similarities are emphasized in a video called "This is an Orange."¹⁷)

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 255

Although in 2006, when this statement was published, this view was simply NIST's "working hypothesis," Popular Mechanics rashly treated it as one of the "conclusions" reached by "hundreds of experts."

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 271

NIST itself, in any case, was evidently not so certain during that period that it had solved the mystery of WTC 7. When asked early in 2006 why this building had collapsed, Sunder replied: "[T]ruthfully, I don't really know. We've had trouble getting a handle on building No. 7."³² The fact that NIST's statements during this

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 275

this report, NIST no longer affirms the two elements that, according to Popular Mechanics, had provided a satisfactory solution to the mystery of WTC 7's collapse. That is, (1) NIST no longer claims that the diesel fuel in WTC 7 explained why the fires burned so long, saying instead that "fuel oil fires did not play a role in the collapse of WTC 7."³⁴ And (2) NIST no longer claims that the collapse of WTC 7 was significantly caused by damage inflicted on it by North Tower debris, saying instead: "Other than initiating the fires in WTC 7, the damage from the debris from WTC 1 had little effect on initiating the collapse of WTC 7."³⁵ The second of these two reversals means that, contrary to what Popular Mechanics had said in its 2006 book, NIST does make the claim that a steel-framed high-rise building had, for the first time in history, been brought down by fire alone. This reversal also undermines an essential element in Popular Mechanics' argument against the idea that WTC 7 was brought down with explosives. In a 2006 BBC documentary entitled *The Conspiracy Files: 9/11*,

Davin Coburn, a research editor for Popular Mechanics, was asked about the fact that the collapse of WTC 7 “does look exactly like a controlled demolition.” He replied:

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 6

The magazine Fire Engineering wrote in 2002: [T]he “official investigation” blessed by FEMA... is a half-baked farce that may already have been commandeered by political forces whose primary interests, to put it mildly, lie far afield of full disclosure. Except for the marginal benefit obtained from a three-day, visual walk-through of evidence sites conducted by ASCE investigation committee members—described by one close source as a “tourist trip”—no one’s checking the evidence for anything.²² As these statements illustrate, no real investigation was allowed. Moreover, even if the FEMA and ASCE personnel themselves, as thinking individuals, rejected the administration’s claim—according to which the airplane impacts and resulting fires sufficed to bring down all three buildings—they could not have published a FEMA–ASCE report challenging that claim.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 6

meant that, as New York Times reporter Philip Shenon wrote, none of the commissioners had “a staff member of their own, typical on these sorts of independent commissions.” Zelikow thereby prevented “any of the commissioners from striking out on their own in the investigation.”²³

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 8

Although Kean and Hamilton said that the Commission, unlike conspiracy theorists, started with the facts, not with a conclusion—“we were not setting out to advocate one theory or interpretation of 9/11 versus another”²⁹—they admitted that Zelikow gave one of the teams the task of “tell[ing] the story of al Qaeda’s most successful operation—the 9/11 attacks.”³⁰ There could be no clearer example of starting with a theory.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 8

The staff assignments, we now know, were based on an outline of the Commission’s final report that Zelikow had prepared in advance. This startling fact, mentioned by Kean and Hamilton, was revealed more fully by Philip Shenon, who reported that it was “a detailed outline, complete with ‘chapter headings, subheadings, and sub-subheadings.’” Shenon also revealed that Kean and Hamilton conspired with Zelikow to conceal the existence of this outline—for fear that the staff would regard this outline “as evidence that they—and Zelikow—had predetermined the report’s outcome.”³¹ How could they possibly have concluded

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 10

One especially well-known and deadly example of scientific distortion ordered by the Bush–Cheney White House involved Ground Zero after the 9/11 attacks. On September 14, 2001, the Boston Globe reported that scientists had determined that the air had “levels of asbestos up to four times the safe level, placing unprotected emergency workers at risk of disease.”³⁷ On September 18, however, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a statement saying that the “air is safe to breathe,” specifically assuring New Yorkers that the air did not contain “excessive levels of asbestos.”³⁸

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 10

Why did the EPA lie—as Dr. Cate Jenkins, one of its scientists, later testified that it had?³⁹ EPA Inspector General Nikki Tinsley reported that pressure from the White House “convinced EPA to add reassuring statements and delete cautionary ones.” Specifically, Tinsley said, statements were deleted about the potential harmful effects of airborne dust containing asbestos, lead, glass fibers and concrete.⁴⁰ On the basis of the EPA’s assurance, many of

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 10

the White House would force the EPA to tell such a lie, even though this lie would endanger the lives of thousands of Ground Zero workers, would it not also, if it had arranged the controlled demolition of the Twin Towers and WTC 7, have made sure that NIST would issue reports covering up this fact? Given the record of the Bush–Cheney administration, one can reject this possibility out of hand only if one presupposes, circularly, that the White House was not complicit in the destruction of the WTC buildings.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 25

NIST’s WTC 7 report was not, however, submitted to a peer-review process. NIST did, as we will see, invite the general public, and thereby fellow scientists, to offer “comments” on it. But there was no neutral adjudicator to require NIST to respond in a responsible way to the criticisms it received. And, as we will see, NIST for the most part simply ignored these critiques—thereby failing to show even pro forma respect for the standard review process of the scientific community.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 28

In fact, insofar as there is a “textbook” that the NIST investigation should have followed, it is the Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations put out by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). This NFPA manual says that investigators should look for evidence of explosives whenever there is “high-order damage,” which is defined thus: High-order damage is characterized by shattering of the structure, producing small, pulverized debris. Walls, roofs, and structural members are splintered or shattered, with the building completely demolished. Debris is thrown great distances, possibly hundreds of feet.³ The first two sentences in this description apply fully to the destruction of WTC 7. Although the third sentence, which speaks of debris being thrown great distances, does not, it definitely does apply to the destruction of the Twin Towers—which NIST itself admits by claiming that debris from the collapse of the North Tower, which was several hundred feet away, damaged and started fires in WTC 7.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 28

In any case, given the fact that the collapse of WTC 7 as well as that of the Twin Towers manifested many of the features mentioned in the NFPA manual as signs of “high-order damage,” NIST was virtually mandated to begin its investigation by looking for evidence that explosives

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 29

Besides following from the fact that the collapse of WTC 7 exemplified many standard features of controlled implosions, including showing signs of “high-order damage,” the conclusion that NIST should have begun its investigation by looking for evidence of explosives also follows from another principle discussed in Chapter 2: Investigators should avoid positing, without good reasons, unprecedented causes for familiar occurrences. This principle in turn follows from another, which is that like effects generally imply like causes.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 30

Whereas “infinitesimal probability” means virtually zero probability, a structural engineer, Kamal Obeid, has bluntly rated the probability to be, simply, zero. Pointing out that the perfectly vertical and hence symmetrical collapse of WTC 7 required all of its 82 steel columns to have failed simultaneously, Obeid stated that for this to have occurred without the use of explosives would have been an “impossibility.”⁷

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 30

Why would NIST, rather than starting with the hypothesis of controlled demolition—which virtually all scientists, architects, structural engineers, and controlled demolition experts around the world would have considered the most likely hypothesis—have started with a hypothesis that most nongovernmental physicists, architects, and structural engineers would have considered extremely unlikely—so unlikely that physicist John Wyndham called it “the least likely assumption”?

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 33

In the Introduction and Chapter 3, we saw seven features of the collapse of WTC 7 that are also common features of controlled implosions—namely, that the collapse began at the bottom, started suddenly, was total, was vertical, occurred in virtual free fall, involved the pulverization of much of the concrete, and resulted in a relatively small pile of debris. These features, which can all be seen in videos of WTC 7’s collapse,¹ are acknowledged by NIST. But there are two other features, which can also be seen on videos, that NIST does not acknowledge: apparent demolition squibs and windows that were blown out at the onset of the collapse.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 35

The concluding sentence of Jones’s 2006 essay—“The official reports lack an explanation for these squibs”—remains true today. NIST, in fact, did not even try to explain the apparent squibs coming out of WTC 7. A search of its long (729-page) report turns up not a single instance of the word “squib” or “puff.” The issue is also not addressed in its “Questions and Answers about the NIST WTC 7 Investigation.”¹¹ So, having given an obviously inadequate explanation of the squibs that appeared during the collapses of the Twin Towers, NIST simply ignored the squibs that are visible in videos of the collapse of WTC 7.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 35

In 2008, a video of the collapse of WTC 7 appeared on the internet that evidently had not previously been available to the public. In this video, titled “New 911 Building 7 Collapse Clearly Shows Demolition,” a vertical

row of approximately eight windows, between (roughly) the 29th and 37th floors, can be seen being blown out as WTC 7 begins to collapse.¹² There would seem to be no way that NIST's theory of this building's collapse, to be discussed in Part II of this book, could explain these blown-out windows. It is not surprising, therefore, that NIST did not mention them. The apparent demolition squibs and the blown-out windows were evidently part of the physical evidence that NIST was content to ignore in order to find a politically acceptable theory. But they were only a small part. There is much more.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 39

NIST's failure to do justice to the squibs, the blown-out windows, and the pools of molten metal would, by themselves, make its theory inadequate. But there are still more things that NIST ignores.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 40

The RJ Lee report of May 2004 represented, incidentally, a revision of an earlier report, entitled "WTC Dust Signature Study: Composition and Morphology," dated December 2003.³⁴ Why the report was revised is not made clear, but there are some interesting differences between the two versions. In order to prove the Deutsche Bank's contamination claim, the RJ Lee Group argued in its final report that the dust in the building had characteristics that resulted from "the collapse of the WTC Towers and the subsequent fires at the WTC site which collectively were unique events that produced unique dust." In a statement that explained its title, the RJ Lee report added: "The unique characteristics of this dust are collectively referred to as the WTC Dust Signature," which "differentiate[s] it from other building dust."

