

9/11 FEMA videographer at Ground Zero goes public

As official videographer for the U.S. government, Kurt Sonnenfeld was detailed to Ground Zero on September 11, 2001, where he spent an entire month filming: "What I saw at certain moments and in certain places ... is very disturbing!" He never handed his 29 tapes over to the authorities and has been persecuted ever since. Kurt Sonnenfeld lives in exile in Argentina, where he wrote "[El Perseguido](#)" (Persecuted). His recently-published book tells the story of his unending nightmare and drives another nail into the coffin of the government's account of the 9/11 events. Below is an exclusive interview by *Voltaire Network*.



Kurt Sonnenfeld and unidentified search and rescue specialist in subterranean void beneath Ground Zero.

Introduction

Kurt Sonnenfeld graduated from the University of Colorado (USA) with studies in International Affairs and Economics, as well as in Literature and Philosophy. He worked for the United States government as official videographer and served as

Director of Broadcast Operations for the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) (FEMA)'s National Emergency Response Team. Additionally, Kurt Sonnenfeld was contracted by several other governmental agencies and programs for classified and "sensitive" operations at military and scientific installations throughout the United States.

On September 11, 2001, the area known as "Ground Zero" was sealed from the public eye. Sonnenfeld, however, was given unrestricted access enabling him to document for the investigation (that never took place) and provide some "sanitized" pool video to virtually every news network in the world. The tapes that reveal some of the anomalies which he discovered at Ground Zero are still in his possession.

Accused of a crime that did not occur in a manifest frame-up scenario, especially in light of ensuing events, Kurt Sonnenfeld has been persecuted across continents. After several years of fear, injustice and isolation, he has decided to take a public stand against the Government's official story and is prepared to submit his material to the close scrutiny of reliable experts.



Kurt Sonnenfeld

Interview

Voltaire Network: *Your autobiographical book titled “El Perseguido” (Persecuted) was recently published in Argentina where you live in exile since 2003. Tell us who is persecuting you.*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: Although it is autobiographical, it is not my life story. Rather it is a history of the extraordinary events that have happened to me and my family at the hands of U.S. authorities over the course of more than seven years, spanning two hemispheres, after my tour of duty at Ground Zero and becoming an inconvenient witness.

Voltaire Network: *You explained that your request for refugee status within the terms of the Geneva 1951 Convention is still being considered by the Argentinean Senate, while in 2005 you were granted political asylum, albeit, on a provisional basis. That probably makes you the first U.S. citizen in that situation! And no doubt the first U.S. Government official with direct exposure to the events surrounding September 11, 2001 who has “blown the whistle”. Is this what drove you into exile?*



With wife Paula, testifying before Senate.

Kurt Sonnenfeld: A refugee is a person who has been forced to leave (or stay away from) his or her country for reasons of persecution. It's undeniable that many people have been persecuted unfairly as a result of the quasi-fascist laws and policies brought about by the shock of September 11, 2001, and they deserve refugee status. But the fact is, requesting refugee status is a risky and dangerous step to take. America is the world's only remaining "superpower", and dissent has been effectively repressed. Any person who requests refugee status on political grounds is by nature making an extreme statement of dissent. And if your request is denied, what do you do? Once you make the request, there can be no going back.

Personally, I wasn't forced to leave the United States, and I certainly did not "flee". At the time I was still fairly oblivious to what was actually brewing against me. I hadn't connected the dots yet; so that when I left in early 2003 I had every intention of returning. I came to Argentina for a short respite; to try to recuperate after all that had happened to me. I travelled here freely, with my own passport, using my own credit cards. But because of an incredible series of events, I have since been forced into exile, and I haven't been back.

Voltaire Network: *What type of events are you referring to?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: I've suffered false accusations for "crimes" that demonstrably did not happen, abusive imprisonment and torture as a result of those accusations, as well as outrageous calumnies against my reputation, death threats, kidnap attempts and several other violations of civil and human rights as denounced by numerous international accords. My return to the United States would not only be a continuation of those violations, but would be aggregated by the separation – perhaps permanent – from my wife and three-year old twin daughters, the only thing remaining that I have to live for. And then, after the impossibility of receiving a fair trial for a crime that did not happen, I could be subject

to the death penalty.

