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UQ Wire: Long Debunked Rumor Validated by Giuliani

Thursday, 3 June 2004, 12:34 pm
Opinion: www.UnansweredQuestions.org

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Long Debunked "Rumor" Validated by Giuliani

FEMA in NYC prior to 9-11 for Project TRIPOD terror drill, scheduled for 9-12
By Gregor Holland

As of this writing, June 2, 2004, the transcript of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani's testimony to the 9-11 Commission during the May 18-19, 2004 hearings in New York is the only transcript of that hearing omitted from the Commission website (<http://www.9-11commission.gov>).

Did Rudy say something wrong?

In case you missed it live, you can listen to his testimony in full at the WNYC radio website at: <http://www.wnyc.org/news/articles/28147>. As Giuliani recounts his experience of the day of 9/11, and the evolving location of the Emergency Command Center that morning, you might want to pay special attention to what he says at the end of his prepared statement:

"... the reason Pier 92 was selected as a command center was because on the next day, on September 12, Pier 92 was going to have a drill, it had hundreds of people here, from FEMA, from the Federal Government, from the State, from the State Emergency Management Office, and they were getting ready for a drill for biochemical attack. So that was gonna be the place they were going to have the drill. The equipment was already there, so we were able to establish a command center there, within three days, that was two and a half to three times bigger than the command center that we had lost at 7 World Trade Center. And it was from there that the rest of the search and rescue effort was completed."

Readers may remember that on the days immediately after 9/11/01 there was a nasty little rumor running around the internet that FEMA had arrived in NYC on Monday September 10, thus implying foreknowledge of the disaster. The source of the rumor was a September 13, 2001 interview between CBS News anchor Dan Rather and Tom Kennedy (later corrected to Kenney) of FEMA National Urban Search and Rescue. Here is a transcript of the brief interview:

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ADVERTISEMENT Rather: "Tom Kennedy... Kenney, a rescue worker with the National Urban Search and Rescue, it's part of FEMA..." Kennedy: "We're currently

one of the first teams that was deployed to support the city of New York for this disaster. We arrived on late Monday night, and went into action on Tuesday morning. And not until today did we get a full opportunity to work the entire site."

The rumors which subsequently ravaged online chatrooms and 9/11 websites were officially denied by FEMA. In a November 15, 2001 WorldNetDaily piece titled "FEMA: No prior knowledge of 9-11: Agency dispels Net rumor, says team didn't arrive in NYC Sept. 10", Jon Dougherty wrote: (http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=25329)

"The Federal Emergency Management Agency has said it did not have urban search and rescue teams in place in New York City prior to the Sept. 11 attacks, contrary to an Internet-based rumor alleging otherwise.

In the interview, Kenney misspoke when he said he and his team arrived in New York City and were "finally on the ground" and deployed by "Monday night. ..." If accurate, that would have meant the team arrived Sept. 10 - the night before the attacks.

According to a spokesman in the office of Vito Pizzi, who works in FEMA's federal coordination office, a total of 16 teams were put on alert or activated Sept. 11. Two of those teams were sent in to Ground Zero the next day, Sept. 12.

FEMA officials said Kenney, in the head of the moment, misstated his team's arrival

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date. Kenney could not be reached for comment."

The rumor of FEMA presence prior to 9/11 was so stubborn that it took another debunking in a September 5, 2002 Boston Herald piece written by a Stephanie Schorow. Schorow recommends that 'X-File fiction' can be separated from fact with simple research and checking of multiple sources. In reference to the rumor that "FEMA sent the Urban Search and Rescue Team to New York City THE NIGHT BEFORE the attacks occurred!", Schorow writes:

"But if you search further, you'll see Tom "Kennedy" is actually Tom Kenney, an officer from the Massachusetts Urban Search and Rescue Task Force; apparently Rather got the name wrong. Likewise, common sense dictates Kenney simply said Monday when he meant Tuesday.

To confirm, the Herald called the Kenney home on Cape Cod and spoke to Kenney's wife, who said that her husband did go to New York on Sept. 11, not Sept. 10. She explained that he was under extreme stress when Rather interviewed him, and added wryly that it was typical of her husband to confuse dates."

(<http://www.cooperativeresearch.org/timeline/2002/bostonherald090502.html>)

We should note that the actual wording of the debunking accounts does not deny that FEMA was in New York on September 10, it merely denies that the Urban Search and Rescue Task Force was not in New York on September 10. We should note that FEMA, when denying presence in NYC prior to 9/11 did not raise the possibility that there was confusion about the existence of a separate FEMA team for the scheduled 9/12 bioterror drill, a drill which we have learned is named Operation TRIPOD. It seems that prior to the Giuliani testimony there has been scant mentioning of the bioterror drill.

According to a May 22, 2002 Press Release from the NYC Office of Emergency Management, the TRIPOD, or 'Point-of-Dispensing' drill, was successfully held that day. The Press Release states:

"TRIPOD had originally been scheduled to take place on September 12th, 2001, at Pier 92 - which ironically had served as the temporary home of OEM shortly after the terrorist attacks on 9/11."

The release also mentions that the TRIPOD exercise is supported by "The Office of Justice Programs, through the Office for Domestic Preparedness". The Office for Domestic Preparedness was the effort assigned to Dick Cheney by George W. Bush on May 8, 2001. Although reports indicate that Cheney never convened any meetings of this Task Force prior to September 2001, it seems that there must have been some sort of planning involved with the organization and scheduling of Operation TRIPOD for September 12, 2001. With all of the unpleasant news of 9/11, it must have pleased Cheney that the scheduling of this drill made the pre-assembled emergency team immediately available to New York City. Who would have thought?

Major questions exist as to why FEMA would deny being in New York City prior to 9/11 without mentioning the 9/12 bioterror drill. These questions must now be addressed as the initial suspicions of those who learned of the Tom Kenney statement have been clearly validated. The coincidental presence of a large FEMA team in NYC at the location, Pier 92, which became the Command Center for the entire emergency operation is disturbing. An alert press and a legitimate 9-11 Commission should have raised this issue long ago.

Mr. Vito Pizzi, listed as FEMA Branch Chief was contacted for this article.

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Comment & Opinion



Rankin Delves into Bollard's Monetary Policy - The First Law of Holes says "stop digging". It applies, universally, to anyone who's in a hole. And Dr Alan Bollard, Governor of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand certainly is in a hole. So are the rest of us, although most of us don't know it yet. It is a hole dug for us by the Reserve Bank, while the Government sits back and watches with increasing concern but no obvious sense of panic. See... Keith Rankin: Dr Bollard & the First Law of Holes



Public Address on New Zealand Culture - Russell Brown writes: Somebody served me a long black without a crema last week. In Wellington. The café had everything else: nice décor, convivial company, Cafenet connectivity, that capital city buzz. But no crema. Certainly, I am a bit of a nut