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 40

The report then listed five main elements in this signature, one of which was: "Spherical iron and spherical or vesicular silicate particles that result from exposure to high temperature."³⁶ This statement, which implies (without explicitly stating) that iron had melted, is the only statement about the modification of iron by high temperature in the final version of the RJ Lee report. The earlier version, by contrast, had contained much more about iron. It said: "Particles of materials that had been modified by exposure to high temperature, such as spherical particles of iron and silicates, are common in WTC Dust... but are not common in 'normal' interior office dust."³⁷ This 2003 version of the report even pointed out that, whereas iron particles constitute only 0.04 percent of normal building dust, they constituted (a whopping) 5.87 percent of WTC dust. This earlier version also explicitly stated that iron and other metals were "melted during the WTC Event, producing spherical metallic particles."

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 41

The word "melt" was completely absent, by contrast, from the 2004 version. Only scientifically informed readers would realize that the existence of spherical iron particles implied that iron had melted. Nevertheless, the final version of the RJ Lee report did indicate that the dust contained spherical iron and silicate particles, which had been produced by "high temperatures."

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 41

This explanation, however, does not work. The existence of “spherical iron particles” means—as the 2003 report had explicitly stated—that iron had been melted. Iron does not melt until it reaches 1,538°C (2,800°F),⁴¹ and the building fires, as we saw earlier, could not have heated iron anywhere close to that temperature. The RJ Lee report, moreover, suggested that some substances must have been heated to still higher temperatures. Lead must have become hot enough to volatilize (boil) and hence to vaporize: The presence of lead oxide on the surface of mineral wool indicate [sic] the existence of extremely high temperatures during the collapse which caused metallic lead to volatilize, oxidize, and finally condense on the surface of the mineral wool.⁴² Although the word “vaporize” was never used in the final version of the RJ Lee report, the 2003 version of this passage explicitly referred to temperatures “at which lead would have undergone vaporization.”⁴³ For lead to boil and hence vaporize, it must be heated to 1,749°C (3,180°F).⁴⁴ As the report indicates, therefore, the temperatures must have been not merely high but extremely high.⁴⁵

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 42

NIST’s treatment was not equally commendable. It dealt with the RJ Lee report’s revelation—that certain ingredients in the WTC dust had been produced by extremely high temperatures—by simply ignoring it. From reading NIST’s reports on the Twin Towers and WTC 7, one would never know about the remarkable findings of the RJ Lee Group’s extensive study of the WTC dust.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 43

This means that the USGS’s report mentions the existence of particles in the dust that should not have been there, given the official explanation of the collapses (according to which they were produced by a combination of airplane impacts, fire, and gravitation, without the aid of explosives). And yet the USGS report, like the RJ Lee report, provides no explanation as to how those iron-rich spheres could have been created. But at least the USGS report, like the RJ Lee report, did mention these phenomena. By contrast, just as NIST did not mention the RJ Lee report’s findings, it also did not mention those of the USGS report, even though this report had been produced by another agency of the federal government (the USGS is an agency of the US Department of the Interior). NIST thereby avoided the need to explain how these iron-rich particles could have been created without explosives to produce the requisite temperature.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 43

The failure of the NIST scientists to mention these iron-rich particles, it should be emphasized, was not based on ignorance of them. It was a simple refusal to mention them—a refusal that could be defended only by a pretense not to understand a basic principle of scientific method. After the release of NIST’s Draft report on WTC 7 in August 2008, a member of the 9/11 truth movement asked NIST about the iron-rich spheres. NIST replied with one sentence: “The NIST investigative team has not seen a coherent and credible hypothesis for how iron-rich spheres could be related to the collapse of WTC 7.”⁴⁹ In giving this answer, the NIST scientists pretended not to understand that the scientific method works the other way around. Scientists cannot legitimately refuse to mention some phenomenon until they have found a “coherent and credible hypothesis” to account for it (and certainly not until they have found a politically acceptable hypothesis). The empirical dimension of scientific

methodology demands that empirical data be reported, whether or not a hypothesis is currently on hand to explain them. To refuse to report the data is to commit scientific fraud.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 45

To summarize: Although NIST claimed that it knew of no evidence that explosives had been used, it ignored evidence, provided by three different sets of scientists, showing that the WTC dust contained particles that could have been created only by extremely high temperatures—temperatures that could not have been produced by fire.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 46

Far from providing a possible solution, however, this information simply deepened the mystery, for three reasons. First, NIST itself does not claim, as we saw earlier, that any of the steel in WTC 7 was heated even to 700°C, let alone to 1,000°C. So the fact that sulfur can lower steel's melting point to about 1,000°C does not explain why some of the building's steel had melted, if the official explanation, according to which fire brought the building down, is presupposed. Second, as Glanz and Lipton indicate, as long as that explanation is presupposed, the presence of the sulfur constitutes a second mystery. Third, even if the presence of sulfur could be explained, there would still be the mystery of how some of it, as they reported, "combined with atoms in the steel," because that could happen only at extremely high temperatures.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 47

In an article that appeared in November 2001, Glanz reported that one of the WPI professors, Jonathan Barnett, said that fire "would not explain steel members in the debris pile that appear to have been partly evaporated in extraordinarily high temperatures."⁵⁹ If Glanz (who himself has a Ph.D. in physics) was correctly reporting Barnett's statement, so that Barnett had said that some steel had evaporated, then we would be talking about very high temperatures indeed, because the normal boiling point of structural steel—apart from a reaction involving sulfur—is roughly the same as that of iron, namely 2,861°C (5,182°F). The claim that some steel had evaporated was also attributed to Abolhassan Astaneh-Asl, a professor of civil engineering at the University of California at Berkeley. Immediately after 9/11, he received a National Science Foundation grant to spend two weeks at Ground Zero studying steel from the buildings. One of his discoveries involved a horizontal I-beam from WTC 7. According to a New York Times story by Kenneth Change, Astaneh-Asl reported that "[p]arts of the flat top of the I, once five-eighths of an inch thick, had vaporized."

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 48

Barnett and the other two WPI professors reported their discoveries in an essay entitled "Limited Metallurgical Examination," which was included as an appendix to FEMA's report on the WTC buildings.⁶¹ Two Mysteries: In the summary of their analysis of a piece of steel from WTC 7, Barnett, Biederman, and Sisson made the following statement: 1. The thinning of the steel occurred by a high-temperature corrosion due to a combination of oxidation and sulfidation. 2. Heating of the steel into a hot corrosive environment approaching 1,000°C (1,832°F) results in the formation of a eutectic mixture of iron, oxygen, and sulfur that liquefied the steel. 3. The sulfidation attack of steel grain boundaries accelerated the corrosion and erosion of the steel. Having mentioned sulfidation in each of these three points, they then, under the heading "Suggestions for Further Research," added:

“The severe corrosion and subsequent erosion of Samples 1 and 2 are a very unusual event. No clear explanation for the source of the sulfur has been identified.”⁶²

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 48

NIST, as we will see later, said that it did not bother to test for sulfur because its presence in the debris would mean nothing, as it could be explained by the fact that the wallboard of the WTC buildings was made of gypsum, which is calcium sulfate. What the WPI professors reported, however, was not merely that there was sulfur in the debris. They reported that the steel had been sulfidized, which means that sulfur had entered into the intergranular structure of the steel (which Glanz and Lipton had indicated by saying that sulfur had “combined with atoms in the steel”). As chemist Kevin Ryan has said, the question NIST would need to answer is: “[H]ow did sulfates, from wallboard, tunnel into the intergranular microstructure of the steel and then form sulfides within?”⁶³ Physicist Steven Jones has added: [I]f NIST claims that sulfur is present in the

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 50

That, however, would not be the case. NIST’s report on WTC 7—like its earlier report on the Twin Towers—did not even mention the discovery of the three WPI professors, which had been reported in the appendix to the FEMA report and elsewhere. It ignored, therefore, what the New York Times had called “perhaps the deepest mystery uncovered in the investigation.” In spite of this fact, Shyam Sunder, as we saw, declared that NIST had solved the mystery of the collapse of WTC 7.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 51

Steel samples were removed from the site before the NIST investigation began. In the immediate aftermath of Sept. 11, debris was removed rapidly from the site to aid in recovery efforts and facilitate emergency responders’ efforts to work around the site. Once it was removed from the scene, the steel from WTC 7 could not be clearly identified. Unlike the pieces of steel from WTC 1 and WTC 2, which were painted red and contained distinguishing markings, WTC 7 steel did not contain such identifying characteristics.⁷⁶ This statement was clearly intended to give the impression that no steel from WTC 7 had been recovered. NIST had even made this claim explicitly in a 2005 report.⁷⁷ In light of the experiments on pieces of WTC 7 steel reported by the four professors, how could we avoid concluding that this statement was simply a lie? The falsity of NIST’s claim was pointed out by a critic in one of the “Comments” posted at NIST’s website in response to its Draft for Public Comment, issued in August 2008. Referring to NIST’s 2005 report stating that no steel from WTC 7 was recovered, this critic, using the pseudonym “Skeptosis,” wrote: NIST seems to have made no effort to obtain or examine existing steel samples (such as the heavily corroded beam featured in FEMA 403, Appendix C) known to have come from WTC 7, choosing instead to estimate the properties of the steel “completely from the literature.” Being required by NIST’s protocol to explain the reason for his comment and to provide a suggested revision of the passage, Skeptosis added these statements: Reason for Comment: Surely the theoretical steel described in the literature would not show any signs of sulfidation and erosion (as were found on the actual steel recovered from WTC 7), ensuring that NIST would not be required to investigate or identify the cause of this bizarre phenomenon. Suggestion for Revision: “While steel from WTC 7 was, in fact, recovered, NIST made no efforts to obtain or examine this steel. Despite the failures of previous examinations to determine the cause of the sulfidation and erosion of steel samples from WTC 7, NIST felt that an investigation

into the potential causes of this deterioration could threaten the Institute's ability to arrive at a conclusion that would not implicate domestic saboteurs."⁷⁸ Whether this letter made the NIST authors smile, I do not know. But it did not, in any case, lead them to revise their report.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 53