Voltaire Network: *In 2005, the U.S. Government lodged a request to have you extradited, which was turned down by a Federal Judge. Then, in 2007, the Argentinean Supreme Court – in a show of integrity and independence – turned down the U.S. appeal, but your Government persisted. Can you shed some light on the situation ?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: In 2008, the US government appealed again, this time with absolutely no legal foundation, to the Supreme Court, which will surely uphold the two already unassailable rulings made by the Federal Judge.

In one of those rulings, it was also noted that there were too many “*sombras*”, or shadows, surrounding my case. There were many, many obvious fabrications in the extradition order sent here by US authorities, and, thankfully, we were able prove that. The fact that there were so many fabrications has actually served to support my request for asylum. We were also able to show that we had been subject to a prolonged campaign of harassment and intimidation from US intelligence services. As a result, since my family has been assigned round-the-clock police protection. As one senator has noted about my case: “It is their behavior that belies their true motivations”.



Sonnenfeld and his family are frequently harassed, followed, and photographed, as shown in this photo.

Voltaire Network: *They want you pretty badly for a “crime that did not happen”! How do you account for such doggedness? As a FEMA official, you must have been trusted by your government. At what point did the situation capsize?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: In hindsight, I realize now that the situation had capsized some time before I actually became aware that it had capsized. Initially, the false accusation against me was completely irrational, and I was totally destroyed by it. It is incredibly difficult to have suffered the loss of someone you love to suicide, but to then be accused of it is too much to bear. The case was dismissed based on a mountain of evidence that overwhelmingly absolved me (Nancy, my wife, had left behind a suicide note and a journal of suicidal writings ; she had a family history of suicide ; etc.). The prosecution was 100% sure of my innocence before requesting the dismissal of charge.

But the sustained incarceration even AFTER it was indicated that I was to be freed was what proved to me that something was happening under the surface. I was held in jail for FOUR MONTHS after my lawyers were informed that the case was to be dismissed and was finally released in June 2002. During that time, an amazing series of strange events began to occur. While still being held, I had a telephone conversation with FEMA officials in an effort to resolve the issue, but I realized that I was considered “compromised”. I was told it had been agreed that “the agency had to be protected”, especially in light of the upheaval that was threatening with the implementation of the “Patriot Act” and the expected usurpation that would come with the new Department of Homeland Security. After all the dangers I had risked, all hardship and difficulties I had endured for them for almost 10 years, I felt betrayed. It left a void in my soul.

Because of their abandonment, I told them I didn't have the tapes, that I gave them to "some bureaucrat" in New York, and that they would have to wait until I was released to retrieve any other documents in my possession. Soon after that conversation, my house was "seized", the locks were changed, and men were observed by neighbors entering my house, though there is no record in the court of their entry, as would be required. When I was finally released, I discovered that my office had been ransacked, my computer was missing, and that my tape library in my basement had been dug through and several were missing. Men were constantly parked on the street near my house, my security system was "hacked" more than once, outdoor security lights were unscrewed, etc., to the point that I went to stay with some friends at their condo in the mountains, which was then ALSO broken into.

Anyone who looks for the truth recognizes that there has been an amazing series of irregularities in this case and that an appalling injustice is being carried out on me and my loved ones. This intense campaign to return me to American soil is a false pretext for other darker motives.

Voltaire Network: *You have suggested that you observed things at Ground Zero that did not tally with the official account. Did you do or say anything to arouse suspicion in this respect?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: In that same telephone call I said that I would "go public", not only with my suspicions about the events surrounding September 11, 2001, but about several contracts I had worked on in the past.



Sonnenfeld at Ground Zero, investigating a “void” beneath fallen steel beams.

Voltaire Network: *What are your suspicions based on?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: There were many things, in hindsight, that were disturbing at Ground Zero. It was odd to me that I was dispatched to go to New York even before the second plane hit the South Tower, while the media was still reporting only that a “small plane” had collided with the North Tower – far too small of a catastrophe at that point to involve FEMA. The Agency was mobilized within minutes, whereas it took ten days for it to deploy to New Orleans to respond to Hurricane Katrina, even with abundant advance warning! It was odd to me that all cameras were so fiercely prohibited within the secured perimeter of Ground Zero, that the entire area was declared a crime scene and yet the “evidence” within that crime scene was so rapidly removed and destroyed. And then it was very odd to me when I learned that FEMA and several other federal agencies had already moved into position at their command center at Pier 92 on September 10th, one day before the attacks!



