

# Thursday September 19, 2002

## 9/11 Hearings Highlight The Healing Power of Blame

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Wednesday marked the beginning of joint House and Senate intelligence committee hearings on security failings leading up to the September 11th attacks. Just as undying conspiracy theories helped people grieve John Kennedy and Tabloid-fueled Elvis sightings keep his fans from slitting their wrists in despair, many lawmakers believe that reliving that blame may be the best way to heal the nation. Apparently, 72 hours of non-stop 9/11 news reruns was not enough to lend closure for many Americans.

"Vigorously scratching open old wounds is the only true way to get them to heal properly," said Senator Joseph Lieberman (D. Conn). "It's a medical fact, I think."

In the report staff director Eleanor Hill testified that Federal agencies got word in August that Bin Laden planned to slam a jetliner into the American embassy in Kenya.

Critics charge that the plot, thwarted though it was, should have served as a motivation for law enforcement officials to look into the background of flight school students with possible Al Qaeda ties.

"It wasn't fair at all," protested FBI Director Robert Mueller when he appeared before the panel. "Al Qaeda blatantly violated the Wile E. Coyote Rule: if a plan doesn't work for any reason at all, you cannot in good faith try again. After the Kenyan thing fell through, another airplane attack was the last thing we could have expected."

According to sources in George W. Bush's inner circle, the administration is ready to go to great lengths to satiate the country's need for blame and mistrust. Desperate for an object of derision, the White House secretly took out a classified ad in the <I>Washington Post:</I>

HELP WANTED: Skittish administration seeks eager fall guy for inter-agency bickering, bureaucratic bungling.

Job responsibilities include appearing before Congress, holding rambling press conferences, and saying "Oops, my bad" a lot.

Applicants must be discreet and look good on camera.

Employer offers "platinum parachute," full dental.

Smokers okay.

To everyone's surprise, the White House has reportedly been overrun with applicants. One of the most promising candidates is Dustin Diamond a.k.a TV's Screech formerly of <I>Saved by the Bell</I> and <I> Saved by the Bell: The New Class</I>. As an actor used to delivering poorly-written dialogue in front of cameras, Diamond seems uniquely qualified, and according to our source his schedule is wide open for the foreseeable future.

Our anonymous source says that a final decision in the matter will come soon and that people should expect to see the new whipping boy paraded in front of the media in the next few weeks.

"Dustin could turn out to be the last real hero of 9/11," said our source. "I just hope that Americans can rally around our scapegoat and unite again as it did in the days following the attacks- at least until after the mid-term elections."

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