This response raises five questions. First, it reveals that NIST's lead investigator knew about this "piece of steel from Building 7," and yet NIST, besides not mentioning it in its Draft for Public Comment, which was released five days before this technical briefing, also did not mention it in its Final Report, which was issued three months later. Second, NIST continued to claim in its public documents that no steel from WTC 7 had been recovered: In an updated version of its "Questions and Answers" document about WTC 7, which appeared in December 2008, NIST repeated the statement quoted above from the first version of this document, in which it had claimed that "the steel from WTC 7 could not be clearly identified"—even though this was almost four months after Sunder's acknowledgment that he knew about at least one piece of steel recovered from WTC 7.⁸¹ There can be no doubt, therefore, that NIST was guilty of scientific fraud by deliberately failing to report, and even denying the existence of, evidence that contradicted its theory. Third, Sunder acknowledged knowing about this piece of steel only after two of the professors who had reported it—Jonathan Barnett and Richard Sisson—had stated on a BBC program about WTC 7 (to be discussed in the next chapter) that, in Sunder's paraphrase, "there was no evidence that any of the residue in that... piece of steel had any relationship to an undue fire event in the building or any other kind of incendiary device in the building." Why had he not acknowledged it earlier, before he had a statement from them that could be used to suggest—even if deceptively—that it no longer posed a threat to NIST's theory? This is not how science is supposed to operate. Fourth, the Barnett–Sisson–Sunder statement did not really lessen the threat to the official story posed by this piece of steel, which had been melted, oxidized, and sulfidized—processes that would take extremely high temperatures. If these changes in the steel were not caused by fire (as everyone agrees) or some kind of "incendiary device" (such as one made of thermate) or by an explosive, then how were they brought about? Neither Barnett, Sisson, nor Sunder answered this question. For people who accept the official account of the destruction of the World Trade Center, this melted, oxidized, and sulfidized piece of steel still remains a deep mystery. Fifth, given the fact that this piece of steel had been publicly acknowledged as a deep mystery, it clearly demanded a thorough investigation and discussion. And yet NIST's only public treatment of it consisted of Sunder's paraphrase of a statement made on a television show. If this is how the present staff at NIST believes that science should be done, then it would seem that a thorough housecleaning (among other things) is in order, if President Obama's commitment to good science is to be fulfilled.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 60

Furthermore, the various metals found in the dust in surprisingly high concentrations can also be explained by this hypothesis. Take, for example, the extremely high percentage of iron-rich particles in the WTC dust, said by the 2003 RJ Lee report to constitute 5.87 percent of the dust—which, as Jones and his coauthors emphasized, is "nearly 150 times" the amount found in ordinary office building dust.¹¹² This extremely high concentration of iron-rich particles can be explained by the aforementioned fact that iron oxide is the most commonly used oxidant in nanothermites. Also, the unusually high concentrations of barium, copper, molybdenum, nickel, titanium, vanadium, and zinc, which were found by the RJ Lee, Cahill, and/or USGS studies, can be explained by the fact that oxidants based on these metals are sometimes used in the production of nanothermites.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 61

Finally, still another phenomenon supporting the hypothesis proposed by Ryan, Gourley, and Jones was the simultaneous spiking of emissions of chemicals commonly used in aluminothermic mixtures. For example, the EPA data showed that the top nine days for iron emissions were also the top nine days for aluminum emissions—which is precisely what would be expected if nanothermite composed of aluminum and iron oxide had been used to demolish the buildings. Eight of those same days, moreover, were also the top days for emissions of barium, another common ingredient in thermitic materials.¹¹³ The unusual amount of barium in the WTC dust, incidentally, might provide a clue as to the provider of at least some of the thermitic material. The film Zero has footage in which Steven Jones says:

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 61

In sum: The long-lasting fires at Ground Zero, along with the unusual emissions noted by Professor Cahill and the EPA, provide further evidence that WTC 7 and the Twin Towers were brought down with explosives. NIST could have contested this conclusion by providing an alternative explanation for the long-enduring heat at Ground Zero and for the emissions of chemicals and metals that should not have been present. Instead, NIST's WTC 7 report dealt with these phenomena in the same way it dealt with the reported pools of molten metal, the scientific reports of particles that could have been produced only by extremely high temperatures, and the pieces of steel that, according to the WPI professors, had undergone oxidation, sulfidation, intergranular melting, and perhaps even vaporization: by simply ignoring them. Once again NIST illustrated Whitehead's observation that if, when formulating a theory, scientists are "content to disregard half [the] evidence," any apparent success of their theory is merely illusory.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 67

repeating its earlier answer, NIST implied that it was a good explanation. But it was not. One problem is that NIST's statement—that such a test "would not necessarily have been conclusive"—entails that it might possibly have been conclusive. This point was made in a "Request for Correction," which was submitted to NIST in 2007 by a group of scholars that included Steven Jones and Kevin Ryan. In their letter, they pointed out several problems in NIST's report on the Twin Towers. With regard to the question at hand, they wrote: A chemical analysis for explosive residue on the steel or in the dust... could put to rest... the theory that explosives were responsible for the collapses of the Twin Towers.¹⁴⁴

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 68

other words, even if a positive result would not have been conclusive, a negative result, showing that there was not any residue from explosives in the Ground Zero dust, would have been conclusive. It would have conclusively disproved the theory that explosives had been used. As the group of scholars pointed out in a later "Appeal" to NIST, this would have required only "a very simple lab test."¹⁴⁵ Why would NIST's scientists not have performed this test? Was it because they knew that the test would not have provided this negative result? A second problem with NIST's claim is that a positive result, showing the presence of thermite residue, might indeed have been conclusive. The group of scholars made this point in their "Request for Correction" by quoting a statement from Materials Engineering, Inc. (a company that "provides assistance in arson investigations"),¹⁴⁶ which says:

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 68

When thermite reaction compounds are used to ignite a fire, they produce a characteristic burn pattern, and leave behind evidence. These compounds are rather unique in their chemical composition, containing common elements such as copper, iron, calcium, silicon and aluminum, but also contain more unusual elements, such as vanadium, titanium, tin, fluorine and manganese. While some of these elements are consumed in the fire, many are also left behind in the residue.... The results [of Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy on minute traces of residue], coupled with visual evidence at the scene, provide absolute certainty that thermite reaction compounds were present, indicating the fire was deliberately set.¹⁴⁷ Accordingly, these scholars said:

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 71

So, although no steel-framed high-rise building had ever been brought down by diesel fuel fires, normal building fires, or girder failures, NIST thought that hypotheses about the collapse of WTC 7 based on these causes were credible enough to justify careful investigations. And although nanothermite could have helped bring the building down and could, moreover, explain the melted steel and the “blast-oriented sounds,” NIST found the hypothesis that nanothermite was used to bring down WTC 7 so lacking in credibility that checking the WTC dust for unreacted nanothermite would not have been justified! Sunder’s reply shows that, besides refusing

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 80

With regard to NIST’s limited denial—that none of the FDNY testimonials spoke of explosions “in the region below the impact and fire floors”—NIST’s “taken as a whole” statement in this letter seemed to admit that there were some testimonies of this type while claiming, in an attempt to justify its silence about them, that there were not enough of them to be worth mentioning. NIST, however, had not simply failed to mention them. It had specifically stated that the FDNY collected “no evidence... of any blast or explosions in the region below the impact and fire floors.” No evidence would mean no testimonies of this sort whatsoever. Accordingly, insofar as NIST admitted that the FDNY oral histories did include some testimonies of this sort, it admitted that its limited denial had been false. And yet NIST has never publicly retracted it, so we have here another example of scientific fraud.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 82

Rodriguez’s testimony that he had witnessed an explosion before the attack on the North Tower was reported by the BBC.²⁴ His account was also corroborated by José Sanchez, who was in the workshop on the fourth sub-level. Sanchez said that he and a coworker heard a big blast that “sounded like a bomb,” after which “a huge ball of fire went through the freight elevator.”

