



# **Unsafe at any Altitude: Failed Terrorism Investigations, Scapegoating 9/11, and the Shocking Truth about Aviation Security Today**

*Susan B. Trento, Joseph J. Trento*

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If you think you are safe getting on a plane in the United States . . . THINK AGAIN

*Unsafe at Any Altitude* reveals for the first time:

- That Saudi intelligence, on which the United States relied for information about Al Qaeda, was penetrated by the terrorist group long before 9/11. Information provided by the Saudis lulled the president and his team into believing they had Al Qaeda under meaningful watch.
- What the 9/11 Commission did not share with the public, including the probability that weapons were put on planes in advance by exploiting security vulnerabilities at airports. To this day, while passengers are forced to stand in line, hundreds of thousands of airport workers remain unsearched and unscreened.
- How the White House and Justice Department created a diversion to place blame for the 9/11 attacks and avoid the wrath of the American people.
- How a partnership the United States made in the 1980s with Iran and Hezbollah terrorists who killed and kidnapped hundreds of Americans and hijacked our planes contributed to a sequence of events that made 9/11 possible.
- That the FBI, CIA, NSA, and Department of Homeland Security refuse to give the airlines an accurate no-fly list, thereby allowing the world's most threatening terrorists to continue to fly.

*Unsafe at Any Altitude* will help readers tell the difference between the eye candy of sharp uniforms on federal officers and what would amount to effective security at our airports.

We may be less safe flying today than we were before 9/11, and we have spent billions of dollars in tax money going backward. *Unsafe at Any Altitude* goes behind the scenes at our nation's airports and penetrates the government to paint a picture of a Transportation Security Administration that is remarkably inept, and reveals the great lengths that U.S. carriers and their lobbyists have gone in order to make certain that serious airline security has not been instituted in this country. Susan and Joseph Trento also trace the evolution of security failures along a continuum that led directly to 9/11: the hijackings of passenger jets to Cuba decades ago, Iran- Contra, Hezbollah's bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, its hijacking of TWA flight 847, the Pan Am Flight 103 Lockerbie tragedy. These and numerous other episodes exposed vulnerabilities in our nation's policies and practices that we failed to heed.

9/11 has resulted in the creation of massive new law enforcement bureaucracies and programs, and a sense of vigilance has certainly arisen among the American public. The Trentos' disturbing investigation reveals, however, that many key aspects of what went wrong on 9/11 have never been carefully examined, rendering meaningful reform impossible. For instance, the TSA was created to replace the low-wage private screeners who once guarded our airports. But no investigative body, including the 9/11 Commission, has ever concluded that the private screening firms contributed to 9/11 by failing to do their jobs, and this book reveals for the first time the breathtaking story of the Bush administration's concerted effort to deflect blame onto those private companies. Inspired by the belief that true vigilance is impossible without an honestly informed citizenry, *Unsafe at Any Altitude* shines the bright light of truth on past and present practices that have remained in the dark for far too long.

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