

or significantly greater numbers of personnel assigned to CTC. A particular problem was that counterterrorism was a worldwide target, and the DO was closing stations in less strategic areas [——] even though al-Qa'ida was active there. This hindered acquisition of information on terrorism in these areas. In interviews, CIA officials explained that they were reluctant to cut entire areas of collection, particularly in the field, because senior U.S. Government policymakers had many requirements for intelligence across a wide variety of issue areas.

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By the late 1990s, Intelligence Community coverage of many issues was exceptionally slim, and staffing was skeletal. The CIA's DO cut by almost one-third the number of personnel deployed overseas, according to the DDO. The Associate DDO for Resources noted that the DO often was not able to meet its collection goals, in part because an increased focus on counterterrorism meant that other issues received less attention. At best, the DO could sustain what it had, but could not invest in the future. Communications and training suffered tremendously, DO officials reported.

[The Intelligence Community was unable to reduce requests for collection on other priorities. As NSA Director Hayden testified, "Our efforts in 2000 to churn money internally were not accepted by the Community; its reliance on [signals intelligence] had made it reluctant to give it up." Former CTC Chief Black noted that shifting resources was difficult because the policy community had other demands for intelligence. He stated in an interview that "[w]e could see it coming in Afghanistan, but, for example, couldn't get more Agency slots [within the theater]." In an interview, the CIA official responsible for the Near East noted that, even after September 11, no major issues were deleted, despite the imperatives of the war on terrorism].

As a result, Intelligence Community officials contend they had too many priorities for the resource levels that were available. The NSA Director testified that, "[g]iven all the other intelligence priorities, it would have been difficult at that time within the [Intelligence Community] or the Department of Defense to accept the kind of resource decisions that would have been necessary to make our effort against the target more robust."

Requests for additional assistance by counterterrorism officials often fell on unsympathetic ears because of declining resources. Mr. Black noted in an interview that the DDO told him that