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 82

When Rodriguez later learned that NIST was doing the official investigation of the destruction of the Twin Towers, he wanted to let its researchers know about his experience. But, he discovered, NIST was unreceptive: I contacted NIST... four times without a response. Finally, [at a public hearing] I asked them before they came up with their conclusion... if they ever considered my statements or the statements of any of the other survivors

who heard the explosions. They just stared at me with blank faces.²⁶ Clearly, given the fact that Rodriguez was reporting something that NIST did not want to hear, his “national hero” status did not count for much. NIST treated his testimony with the same lack of respect that it would show for that of Barry Jennings (to be discussed below). NIST’s unscientific treatment of testimonial

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 86

Giuliani’s account, published in 2002, was evidently the first attempt by a spokesperson for the official story about 9/11 to deal with the potentially problematic fact that two city employees, Michael Hess and Barry Jennings, had become trapped in WTC 7 on the morning of 9/11. I have dealt with this account at some length partly because of its intrinsic interest, as the account provided by the then mayor of New York City, and partly because NIST would later give essentially the same account, which would, in turn, be echoed in 2008 by the BBC.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 89

Jennings was also certain that what he considered an explosion beneath him could not have been simply effects from the collapse of one of the towers. During the interview, Dylan Avery pointed out that, according to defenders of the official story, “the whole reason that Building 7 collapsed... is because the North Tower fell onto it and caused damage. And what people are going to say is... that Barry was hit by debris from the North Tower.” Jennings replied: “No. What happened was, when we made it back to the 8th floor, as I told you earlier, both buildings were still standing.”⁵³ Jennings clearly rejected Giuliani’s claim, therefore, that it was debris from the North Tower collapse that caused him and his companion to become trapped. After getting back up to the 8th floor, Jennings

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 90

In any case, the most important point is that, whereas Giuliani had claimed that the two men were trapped because of damage caused by the collapse of the North Tower, Jennings stated that the North Tower and even the South Tower collapsed only after an explosion had caused them to become trapped. What Jennings called “an explosion” beneath him could not, therefore, have simply been some effects created in WTC 7 by the collapse of the North Tower. He and Hess were clearly describing an explosion that occurred in WTC 7 approximately an hour before the 10:28 collapse of the North Tower.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 91

Jennings’ account of the destroyed lobby is given added credibility by the fact that he (and perhaps also Hess) evidently reported it shortly after the event. The previously cited Independent story, published two days after 9/11, said that Hess and Jennings went “downstairs to the lobby, or what was left of it.”⁶² It cannot be claimed, therefore, that Jennings’ statement to Avery about the destruction of the lobby was a later elaboration. Before completing his narrative, Jennings spoke of still more explosions, saying: They took us out through a hole in the wall.... And this big giant police officer came to me, and he says, “You have to run,” and I said, “I can’t run, my knees are swollen.” He said, “You’ll have to get on your knees and crawl, then, because we have reports of more explosions.”⁶³

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 94

Having distorted Jennings' testimony on many points by changing the timeline of the events he reported, NIST then completely omitted the final part of his testimony, in which he reported that the lobby of WTC 7 had been destroyed, that he felt himself "stepping over people," and that the "big giant police officer" said that there were "reports of more explosions." NIST again simply omitted whatever evidence did not fit its story.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 95

Is it possible that Jennings had not told NIST the things he told Avery? Although this is not likely—especially given the fact that Jennings, as we saw earlier—explicitly said that he had been asked the same questions and had given the same answers—it is possible. Assuming for the sake of argument that it is true, is it also possible that NIST did not know about Avery's interview of Jennings? That would be very unlikely simply from the fact that this interview, titled "Barry Jennings Uncut," was made available on the internet in the second week of July 2008, over a month before NIST issued its Draft Report on WTC 7. Beyond that, moreover, Avery notified NIST about the interview, he has reported.⁷¹ We can safely conclude, therefore, that NIST was not ignorant of this interview; it simply ignored it. I turn now to the way in which the BBC, which supported NIST's explanation of the collapse of WTC 7, treated the testimony of Hess and Jennings in its documentary about WTC 7.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 96

To complete the timeline distortion, the BBC, after showing Jennings describing how he finally got outside the building, showed a clock with its hands at 12:03 (which came close to the rescue time—"12:10 to 12:15PM"—stated in NIST's 2004 Interim Report on WTC 7). Here, however, the BBC slipped up, saying that Jennings was finally rescued "after surviving for three hours, trapped inside an inferno."⁷⁸ This was a slip, because if Jennings had been trapped in the building for three hours before being rescued at 12:03, he would have been trapped since 9:03. The BBC thereby inadvertently stated the truth: that Jennings (and Hess) had started down the stairs shortly after the South Tower was struck (which occurred at 9:03), not shortly after the South Tower collapsed (which occurred at 9:59). This slip aside, the most important issue is how the BBC handled the problematic fact that Michael Hess, who had been with Jennings and was rescued at the same time, had given an interview several blocks away before noon. If Hess and Jennings had not been rescued until after noon, as the BBC suggested, Hess could not have been giving this interview before noon. The BBC dealt with this problem by simply making no mention of Hess, giving the impression that Jennings experienced these events all by himself. The BBC did this even though Jennings had sometimes, in statements included in the BBC program, used the word "we." In describing explosions, for example, he said: "The first explosion I heard when we were on the stairwell landing, when we made it down to the 6th floor."⁷⁹ Bizarrely, however, the BBC narrator consistently spoke only of Jennings, never uttering Hess's name or even mentioning that Jennings was with another man.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 97

The controversy, such as it was, revolved around Jennings' statement that, when he was being taken through the lobby by a firefighter, they were "stepping over people." After declaring, "There is no evidence that anyone died

in Tower 7 on 9/11,” the BBC tried to make it seem as if the Loose Change producers, by saying that Jennings had indicated otherwise, had mischaracterized his testimony. To do this, the BBC first showed Dylan Avery saying: “He [Jennings] says he was stepping over dead bodies in the lobby.” The BBC then said: “Trouble is, Barry Jennings himself disagrees with their interpretation of his words.” It then showed Jennings saying: I didn’t like the way, you know... they portrayed me as seeing dead bodies. I never saw dead bodies.... I said it felt like I was stepping over them, but I never saw any.⁸⁰ As we can see, this was at most a quibble about words. The central issue raised by the BBC in its statement introducing this segment was whether Jennings had suggested that there were bodies in the lobby. He clearly had. Whether he had seen them or merely felt them was a secondary matter, to which the BBC should not have devoted any time. But it clearly wanted to use this quibble to suggest that the Loose Change producers had misrepresented Jennings’ testimony on this subject. Moreover, the BBC provided no evidence that the Loose Change producers had ever claimed that Jennings had seen bodies. In the statement quoted above, Avery had said: “He [Jennings] says he was stepping over dead bodies in the lobby.” When the BBC confronted Avery on camera with the charge that he had taken Jennings’ statement out of context, Avery played the portion of the Loose Change interview in which Jennings said:

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 98

[T]he firefighter that took us down kept saying, “Don’t look down.” I asked, “Why?” And he said, “Do not look down.” We were stepping over people, and you know you can feel when you’re stepping over people.⁸¹ So, although the BBC had introduced this segment by saying that Jennings disagreed with the Loose Change producers’ interpretation of his words, it showed no actual disagreement. Indeed, this segment of the interview even explained why Jennings would not have “seen” any bodies—because he had been told by the firefighter not to look down. Was this supposed disagreement between Jennings and the Loose Change producers manufactured by the BBC? We do not know. What does seem clear, however, is that the BBC unfairly used it to create the impression that the Loose Change producers had distorted Jennings’ testimony. The BBC was thereby able to appear to have supported the claim with which it began this segment, namely: “There’s no evidence that anyone died in Tower 7 on 9/11.”

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 98

The BBC rightly called Jennings “the key witness in the controversy over what really happened inside Tower 7.” His testimony, undistorted, provided evidence that a very powerful explosion occurred within WTC 7 fairly early that morning, followed by other explosions, and that, at some point, people in the building were killed. Jennings, however, would not personally be able to correct the distortions of his record by NIST and the BBC. Although only 53 years old, he reportedly died, after several days in a hospital, on August 19, 2008.⁸² This was just two days before NIST had its August 21 press briefing to announce the Draft version of its final report on WTC 7.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 99

April 2009, for example, Dylan Avery hired a private investigator—reputed to be one of the best in the state of New York—to find out what she could. Within 24 hours, however, Avery received a message from her, saying: Due to some of the information I have uncovered, I have determined that this is a job for the police. I have refunded your credit card. Please do not contact me again about this individual. This sounded like the response

of a person who had been frightened. It is, in any case, not the response one would expect, as Avery observed, if she had merely found that Jennings had passed away “innocently in a hospital.”⁸³ Whatever its actual cause, Jennings’ death at that time was undeniably convenient for NIST. There would now be no chance that Jennings would be asked—perhaps again by Avery, perhaps by a mainstream reporter who had watched “Barry Jennings Uncut,” perhaps by a grand jury—what he thought about NIST’s report on WTC 7. Jennings’ death was also convenient, as we will see next, for the BBC.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 100

The BBC hence used Hess to refute what was said in the Loose Change interview by Jennings, who can no longer defend his account (except posthumously, by means of that interview, which is widely available on the internet and also in a new [2009] version of Loose Change⁹⁰). Back on 9/11 itself, Hess evidently gave the same account as Jennings. In his interview with UPN 9 News, as we saw, he said that there had been an explosion. At that time, Hess clearly had no idea what Giuliani’s account of WTC 7 would be. But after he became aware of this account—which would likewise become the account given by NIST and the BBC—Hess would not have wanted to contradict it: Besides being an old friend of Giuliani’s, he had since 2002 been a founding partner and vice chairman of the former mayor’s consulting business, Giuliani Partners LLC.⁹¹ Hess also, however, probably would not have wanted to contradict the account given by Barry Jennings, which had become somewhat well known on the internet. Indeed, if Hess had contradicted Jennings’ account and then Jennings had publicly disputed Hess’s account, implying that Hess was either lying or seriously confused, this dispute could have resulted in considerable publicity for something that Giuliani and other defenders of the official story surely wanted kept quiet—the fact that Jennings had testified to an enormous explosion in WTC 7 on the morning of 9/11 and that Hess had originally supported that testimony. It is not surprising, therefore, that Hess’s “first interview since 9/11” occurred only after Jennings was dead.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 101

