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PART THREE-TOPICS-THE ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

I. Counterterrorism Resources

Throughout the Joint Inquiry, Intelligence Community witnesses cited a lack of money and people to explain why agencies failed to produce more intelligence on al-Qa'ida, did not arrest or disrupt more terrorists, and were otherwise limited in their response to the growing terrorist threat.

In general, between the end of the Cold War and September 11, 2001, Intelligence Community resources fell or remained even in constant dollars. As a result, overall capabilities declined. The CIA, for example, reduced the number of its operations officers in the field. In addition, the necessary support "tail" for counterterrorism, such as communications and training, eroded. More generally, depth of coverage and expertise declined as personnel moved from crisis to crisis or focused only on the highest priorities.

Within the overall intelligence budget, however, spending on counterterrorism increased considerably during the 1990s. The counterterrorism component of the overall National Foreign Intelligence Program (NFIP) at least doubled at most agencies in the decade before the September 11 attacks, while funding for other intelligence missions declined or stayed even.

In spite of this increase in counterterrorism resources, the overall decline in Intelligence Community resources made it difficult to expand the counterterrorism effort significantly to meet the growing threat. In addition, the overall decline in capabilities hindered the robustness of the counterterrorism effort. Spending on counterterrorism, and spending on al-Qa'ida in particular, relied heavily on supplemental appropriations, which carried with it additional disadvantages.

Although details are imprecise, the Joint Inquiry's research and Intelligence Community agency estimates show that the number of people working on terrorism rose steadily, despite overall decreases in Intelligence Community staffing. Nonetheless, the number of people in