Rubber landing-gear tyres visible in evidence container marked "FBI Plane Parts Only."

We are asked to believe that all four of the "indestructible" black boxes of the two jets that struck the twin towers were never found because they were completely vaporized, yet I have footage of the rubber wheels of the landing gear nearly undamaged, as well as the seats, parts of the fuselage and a jet turbine that were absolutely not vaporized. This being said, I do find it rather odd that such objects could have survived fairly intact the type of destruction that turned most of the Twin Towers into thin dust. And I definitely harbor some doubts about the authenticity of the "jet" turbine, far too small to have come from one of the Boeings!



“Boeing” jet turbine at Fresh Kills island landfill.

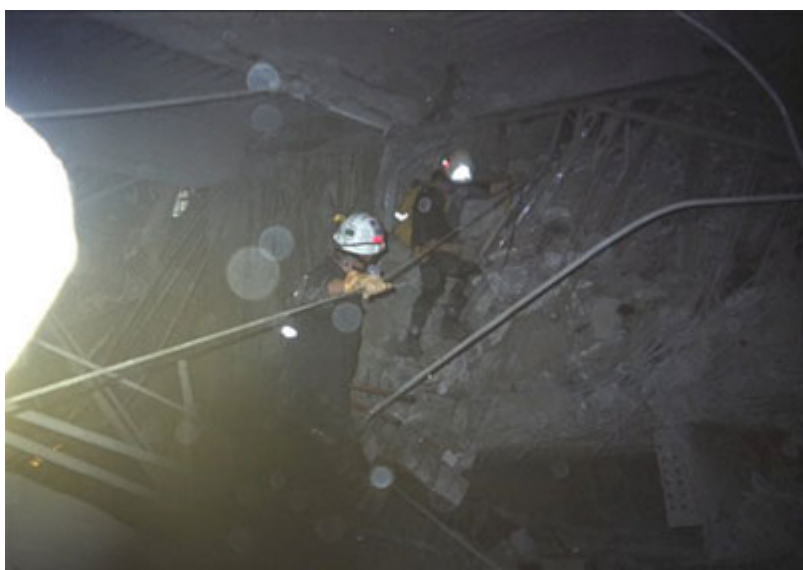
What happened with Building 7 is incredibly suspicious. I have video that shows how curiously small the rubble pile was, and how the buildings to either side were untouched by Building Seven when it collapsed. It had not been hit by an airplane; it had suffered only minor injuries when the Twin Towers collapsed, and there were only small fires on a couple of floors. There’s no way that building could have imploded the way it did without controlled demolition. Yet the collapse of Building 7 was hardly mentioned by the mainstream media and suspiciously ignored by the 911 Commission.

Voltaire Network: *Reportedly, the underground levels of WTC7 contained sensitive and undoubtedly compromising archival material. Did you come across any of it?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: The Secret Service, the Department of Defense, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Office of Emergency Management’s “Crisis Center” occupied huge amounts of space there, spanning several floors of the building. Other federal agencies had offices there as well. After September 11, it was discovered that concealed within Building Seven was the largest clandestine domestic station of the Central Intelligence Agency outside of Washington DC, a

base of operations from which to spy on diplomats of the United Nations and to conduct counterterrorism and counterintelligence missions.

There was no underground parking level at Seven World Trade Center. And there was no underground vault. Instead, the federal agencies at Building Seven stored their vehicles, documents and evidence in the building of their associates across the street. Beneath the plaza level of US Customs House (Building 6) was a large underground garage, separated off from the rest of the complex's underground area and guarded under tight security. This was where the various government services parked their bomb-proofed cars and armored limousines, counterfeit taxi cabs and telephone company trucks used for undercover surveillance and covert operations, specialized vans and other vehicles. Also within that secured parking area was access to the sub-level vault of Building 6.



Approaching the entrance to the sub-level areas of WTC6.