The BBC apparently tried to suggest that the second version of its program, and hence its interview with Hess, had been made before Jennings had died. At the end of the program, the following statement appears on the screen: “Since this program was filmed Barry Jennings has sadly passed away.”⁹² That would most likely be true only if by “this program,” the BBC meant the first version of it, which was aired July 6, 2008. If Jennings died on August 19, the second version, which was not aired until October 26 and hence almost ten weeks later, was probably filmed after Jennings’ death. This assumption seems confirmed in Mike Rudin’s own blog of October 26, in which he said that the interview with Hess had been “recently recorded.” A second thing that is not surprising about Hess’s interview, when he finally did allow one, is that his account agrees point by point with Giuliani’s 2002 account (which can be reviewed on pages 85–86, above). Giuliani had written: “When [Hess] got to the 8th floor [of WTC 7], Tower 1—the North Tower—collapsed, part of it falling on top of the southern part of 7 World Trade Center.” Hess similarly, as we just saw, told the BBC that “the northern half of Number 1 [fell] on the southern half of our building.” Giuliani then wrote: “Luckily, Mike was in the northern section of the building.” Hess told the BBC: “We were in the northern half of our building so luckily we weren’t crushed.”⁹³ It was almost as if Hess had reviewed Giuliani’s account before doing the interview. In any case, by virtue of agreeing with Giuliani, Hess’s 2008 statement also agreed with NIST and thereby the BBC. Accordingly, as we saw, the BBC’s Mike Rudin said that Hess’s testimony “confirms” the BBC’s chronology. It could have confirmatory value, however, only if it were plausible. But it is problematic in many ways. One

problem is that Hess's BBC account is contradicted by Barry Jennings' account on two points: First, Jennings said that he and Hess ran down the stairs following the attack on the South Tower, hence not long after 9:03, but Hess now implies that they started down the stairs almost an hour later, right after 9:59, when the South Tower collapsed.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 102

Second, Jennings explicitly said that he heard explosions, stating: "The first explosion I heard when we were on the stairwell landing, when we made it down to the 6th floor. Then we made it back to the 8th floor, and I heard some more explosions." When he was asked by the BBC interviewer what it sounded like, Jennings said: "Like a boom, like an explosion."⁹⁴ But when Hess was asked whether he heard "any sounds, like explosions," he replies: "No, nothing.... My position, and I'm quite firm on it, there were no explosions."⁹⁵ If Hess really disagreed with Jennings on these points with regard to what the two of them had experienced, why did he wait until after Jennings was dead to give his contradictory account?

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 102

A second problem with Hess's new testimony involves the first of the above points of disagreement: the time at which the two men started down the stairs. As we saw earlier, an Independent story two days after 9/11 echoed Jennings' account, saying: "After the second plane hit they [Hess and Jennings] scrambled downstairs."⁹⁶ This story shows, therefore, that what Jennings told Dylan Avery is what he—and possibly Hess—had told the press immediately after the event. A third problem involves the second point of disagreement. When Hess was interviewed by UPN 9 News on 9/11, he did not express the slightest doubt about there having been an explosion. He did not, for example, speak of an event that might have been an explosion, or that he assumed to have been an explosion. He simply stated, as a matter of fact, that "there was an explosion." Would he have spoken with such certainty if he had not heard an explosion? And given how certain he appeared to have been at that time, before he knew what the official story was going to be, how can we believe his present claim, according to which he heard nothing and is now quite certain that

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 102

no explosions occurred? A fourth problem with Hess's statement to the BBC is that, in this statement, he implies that he and Jennings had arrived at WTC 7 shortly after the attack on the North Tower. He said: "In an emergency, we were supposed to go and huddle and plan and strategize with Mayor Giuliani in the emergency management center on the 23rd floor. That was the plan."⁹⁷ If that was the plan, Hess and Jennings should have arrived shortly after the first attack and hence around 9:00, as Jennings had said, not almost an hour later, shortly before the 9:59 collapse of the South Tower. But if they arrived at about 9:00AM and found that the emergency management center was empty, as Hess as well as Jennings said,⁹⁸ then why would they still have been up there at 9:59, when the South Tower collapsed? Why would they have remained in this empty building for almost an hour—especially after two World Trade Center buildings had been hit by airplanes? The idea is completely implausible. A fifth problem was discussed earlier in relation to NIST's account: If Hess and Jennings started down the stairs right after the collapse of the South Tower and hence at about 10:00AM, why would it have taken them 28 minutes to descend the 17 flights from the 23rd to the 6th floor? Jennings said that they were running down the stairs (saying that he was "jumping landings"), so it certainly would not have taken them over

90 seconds per floor. A sixth problem, which was mentioned earlier in discussing Giuliani's account, involves Hess's statement to the BBC that he and Jennings were in the northern part of WTC 7 (so that, when they went back up to the 8th floor, they could not see whether the Twin Towers had collapsed). If so, then why did the debris from the North Tower, which struck the south part of WTC 7, cause their stairwell, on the north side of the building, to become blocked? The account by Hess and the BBC, like that by Giuliani, is simply self-contradictory on this issue. A seventh problem for Hess's new story concerns his own interview with UPN 9 News: If the event that he had earlier called "an explosion" had really been caused by the collapse of the North Tower, which occurred at 10:28, and if he and Jennings had then been trapped for "about an hour and a half" before they were rescued, as he reported on that day itself, then how did he get back to City Hall, several blocks away, in time to be interviewed before noon?

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 103

Accordingly, every part of Hess's new story is either inherently implausible or contradicted by the testimony of Jennings, who—unlike Hess—had no obvious motive to lie. The BBC cannot credibly claim, therefore, that the truth of its chronology was "confirmed" by Hess's testimony. To conclude this discussion of the BBC's effort to bolster NIST's attempt to neutralize Barry Jennings' testimony about explosions in WTC 7: Far from bolstering NIST's account, the BBC succeeded only in making it more obviously problematic. It did this by allowing Jennings to tell his story on a mainstream television program while revising Jennings' chronology in a way that could be easily exposed as a distortion; by first trying to pretend that Jennings was by himself, even though he repeatedly spoke of "we"; by only later, after Jennings was dead, admitting that he had been accompanied by Michael Hess, who was now used by the BBC to support the official account; and by making public an interview with Hess that is so riddled with problems as to leave little doubt that it is a tissue of falsehoods from

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 104

beginning to end. As a result, the testimony of Barry Jennings stands: There were explosions in WTC 7 on the morning of 9/11, with a huge one occurring not long after 9:03, hence prior to the collapse of both of the Twin Towers.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 105

Moreover—to bring up a remarkable fact not mentioned earlier—this rescue account in NIST's 2008 report on WTC 7 is essentially the same as the rescue account provided in its 2005 report, which was quoted earlier. In my previous discussion of that 2005 account, however, I interpreted it in light of the statement, found in NIST's 2004 Interim Report on WTC 7, that the rescue did not occur until "12:10 to 12:15PM." But nothing in that 2005 rescue account itself—which had different authors than the 2004 report¹⁰¹—suggested that the rescue occurred so late. Instead, like the account provided in NIST's 2008 report, it suggested that Hess and Jennings were rescued at about 11:00AM. This is not surprising, given the fact that the same person—J. Randall Lawson—was the first-listed author of each document.¹⁰² In Lawson's 2005 version, however, he and his coauthor, Robert Vettori, were somewhat vague about how quickly the firefighters started up the stairs to rescue the three men (Hess, Jennings, and the security officer).¹⁰³ One could, therefore, not say for certain that their account contradicted NIST's statement, made in its 2004 Interim Report on WTC 7, that they were not rescued until "12:10 to 12:15PM."

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 106

But in Lawson's account in NIST's 2008 report, he and his coauthor, Richard Gann, are more explicit about this point. Their account, quoted above, says that when the security officer broke a window on the 7th floor (following the 10:28 collapse of WTC 1) and yelled for help, the firefighters, after unsuccessfully trying to get a ladder to his window, "came up the stairwell right away." This Lawson-Gann account could not reasonably be read as the description of a rescue effort that, by not succeeding until 12:10 to 12:15PM, took close to an hour and a half. It is clear, therefore, that this account contradicted the 2004 Interim Report's claim—a claim also made by the BBC104—that Hess and Jennings were not rescued until after

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 106

noon. The conclusion that NIST gave two mutually inconsistent versions of the rescue of the three men is confirmed by its treatment of the security officer, and in this case the inconsistency occurs within the pages of NIST's 2008 WTC 7 report itself. In its fifth chapter, written by William M. Pitts, we read that "a witness saw a fire on the southwest corner of the 7th floor at about 12:15PM, before being rescued (Chapter 6)."105 Pitts thereby agreed with NIST's 2004 Interim Report on WTC 7 with regard to the question of when the men were rescued. However, when we follow Pitts' suggestion to turn to Chapter 6, which is the chapter in which Randall Lawson and Richard Gann describe the rescues, we find that this "witness" is the security officer we discussed above. The statement about his seeing a fire on the 7th floor is in a sentence that was omitted, for the sake of brevity, in my earlier quotation of Lawson and Gann's 2008 account of the rescue. A portion of that passage, with the omitted sentence reinserted and italicized, reads:

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 107

In this Chapter 6 account by Lawson and Gann, the security officer observed the fire "shortly after WTC 1 collapsed," meaning shortly after 10:28AM—not at "about 12:15PM," as the Chapter 5 account by William Pitts states. Pitts even, as we saw above, referred readers to Chapter 6, evidently not realizing that its account contradicted his own. These two contradictions within the 2008 report—regarding the time at which the security officer observed a fire on the 7th floor and the time at which the three men were rescued—show that the various authors of the NIST report had not settled upon a consistent story. Obviously, both sets of stories cannot be true. And, as we have seen, the "12:10 to 12:15PM" rescue time contradicts not only the testimony of Jennings but also the fact that Hess gave an interview before noon. Of the two NIST stories, therefore, the Lawson-Gann account, which suggests that the men were rescued at about 11:00, is surely closer to the truth.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 110

