

# Newly Released 9/11 Transcripts Reveal Port Authority Cops' Fear

**BILL SANDERSON**

*Courtesy of New York Post*

December 30, 2003 -- Worried that the Sept. 11 attacks could escalate, jittery Port Authority cops asked La Guardia Airport traffic controllers if any other planes were headed the city's way, newly released police communications transcripts reveal.

The first plane hit the World Trade Center at 8:46 a.m., the second at 9:03 a.m.

At 9:10 a.m., a PA police officer based at La Guardia called the airport's control tower.

"They are considering it a criminal act," the police officer said.

"We - we believe that, and we are holding all aircraft on the ground," said FAA employee Chris McCary.

After some confusing back-and-forth, the police officer asked, "Do you have any - any incoming at this point?"

"No," McCary answered. "We - we're taking whatever is immediately in the vicinity . . . so that we can eliminate any other questionable aircraft . . . We think we don't have anything that we might have targeted."

The officer asked, "Can you also let us know when that's done? Give us a call back when you know that there are no more in the area?"

"Yes, sir," McCary replied.

In a subsequent call, McCary told police that nobody in the FAA had any contact with the hijackers.

The FAA grounded all air traffic around New York at 9:09 a.m. But according to the police transcripts, La Guardia controllers banned takeoffs about two minutes before that.

Dr. Ute Wartenberg: "People tend to produce these things and they think, let's just try to make a few of them and we see how they work. Some are successful others aren't. And it is a low-risk operation that way."

In this case, it worked until the Secret Service got a tip, which brought down the operation before it expanded.

Steve Carey: "This particular note has only been seen in the New York area, which probably tells us that the note has not been distributed around the country."

The new \$20 is supposed to deter counterfeiters. Its security features include a thread visible when the bill is held up to the light. And the number 20 changes color when you tilt the note up and down. Also, a watermark of Andrew Jackson is visible when held to the light.

Robert Castelli, Security Expert John Jay College: "There are a number of sophisticated security measures impregnated into this bill which would make it truly impossible to replicate completely. But again, the counterfeiter is only looking at the opportunity of replicating it so it passes a cursory examination."

And that's why counterfeiters may be trying to capitalize on the busy holiday shopping season, when they know busy cashiers have little time to inspect money in search of faint watermarks, and shifting shades of color.