

SD, serial 1522; 315N-NY-280350-302, serials 16597, 5029, 6072, 11098, 11114, 11133, 4119; 315N-NY-280350-BS, serials 349, 19106, 16624; 315N-NY-280350-CD, serial 373; 315N-NY-280350, serials 7441, 21340; 315N-NY-280350-AT, serial 135). There have been many speculations about why Atta scheduled the Portland flight. Although he may have believed that security was more relaxed at the smaller airport, he and Omari had to pass through security again at Logan. *Ibid.* (citing 315N-NY-280350-BS, serial 2909). Interrogation of detainees has produced no solid explanation for the trip. See, e.g., Intelligence report, interrogation of Binalshibh, Mar. 3, 2004.

192. FBI report, "Hijackers Timeline," Dec. 5, 2003 (citing 315N-NY-280350, serial 2268; 315N-NY-280350-302, serials 32036, 9873; 315N-NY-280350-LO, serial 2).

8 "The System Was Blinking Red"

1. Beginning in December 1999, these briefings were conducted based on slides created by the CIA's Bin Ladin unit. See Richard interview (Dec. 11, 2003). We were able to review the slides to identify the subjects of the respective briefings.

2. The exact number of persons who receive the PDB varies by administration. In the Clinton administration, up to 25 people received the PDB. In the Bush administration, distribution in the pre-9/11 time period was limited to six people. The Commission received access to about four years of articles from the PDB related to Bin Ladin, al Qaeda, the Taliban, and key countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, including all the Commission requested. The White House declined to permit all commissioners to review these sensitive documents. The Commission selected four representatives—the Chair, the Vice Chair, Commissioner Gorelick, and the Executive Director—as its review team. All four reviewed all of the more than 300 relevant articles. Commissioner Gorelick and the Executive Director prepared a detailed summary, reviewed by the White House for constitutional and especially sensitive classification concerns, that was then made available to all Commissioners and designated staff. Except for the August 6, 2001, PDB article, the summary could not include verbatim quotations, for example the titles of the articles, but could paraphrase the substance. Two of the articles—the December 4, 1998, hijacking article (in chapter 4) and the August 6, 2001, article discussing Bin Ladin's plans to attack in the United States (in this chapter)—were eventually declassified.

3. The CIA produced to the Commission all SEIB articles relating to al Qaeda, Bin Ladin, and other subjects identified by the Commission as being relevant to its mission from January 1998 through September 20, 2001.

4. See CIA, SEIB, "Sunni Terrorist Threat Growing," Feb. 6, 2001; CIA cable, "Intelligence Community Terrorist Threat Advisory," Mar. 30, 2001.

5. See NSC email, Clarke to Rice, Briefing on Pennsylvania Avenue, Mar. 23, 2001.

6. See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Terrorism Update, Mar. 30, 2001; NSC email, Clarke to Rice, Terrorist Threat Warning, Apr. 10, 2001.

7. See FBI electronic communication, heightened threat advisory, Apr. 13, 2001.

8. See NSC email, Cressey to Rice and Hadley, Threat Update, Apr. 19, 2001; CIA, SEIB, "Bin Ladin Planning Multiple Operations," Apr. 20, 2001; NSC memo, Clarke for Hadley, "Briefing Notes for al Qida Meeting," undated (appears to be from April 2001).

9. For threats, see CIA, SEIB, "Bin Ladin Public Profile May Presage Attack," May 3, 2001; CIA, SEIB, "Bin Ladin Network's Plans Advancing," May 26, 2001; FBI report, Daily UBL/Radical Fundamental Threat Update, ITOS Threat Update Webpage, May 7, 2001 (the walk-in's claim was later discredited). For Attorney General briefing, see CIA briefing materials, "Briefing for the Attorney General, 15 May 2001, Al-Qa'ida," undated. For more threats and CSG discussion, see Intelligence report, Threat Report, May 16, 2001; NSC memo, CSG agenda, May 17, 2001.

10. See CIA, SEIB, "Terrorist Groups Said Cooperating on US Hostage Plot," May 23, 2001; FAA information circular, "Possible Terrorist Threat Against American Citizens," IC-2001-08, June 22, 2001 (this IC expired on August 22, 2001); CIA, SEIB, "Bin Ladin Network's Plans Advancing," May 26, 2001; NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, "A day in the life of Terrorism intelligence," May 24, 2001.

11. See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Stopping Abu Zubaydah's attacks, May 29, 2001. For threat level, see White House document, "Selected Summer 2001 Threat Response Activities," undated, pp. 1-2 (provided to the Commission by President Bush on Apr. 29, 2004).

12. The information regarding KSM was not captioned as a threat. It was part of a longer cable whose subject line was "Terrorism: Biographical Information on Bin Ladin Associates in Afghanistan." The cable reported further that KSM himself was regularly traveling to the United States. See Intelligence report, June 12, 2001. This was doubted by the CIA's Renditions Branch, which had been looking for KSM since 1997. It noted, however, that if the source was talking about the "real" KSM, the CIA had both "a significant threat and opportunity to pick him up." See CIA cable, request additional information on KSM, June 26, 2001. A month later, a report from the source indicated that the information regarding KSM's travel to the United States was current as of the summer of 1998. It noted further, however, that KSM continued his old activities but not specifically the travel to the United States. Significantly, it confirmed that the source was talking about the "real" KSM. See CIA cable, follow-up source on