To conclude this discussion about timing: If Hess and Jennings were rescued at about 11:00 and if this was at least an hour and a half after they had become trapped, then they had become trapped no later than about 9:30. NIST's rescue account, therefore, has inadvertently supplied evidence in favor of Jennings' report that the event that trapped them occurred prior to the collapse of either tower, so it must have been an explosion within WTC 7 itself.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 114

summarize: Whereas some firefighters, in line with the fact that fire had never caused a steel-framed high-rise building to come down, did not expect WTC 7 to collapse, some senior fighters did expect it to collapse, and correctly so. The question arises, therefore, as to why the latter group had this expectation.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 114

According to Captain Michael Currid, the Uniformed Fire Officers Association's sergeant at arms, he and other FDNY officers at some point went into WTC 7, where four or five fire companies were battling its flames, and yelled up the stairwells: "Drop everything and get out!" He did this, he said, because "[s]omeone from the city's Office of Emergency Management" had told him that WTC 7 was "basically a lost cause and we should not lose anyone else trying to save it."¹²⁶ The fact that the idea that WTC 7 was a lost cause came from Giuliani's Office of Emergency Management is significant. As I reported elsewhere, this same office had told some firefighters in advance that the Twin Towers were going to collapse.¹²⁷ Mayor Giuliani himself, in fact, told Peter Jennings on ABC News that he had been told that the towers were going to collapse shortly before the first of them actually did.¹²⁸ How could Giuliani's people have known that these three buildings—and only these three buildings—were going to collapse? The only possible answer seems to be their knowledge that explosives were going to bring these three buildings down. NIST, of course, failed to point out that the decision to stop fighting the fires in WTC 7 must surely have been based on such knowledge, not on any evidence that could have been discerned by firefighters lacking such knowledge.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 115

Further evidence of foreknowledge of WTC 7's collapse was provided by premature news reports, in which this building's collapse was announced before it actually occurred. These reports evidently began "at about 4:15," when CNN's Aaron Brown said: "We are getting information now that... Building 7 ... has either collapsed or is collapsing."¹²⁹ This was over an hour before the building actually did collapse (at 5:21). Additional premature announcements came from the BBC. At 4:53PM, the BBC's Radio Five Live said it had reports "that another large building has collapsed just over an hour ago." At 4:54, the BBC's domestic television news channel announced the collapse. Then at about 5:10, BBC World repeated this announcement. It even provided an explanation of why the building had collapsed, saying: "[T]his wasn't the result of a new attack but because the building had been weakened during this morning's attack." Finally, at 5:14, BBC reporter Jane Standley was seen announcing the collapse of the Salomon Brothers building—the other name for WTC 7—while it could still be seen standing in the background.¹³⁰ In February 2007, a video containing some of this news footage, especially of the BBC's premature reporting, was placed on the internet. After it had evoked an enormous amount of discussion and "lots of emails" to the BBC, Richard Porter, the head of news for BBC World, responded on his blog, writing: We're not part of a conspiracy. Nobody told us what to say or do on September 11th. We didn't get told in advance that buildings were going to fall down. We didn't receive press releases or scripts in advance of events happening.... If we reported the building had collapsed before it had done so, it would have been an error—no more than that.¹³¹

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 115

This was a manifestly inadequate response (as shown by viewers' responses to it, which numbered almost 600 by the end of 2007). It was obvious that the BBC's announcement was "an error." The question was: How could such an error—announcing the collapse almost 30 minutes before it happened—have occurred? Rather than offering some explanation, Porter simply exclaimed that the BBC was not part of any conspiracy. The suspicion that the BBC's premature announcement reflected something more than simply an inexplicable "error" was not entirely unreasonable, given some of the BBC's previous coverage of 9/11. On September 13, 2001, it published an article on its website entitled "How the World Trade Center Fell," which quoted two experts making the obviously false assertion that the buildings collapsed because the jet fuel-fed fires had melted their steel columns.¹³² Then in February 2007, just over a week before Porter's blog entry was published, the BBC aired one of the worst, most-biased television programs ever produced on the subject, *The Conspiracy Files: 9/11*.¹³³

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 116

In March 2007, Porter wrote another blog entry on the subject in which he said that, on the afternoon of 9/11, there had been "a fairly consistent picture being painted of Building 7 in danger of collapse." But how did the transition get made to the declaration that the building had collapsed? Referring to the fact that three BBC channels reported the collapse "in quick succession," Porter was "inclined to believe that one or more of the news agencies was reporting this, or at least reporting someone saying this." But why would such agencies have been reporting the collapse approximately 30 or even—in the case of CNN—60 minutes before it happened? Porter's only explanation was to "point to [the] confusing and chaotic situation on the ground."¹³⁴ This second blog entry by Porter evoked over 600 responses, most of which found his explanation inadequate. Porter could have offered a somewhat plausible explanation by suggesting that the rumor that WTC 7 was going to collapse, which had been circulating for several hours, at some point became changed, through misunderstanding, into the rumor that it had already collapsed. If we accept this explanation, which the BBC could have offered, we might conclude that the premature announcement of the collapse by the news media adds nothing to what we have already established, namely, that Giuliani's Office of Emergency Management had spread the word several hours in advance that WTC 7 was going to collapse.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 116

Even with that interpretation, however, the premature announcements were not insignificant, because they revealed in a dramatic and memorable fashion the fact that someone knew in advance that Building 7 was going to collapse. This is important because, given the salient facts—that WTC 7 had not been hit by a plane, that no steel-framed high-rise building had ever collapsed because of fire alone, that WTC 7 had fires on only a few floors, and that some of the other still-standing WTC buildings had suffered far worse damage—there should have been no reason to expect WTC 7 to collapse.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 117

Additional Statements from "Seven Is Exploding": Most of Indira Singh's testimony as quoted above can be heard on a video entitled "Seven Is Exploding" (which is a segment from a program aired on Italian television in April 2007). After playing Singh's statement, this video shows police officers saying: "Keep your eye on that

building, it'll be coming down.... This building is about to blow up; move it back." We then hear the sound of loud explosions, after which a firefighter says: "We gotta get back. Seven is exploding."136

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 118

They said you know you've got to stay behind this line because they're thinking about taking this building down, they're not sure if it's stable or not, so they were holding a line off because they had knowledge that something was gonna happen. Well, they pushed us back a little bit.... [A] couple of minutes later... people started coming back out to the street, I watched five New York City buses jam packed with people wanting to do search and rescue head down there towards Building 7... and right then Building 7 came down.137

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 119

The statement by the Silverstein Properties spokesman, as we saw, simply said that this conversation occurred "in the afternoon," which left open the possibility that it had occurred in the very early afternoon, before the firefighters had been ordered out of the building. It was widely agreed, as we have seen, that this order had been given around 2:00. But Silverstein, in response to a question from a "We Are Change" group in March 2008, said that the decision to pull was made "around 3:30 or 4:00PM."140 NIST, in implying that the interpretation suggested by the Silverstein Properties spokesman was true, failed to point out that Silverstein himself had undermined that interpretation.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 119

If this is what happened, "the Fire Department Commander on site at Seven World Trade Center" definitely would not have told Silverstein at "about 3:30 or 4:00" that "there were several firefighters in the building working to contain the fires." Accordingly, NIST itself, evidently without knowing it, helped Silverstein inadvertently undermine the official interpretation of his problematic "pull it" statement—an interpretation that had been endorsed by Popular Mechanics142 and even the US State Department.143 Moreover, given the fact that Silverstein did make the statement and that its meaning had been publicly debated, we would assume that NIST would have interviewed him about this. Did it? At the August 2008 technical briefing, 9/11 widow Lorie Van Auken asked: Did NIST interview Larry Silverstein to find out why he said, "There was so much loss of life we decided to pull it," regarding WTC 7?

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 120

NIST's lead investigator, Shyam Sunder, replied: "No, we did not interview Larry Silverstein."144 Although that admission—parallel to Sunder's

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 121

A little later, in any event, Sunder gave the same kind of answer to the following question from Lorie Van Auken: "Many people who were near WTC 7 on 9/11 did hear explosions. Some even heard a countdown on police radio. Did you speak with these people?" Sunder replied: No, we did not speak with those people, again for the same reason I just mentioned, so I won't repeat the whole argument, which is that the science speaks for itself and it's pretty robust.146

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 122

Hugo Bachmann and Jörg Schneider, both emeritus professors of structural analysis and construction at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, have stated that, in their opinion, WTC 7 was “with great probability” professionally demolished.¹⁴⁸ Jack Keller, emeritus professor of engineering at Utah State University (who had been named by Scientific American as one of the world’s leaders in using science and technology to benefit society), was even more definite, saying of this building’s destruction: “Obviously it was the result of controlled demolition.”

