

recruiting new members, and disseminating propaganda. While international terrorists have conducted attacks on U.S. soil, these acts represent anomalies in their traditional targeting which focuses on U.S. interests overseas.

Thus, less than a year before the September 11 attacks, and notwithstanding intelligence information to the contrary, the FBI and FAA assessed the prospects of a terrorist incident targeting domestic civil aviation in the United States as relatively low.

After September 11, the CIA acknowledged some of the information that was available regarding the use of airplanes as weapons. A draft analysis dated November 19, 2001, "The 11 September Attacks: A Preliminary Assessment," explains:

We do not know the process by which Bin Ladin and his lieutenants decided to hijack planes with the idea of flying them into buildings in the United States, but the idea of hijacking planes for suicide attacks had long been current in jihadist circles. For example, GIA terrorists from Algeria had planned to crash a Air France jet into the Eiffel Tower in December 1994, and Ramzi Yousef – a participant in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing – planned to explode 12 US jetliners in mid-air over the Pacific in the mid-1990s. Likewise the World Trade Center had long been a target of terrorist bombers.

Despite that intelligence, the Joint Inquiry found no evidence that, before September 11, analysts in the Intelligence Community were:

- cataloguing information regarding the use of airplanes as weapons as a terrorist tactic;
- sending requirements to collectors to look for additional information on this threat; or
- considering the likelihood that Bin Ladin, al-Qa'ida, or any other terrorist group, would attack the United States or U.S. interests in this way.

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The CTC's Deputy Director acknowledged that the CIA had not performed strategic analysis on airplanes as weapons before September 11. He also explained ways in which CTC has sought to improve its analytic capabilities since then:

We have a couple of approaches to strategic analysis in CTC now...We have spent a fair amount of analytic time looking at intelligence reporting that [al-Qa'ida is] going to use a particular type of tactic or go after a particular type of target, other intelligence reporting...that shows that they have actually trained at that tactic or trained for that type of target. . . . When you get all three of those ingredients, that's pretty sobering. What is most alarming to us is the number of tactics that we've gotten that kind of a case on, that three-legged case . . . on