When the North Tower fell, the US Customs House (Building 6) was crushed and totally incinerated. Much of the underground levels beneath it were also destroyed. But there were voids. And it was into one of those voids, recently uncovered, that I descended with a special Task Force to investigate. It was there we found the security antechamber to the vault, badly

damaged. At the far end of the security office was the wide steel door to the vault, a combination code keypad in the cinderblock wall beside it. But the wall was cracked and partially crumbled, and the door was sprung partially open. So we checked inside with our flashlights. Except for several rows of empty shelves, there was nothing in the vault but dust and debris. It had been emptied. Why was it empty? And when could it have been emptied?

Voltaire Network: *Is this what set alarm bells ringing for you?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: Yes, but not immediately. With so much chaos, it was difficult to think. It was only after digesting everything that the “alarm bells” went off.

Building Six was evacuated within twelve minutes after the first airplane struck the North Tower. The streets were immediately clogged with fire trucks, police cars and blocked traffic, and the vault was large enough, 15 meters by 15 meters by my estimate, to necessitate at least a big truck to carry out its contents. And after the towers fell and destroyed most of the parking level, a mission to recover the contents of the vault would have been impossible. The vault had to have been emptied before the attack.

I’ve described all of this extensively in my book, and it’s apparent that things of importance were taken out of harm’s way before the attacks. For example, the CIA didn’t seem too concerned about their losses. After the existence of their clandestine office in Building Seven was discovered, an agency spokesman told the newspapers that a special team had been dispatched to scour the rubble in search of secret documents and intelligence reports, though there were millions, if not billions of pages floating in the streets. Nevertheless, the spokesman was confident. “There shouldn’t be too much paper around,” he said.



The bizarre hollowed-out vestiges of The US Customs House (WTC6).

And Customs at first claimed that everything was destroyed. That the heat was so intense that everything in the evidence safe had been baked to ash. But some months later, they announced that they had broken up a huge Colombian narco-trafficking and money-laundering ring after miraculously recovering crucial evidence from the safe, including surveillance photos and heat-sensitive cassette tapes of monitored calls. And when they moved in to their new building at 1 Penn Plaza in Manhattan, they proudly hung on the lobby wall their Commissioner's Citation Plaque and their big round US Customs Service ensign, also miraculously recovered, in pristine condition, from their crushed and cremated former office building at the World Trade Center.

Voltaire Network: *You weren't alone on the Ground Zero assignment. Did the others notice the same anomalies? Do you know whether they have also been harassed?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: Actually there were a few people on two different excursions that I know about. Some of us even discussed it afterwards. They know who they are and I hope that they will come forward, but I'm sure they have strong apprehensions as to what will happen to them if they do. I

will leave it to them to decide, but there is strength in numbers.

Voltaire Network: *With the publication of your book, you have become a “whistleblower” – yet another step on which there is no going back! There must be many people with inside knowledge about what really happened or did not happen on that fateful day. Yet, hardly any have stepped up to the plate and certainly no one who was directly involved in an official capacity. This is what makes your case so compelling. Judging from your ordeal, it is not difficult to imagine what is holding such people back.*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: Actually, there are several other very smart and credible people blowing whistles, too. And they are being discredited and ignored. Some are being harassed and persecuted, as I am.

People are gripped by fear. Everybody knows that if you question US authority you will have problems in some way or another. At minimum you will be discredited and dehumanized. Most likely you’ll find yourself indicted for something completely unrelated, like tax evasion – or something even worse, as in my case. Look at what happened to Secret Service whistle-blower Abraham Bolden, for example, or to chess master Bobby Fischer after he showed his disdain for the US. There are countless other examples. In the past I asked friends and associates to speak out for me to counter all the lies being planted in the media, and all of them were terrified as to the ramifications to themselves and their families.

Voltaire Network: *To what degree would your discoveries at Ground Zero expose the government’s involvement in those events? Are you familiar with the investigations that have been carried out by numerous scientists and qualified professionals which not only corroborate your own findings but, in some instances, far exceed them? Do you regard such people as “conspiracy nuts”?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: At the highest levels in Washington, DC, someone knew what was going to happen. They wanted a war so badly that they at least let it happen and most likely even helped it happen.

Sometimes it seems to me that the “nuts” are those who hold to what they’ve been told with an almost religious fervor despite all of the evidence to the contrary – the ones who won’t even consider that there was a conspiracy. There are so many anomalies to the “official” investigation that you can’t blame it on oversight or incompetence. I am familiar with the scientists and qualified professionals to whom you refer, and their findings are convincing, credible, and presented according to scientific protocol – in stark contrast to the findings of the “official” investigation. In addition, [numerous intelligence agents](#) and government officials have now come forward with their very informed opinions that the 9/11 Commission was a farce at best or a cover-up at worst. My experience at Ground Zero is but one more piece of the puzzle.