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 122

Another expert who has stated this was Danny Jowenko, a controlled demolition expert in the Netherlands with his own firm.¹⁵⁰ As mentioned in the Introduction, he was asked in 2006 by a filmmaker to comment on a video of the collapse of WTC 7 without knowing what it was—he had not realized that a third building had collapsed on 9/11. After viewing the video, he said: “They simply blew up columns, and the rest caved in afterwards.... This is controlled demolition.” When asked if he was certain, he replied: “Absolutely, it’s been imploded. This was a hired job. A team of experts did this.” When he was told that this happened on September 11, he was incredulous, repeatedly asking, “Are you sure?” When he was finally convinced, Jowenko said: “Then they worked very hard.”¹⁵¹ In 2007, Jowenko was asked whether he stood by his statement that it must have been controlled demolition. He replied: “Absolutely.... I looked at the drawings, the construction and it couldn’t be done by fire... absolutely not.”¹⁵² Jowenko also explained why controlled demolition experts in the United States have not stated this obvious fact. When the interviewer mentioned that he had phoned the US company Controlled Demolition, Inc., which said: “Oh, it’s possible it came down from fire,” Jowenko replied: “When... you have to earn your money in the States as a controlled demolition company and you say, ‘No, it was a controlled demolition,’ you’re gone.”¹⁵³ NIST, as a political rather than a scientific agency, did not report any of this expert testimony.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 123

NIST also ignored the fact that some senior members of the FDNY knew several hours in advance that the building was going to come down and that the source for this information seemed to be Giuliani’s Office of Emergency Management.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 129

This argument depends entirely on NIST’s assumption that if WTC 7 had been brought down by explosive material, the most plausible scenario would have involved nine pounds of RDX, which would have produced a very loud concussive sound. But RDX was emphatically not the most plausible type of explosive material for someone to use to bring down WTC 7. Indeed, among those who have argued that WTC 7 was brought down by controlled demolition, RDX has seldom if ever been named as the most likely explosive. Rather, as we have seen, the prime suspect has been nanothermite. As we saw in Chapter 4, the leading scientists who have worked on this issue have suggested that, in addition to the use of thermate, which is an incendiary, the perpetrators used nanothermite, which is classified as a high explosive. They regard it as the most likely candidate, partly because its signature has been repeatedly and independently discovered in the World Trade Center dust, and partly because of other virtues to be mentioned below.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 130

We can see, therefore, that NIST, in arguing against the feasibility of the controlled demolition of WTC 7 by means of arguing against controlled demolition using RDX, has engaged in one of the best-known of the fallacious forms of argumentation: attacking a straw man. That is, rather than responding to the real argument employed by proponents of the controlled demolition thesis, it attacked an argument of its own creation. Then, having knocked down this strawman argument, which it had erected on the pretense that RDX would have been employed in the most plausible of the controlled demolition scenarios, NIST could claim to have shown that WTC 7 was not brought down by controlled demolition.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 131

However, in spite of this and other calls for NIST to revise its discussion of this issue, no revisions were made. Indeed, a search of both versions of NIST's Final Report on WTC 7—both the brief and the long versions—reveals not a single instance of the word “thermite” (or “thermate”) or any word beginning with “nano.” It appears that NIST, after inviting the public to comment on the Draft version of its final report on WTC 7, simply ignored the comments that pointed out the straw-man nature of its RDX scenario.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 134

1978, for example, after the owners of the new Citicorp Tower learned that it was likely to fall over during a hurricane, they had it retrofitted during the evening hours, without the building's tenants ever knowing.²⁰ In light of the previous point about the Bush-family connections to WTC security, moreover, those who had the job of planting the material may have had no problem getting into the buildings during off hours.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 143

Accordingly, given NIST's directors and advisors, its various partnerships for research in nanotechnology, and its own center for nanoscience and nanotechnology, the idea that its scientists could have been unaware of the existence and capabilities of nanothermites is implausible. Insofar as the NIST authors implied ignorance of nanothermites, we can only conclude that they were dissembling.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 143

Deets' point is well grounded, because, as we saw in Chapter 3, the NFPA Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations points to “highorder damage” as a sign that explosives had gone off, and lists as one of the features of high-order damage: “Debris is thrown great distances, possibly hundreds of feet.” In its report on the Twin Towers, NIST avoided the need to explain what could have caused these horizontal ejections by its usual method: simply refusing to acknowledge them.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 144

In its reports on WTC 7, however, NIST does acknowledge them, at least implicitly. As we saw in the Introduction, NIST in earlier years suggested that the damage caused by the debris from the North Tower would

likely play a major role in its account of WTC 7's collapse. This stage of NIST's thinking was reflected in the 2006 book by Popular Mechanics. Saying NIST had found that "WTC 7 was far more compromised by falling debris than the FEMA report indicated," the Popular Mechanics authors wrote that NIST's investigators "now believe the building failed from a combination of long-burning fires in its interior and damage caused from the North Tower's collapse."⁵⁶ Later, as we have seen, NIST abandoned this twofold explanation, saying that WTC 7 was brought down by fire alone. But it still, as we will see, needed to appeal to debris from the North Tower's collapse to explain how the fires in WTC 7 got started. And it could hardly deny all the debris damage that had been described in its Interim Report on WTC 7, which said, among other things, that the "middle one-fourth to one-third width of the south face was gouged out from Floor 10 to the ground."⁵⁷

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 144

Here, in any case, is what NIST says in its 2008 report on WTC 7: When WTC 1 collapsed at 10:28:22AM, most of the debris landed in an area not much larger than the original WTC 1 building footprint. However, some fragments were forcibly ejected and traveled distances up to hundreds of meters. Pieces of WTC 1 hit WTC 7, severing six columns on Floors 7 through 17 on the south face and one column on the west face near the southwest corner. The debris also caused structural damage between Floor 44 and the roof.⁵⁸ Debris that caused such extensive damage, including the severing of seven steel columns, had to be quite heavy. NIST seemed implicitly to be admitting that sections of steel columns, after being forcibly ejected, had been hurled at least 650 feet (because "hundreds of meters" would mean at least 200 meters, which would be about 650 feet). Actually, NIST could have made its point without acknowledging that debris had traveled so far, because the North Tower was only 375 feet (about 115 meters) from WTC 7. Nevertheless, whether we are talking about 650 or only 375 feet, enormous force would be needed to eject large sections of steel that far out, so as to strike WTC 7. It would seem, therefore, that NIST's report on WTC 7, while explicitly denying that explosives were used to bring down this building, has implicitly admitted that they were used to demolish the Twin Towers. And if explosives were used in the towers, who could doubt that they were also used in WTC 7?

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 152

Another important element of NIST's account is a claim that it did not make in its final report. Supporters of the fire theory of the collapse of WTC 7, as I mentioned in the Introduction, had generally assumed that the fires had been spread and intensified by diesel oil contained in the building. NIST's final report on WTC 7, however, said that "fuel oil fires did not play a role in the collapse of WTC 7."¹⁶ Gone, therefore, was the possibility of claiming that the diesel fuel had played a role in WTC 7 analogous to that played by jet fuel in the Twin Towers. In those two buildings, NIST said, there was "widespread spraying of jet fuel to ignite numerous workstations or offices simultaneously." In WTC 7, by contrast, "the fire would have spread from one individual workstation or office to another."¹⁷ Nevertheless, as Chapter 8 will show, NIST

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 154

According to NIST, the high temperatures reached by the steel beams supporting Floors 6 through 13 on the northeast side of WTC 7, near Column 79, weakened them so much that they were ready to collapse. At the same time, the thermal elongation of a beam on Floor 13 caused the steel girder connecting Column 44 to Column 79 to disconnect from the latter, so that it was no longer supporting it. This loss of support for Column

79, along with other damage, caused Floor 13 to collapse, and its collapse triggered a cascade of collapses down to the 5th floor. Then Column 79, having lost support from the girder and the floors, buckled, and this started a chain reaction of column failures, leading eventually to the collapse of the entire building. One problem with this theory, already mentioned, is that it depends on greatly overestimated steel temperatures. A second problem is that, even if those temperatures were correct, the claim that the steel would have elongated sufficiently to produce the effects described by NIST appears to be unsupported by the relevant calculations, as we will see in Chapter 9. A third problem is that NIST's claim that steel beams expanded enough to cause such damage is dependent on a finding of its computer simulation, according to which the shear studs connecting the steel beams to the concrete floor slabs failed because the steel beams expanded further and more quickly than the concrete slabs. This was a surprising result, given the fact that steel and concrete, when heated, expand virtually the same amount. The result becomes less surprising, however, when we learn that NIST, while running its simulation, "heated" only the simulated steel, not also the simulated concrete, even though an actual fire in the real building would have heated the actual concrete as well as the actual steel. It was only through this chicanery, evidently, that the simulation predicted the failure of the shear studs. A fourth problem involves a second instance of fraud involving shear studs. NIST's finding in its computer simulation that the girder connecting Columns 44 and 79 failed is dependent on its claim that, although shear studs were used to connect the beams to the floor slabs, they were not also used to connect the girders to the slabs.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 154

But NIST's Interim Report on WTC 7, released back in 2004, stated that shear studs were used to connect the girders (as well as the beams) to the floor slabs. Once we are aware of this and the previous three problems in NIST's theory of how the global collapse of WTC 7 began, we can see that it is completely unworthy of credence.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 157

But public discussion, especially by high-school physics teacher David Chandler, forced NIST to admit, in its Final Report, issued in November, that there had been a stage in the collapse, lasting for over two seconds, during which free fall had occurred. NIST's theory was not revised, however, to allow for this, so NIST ended up with a contradiction between its description of, and its theory about, the collapse. This contradiction dramatically illustrates, more clearly than any of the other problems in NIST's theory, the falsity and unscientific character of its entire approach.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 160

second requirement followed from NIST's acknowledgment, pointed out in the previous chapter, that "there was no evidence of floor-to-floor fire spread."⁸ Given this fact, NIST had to maintain that the fires on all ten floors on which fires were observed had been started directly by debris from the collapse of the North Tower. It needed to maintain, therefore, that the fires on each of those floors began at 10:28. This means that if fires were not observed on some of those floors until later on in the day, NIST could not suggest that they had migrated from floors on which fire had been observed earlier. It had to claim that fires had been burning on each of the ten floors since 10:28.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 160

NIST had to maintain, therefore, that the fires on all ten floors began on either the south side or the south end of the west side. Therefore, if fire was first observed on the north or east face of a particular floor—and this was indeed the case for some floors—NIST had to claim that the fire had migrated there unnoticed from the south or southwest part of the building. NIST's theory, moreover, claims that WTC 7 was caused to collapse by fires on its north and east sides. Accordingly, whereas floor-to-floor migration of fires was ruled out, side-to-side migration of fires on the floors was

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 162

The fact that fires first became visible on the 11th and 12th floors at 2:00 make it very difficult to believe NIST's claim that all fires began at 10:26. Equally implausible are NIST's claims about

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 162

NIST's theory moves completely beyond the realm of plausibility in relation to the 8th, 9th, and 14th floors, on which fires were first photographed at about 3:40, 4:00, and 5:00PM, respectively, and hence about five, five and a half, and six and a half hours after the collapse of the North Tower.¹⁸ Can anyone really believe, for example, that a fire had been burning on Floor 14 since 10:28AM, even though "the first and only visual indication of a fire on this floor" was a picture of it taken at 5:03?¹⁹

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 167

Doubt about NIST's claim could easily be cleared up if NIST would provide proof that it did indeed interview a security officer who reported what NIST claims. But NIST refused a FOIA request to release the text of the alleged interview—thereby increasing the doubt that it actually took place.³⁰

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 172

This would seem plausible, except for one problem: There was also evidence of fire on the 19th floor, which was one of the floors on which the sprinkler system was not supplied with water. And yet the fire on this floor had also died out by 1:00.⁴² Why so? NIST wrote: "NIST was unable to obtain evidence to indicate why this fire did not spread."⁴³ Perhaps the area where this fire began simply did not have sufficient combustible material to keep it going. Be that as it may, the 19th floor exception prevented NIST from claiming that, once a fire was started on a floor, it would spread unless it was put out by sprinklers. The fact that Floor 19's fire did not spread, even though its sprinklers could not have been operating, suggests that fires on other floors may have been unable to spread for a reason unrelated to the question of whether those floors had functioning sprinklers—with such a possible reason being the absence of sufficient combustible material. The fire on Floor 19, therefore, provides one more reason to be skeptical of NIST's theory that fires started on some of the lower floors at 10:28 and continued to spread until the building collapsed. In any case, NIST's claim about long-burning, out-of-control fires was restricted to six lower floors: "Sustained fires occurred on Floors 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13."⁴⁴ These are the floors on which Shyam Sunder claimed that fires burned "for about seven hours." But NIST's own evidence fails to support this claim. I will look at these six floors in reverse order, starting with Floor 13.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 172

although NIST claims that this fire started on the south or southwest part of building at 10:28, it provides no evidence to support this claim. The empirical evidence would be compatible with the assumption that the fire on this floor originated on the east face shortly before 2:30. At best, therefore, NIST has provided evidence that the fire on the 13th floor lasted about three hours. This is important because, as we will see in the next chapter, Floor 13 is one of the three floors on which fire is said to have caused the greatest damage.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 174

other words, NIST had evidence that a fire on the 9th floor was “sustained” for a total of 40 minutes—from about 4:00 until about 4:40PM. It was “out of control” in the sense that no one was controlling it. But it seemed to control itself quite well, perhaps because this floor—possibly like the 19th floor—simply did not have enough combustible material to keep a fire going.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 178

Although Shyam Sunder, NIST’s lead investigator, claimed at his August 2008 press briefing that “fires burned out of control on six... floors for about seven hours,” NIST’s report at best provides evidence that fires on these six floors had endured for durations ranging from 40 minutes to a little over three hours. NIST has speculated, of course, that all of the fires started at 10:28, which would mean that the fires on some of the floors would have endured almost seven hours. NIST has provided no credible evidence, however, that any of the fires lasted even half that long. This fact is implicitly acknowledged by NIST in the chapter on “Fire Simulations,” written by Kevin McGrattan, William Grosshandler, and Richard Gann. Whereas the short version of NIST’s WTC 7 report claims that “[s]ustained fires occurred on Floors 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13,”⁵⁹ the chapter by these three authors in the long version says, more accurately, that “sustained and/or late fires were observed on Floors 7 through 9 and 11 through 13 of WTC 7.”⁶⁰ This statement reflects a major modification, because the “and/or” allows for the possibility that none of the six floors had “sustained” fires—that all of them merely had “late” fires. This is, in fact, all that NIST’s evidence shows. Of course, while the statement by McGrattan,

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 181

One of the most extraordinary aspects of NIST’s WTC 7 report is its estimation of the amount of combustible materials on the 11th and 12 th floors. NIST provides only very flimsy support for its claim that these floors had far more combustible fuel than the floors in the Twin Towers and most of the other floors in WTC 7. And yet the fires on these floors—along with the 13th floor, which will be discussed below—are portrayed by NIST as the primary cause of the collapse of WTC 7. We must, therefore, look closely at its evidence for this claim. For the 7th, 8th, and 9th floors, NIST used the same estimate of combustible fuel load that it had made for the floors of the Twin Towers: 20 kg/m² (4 lb/ft²). For Floors 11 and 12, however, NIST estimated the combustible fuel load to have been more than 50 percent higher: 32 kg/m² (6.4 lb/ft²).³ Why? In Chapter 3 of the long version of its Draft for Public Comment, put out in August 2008, NIST wrote: The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) had occupied the 11th and 12th floors and the north side of the 13th floor.... American Express occupied the southwest sector of the 13th floor.... The furniture [on the 11th and 12th floors] was mostly modular, generally consisting of decorative laminate over particle board. There were some older solid wood pieces

scattered among the managers' offices. The combustible load in the offices was described as high by interviewed American Express managers. There was no clean desk policy. Open case files were left on surfaces. There were many bookcases, file cabinets, and cartons of files in the offices.⁴ The key statement here, to which NIST would repeatedly refer, is that the combustible load was "described as high." Attorney and chemical engineer James Gourley, writing "on behalf of scientists, scholars, engineers, and building professionals" (including scientists Niels Harrit, Steven Jones, and Kevin Ryan, and architect Richard Gage), sent NIST an incisive critique of its Draft Report. Commenting on the passage just quoted, Gourley said: Recall that American Express occupied only the southwest sector of the 13th floor. How, then can NIST credibly claim that the combustible load on the entirety of the 11th and 12th floors, both occupied solely by the SEC, was reported to have been high?⁵ Gourley was wrong about one thing here: Besides occupying part of the 13th floor, American Express also occupied Floors 7 and 8. This fact does not, however, affect his point, which was that American Express representatives could not be assumed to be authorities about Floors 11 and 12.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 182

In NIST's Final Report, issued in November 2008, the sentence in question has been changed to read: "The combustible load in the offices [on Floors 11 and 12] was described as high by interviewed SEC managers."⁶ Was NIST here, by changing "American Express managers" to "SEC managers," simply correcting a careless error that Richard Gann, the author of Chapter 3, had made in the Draft Report? Probably so, because citing the American Express managers would have made no sense, as Gourley's letter pointed out, and the Draft Report did have a footnote referring to 2005 and 2006 interviews with SEC staff.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 183

One problem with NIST's argument here is that, if each cubicle had about as much furniture as each office, as NIST says, Floor 8, with its 150 cubicles, would have had considerably more furniture than Floor 12, with its merely 120 offices. Accordingly, if NIST had needed, for some reason, to argue that the 8th floor had more combustibles than did Floors 11 and 12, it could have used the cubicles-versus-offices contrast to make that case.

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 183

But NIST, which needed the opposite conclusion, interpreted its own statement in Chapter 3—"The combustible load in the [11th and 12th floor] offices was described as high by interviewed SEC managers"—to mean that the quantity of "other combustibles" on those floors was so great that it not only compensated for the furniture deficit but also made the "total combustible mass" on each of these floors over 50 percent higher than that on Floors 7 and 8. That is a lot to read into the statement reportedly made by some SEC managers. There is, moreover, no way to verify whether these managers really made this statement to NIST. And if they did, we have no way to check NIST's interpretation of it. If these managers said that the combustible load on these two floors was "high," were they indicating that it was higher than that of the other floors in WTC 7 and the floors in the Twin Towers? And if so, did they mean that it was over 50 percent higher? We have no way to find out, as we are not told their names. Unlike some of NIST's reported interviews, moreover, these alleged interviews are not even given reference numbers. The footnote simply says: "NIST Interviews with U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission staff, December 2005 through March 2006."⁹

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 184

And yet NIST's entire theory about the collapse of WTC 7 is dependent on its highly dubious interpretation of this vague, anonymous, and unverifiable statement. The claims about Floor 12 are especially important,

Highlight (Geel) | Pagina 184

In other words, if NIST were not positing extra-high loading of combustible material on Floor 12 and hence Floors 11 and 13, its theory that fires brought down WTC 7 would not have even prima facie plausibility. But the basis for NIST's argument for this high loading is, we have seen, far too weak to support NIST's extraordinary claim—that for the first time in history, a steel-framed high-rise building was brought down by fire. Extraordinary claims, it is often pointed out, require extraordinary evidence. But NIST's evidence for the claim in question—that Floor 12 and hence Floor 11 (and also Floor 13) had 50 percent more combustible fuel than the other floors in the World Trade Center buildings—is extraordinary only in the sense of being extraordinarily flimsy.