Voltaire Network: *Those events are nearly 8 years behind us. Do you consider that uncovering the truth about 9/11 continues to be an important objective?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: It is of absolute importance. And it will be equally as important in 10 years, or even 50 years if the truth still has not been exposed. It is an important objective because, at this point in history, many people are too credulous to whatever “authority” tells them and too willing to follow. People in a state of shock seek guidance. People who are afraid are manipulable. And being able to manipulate the masses results in unimaginable benefits to a lot of very rich and very powerful people. War is incredibly expensive, but the money has to go somewhere. War is very profitable for the very few. And somehow their sons always end up in Washington DC, making the decisions and writing the budgets, while the sons of the poor and the poorly-connected always end

up on the enemy lines, taking their orders and fighting their battles. The enormous black-budget of the US Department of Defense represents an unlimited money machine for the military-industrial complex, figuring in the multi-trillions of dollars, and it will continue to be so until the masses wake up, recuperate their skepticism and demand accountability. Wars (and false pretexts for war) will not cease until the people realize the true motive of war and stop believing "official" explanations.

Voltaire Network: *What is referred to as the 9/11 Truth Movement, has been asking for a new, independent investigation into those events. Do you think that the Obama Administration holds out any hope in this respect?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: I really hope so, but I'm skeptical. Why would the leadership of any established government willingly undertake any action that would result in a serious compromise to their authority? They will prefer to maintain the status quo and leave the things the way they are. The conductor of the train has been changed, but has the train changed its course? I doubt it. The push has to come from the public, not only domestically, but internationally, like your group is doing.

Voltaire Network: *A number of human rights and activist groups are supporting your plight, not least Peace Nobel Prize winner [Adolfo Pérez Esquivel](#). How have the Argentinean people in general responded to your situation?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: With an incredible outpouring of support. The military dictatorship is still fresh in the collective memory of most of the people here, along with the knowledge that the dictatorship (along with the other South American dictatorships at the time) was backed by the CIA, directed at the time by George Bush Senior. They remember well the torture centers, the secret prisons, the thousands of people "disappeared" for their opinions, the living in daily fear.

They know that the United States today will do the same thing if they consider it beneficial, that they will invade a country to achieve their political and economic interests and then manipulate the media with fabricated “causus belli” to justify their conquests.



Kurt Sonnenfeld with Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Prize 1980.

My family and I are honored to have [Adolfo Pérez Esquivel](#) and his advisors at [Servicio de Paz y Justicia](#) (SERPAJ) among our dearest friends. We have worked together on many causes, including the rights of refugees, the rights of women, for children without families and children with HIV/AIDS. We are also honored to have the support of the [Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo](#); [Madres de Plaza de Mayo, Línea Fundadora](#); [Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales](#) (CELS); [Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos](#) (APDH); [Familiares de Detenidos y Desaparecidos por Razones Políticas](#); [Asociación de Mujeres, Migrantes y Refugiados Argentina](#) (AMUMRA); [Comisión de Derechos Humanos de la Honorable Cámara de Diputados de la Provincia de Buenos Aires](#); [Secretaría de Derechos Humanos de la Nación](#); and the [Programa Nacional Anti-impunidad](#). On an international level, [Amicus Curiae](#) have been presented in our favor by [REPRIEVE](#) of Great Britain, along with the

collaboration of [NIZKOR](#) of Spain and Belgium. In addition, my wife, Paula, and I have been received in the Congress by La Comisión de Derechos Humanos y Garantías de la Honorable Cámara de Diputados de La Nación.

Voltaire Network: *As we said, deciding to write this book and to go public was a huge step. What pushed you to do it?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: To save my family. And to let the world know that things are not what they seem.

Voltaire Network: *Last but not least: what will you do with your tapes?*

Kurt Sonnenfeld: I am convinced that my tapes reveal many more anomalies than I am capable of recognizing given my limited qualifications. I will therefore cooperate in any way that I can with serious and reliable experts in a common endeavour to expose the truth.

Voltaire Network: *Thank you very much !*

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