

these options further. The Joint Inquiry requested a copy of both the paper detailing the military options as well as the military Joint Staff's pre-September 11 strategic plan for Afghanistan that is discussed below. The NSC denied that request, although a senior officer in the military Joint Staff was allowed to brief the Joint Inquiry on those options.

Former Chairman Shelton said the options could have been executed "very quickly," but depended on the Intelligence Community obtaining actionable intelligence. He said CIA never provided such intelligence and the military had never been tasked to obtain it.

Mr. Clarke explained that "the overwhelming message to the White House from the uniformed military leadership was 'we don't want to do this,' [_____]
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_____]." Mr. Clarke also said that "[t]he military repeatedly came back with recommendations that their capability not be utilized for commando operations in Afghanistan."

According to CTC officers, the military levied so many requirements for highly detailed, actionable intelligence before conducting an operation – far beyond what the Intelligence Community was ever likely to obtain – that U.S. military units were effectively precluded from conducting operations against Bin Ladin's organization on the ground in Afghanistan before September 11. As noted above, the Joint Inquiry heard conflicting testimony from CIA officers about the Intelligence Community obtaining actionable intelligence. For instance, one former CTC officer told the Joint Inquiry:

[_____

_____].

A former CTC Chief [_____] explained:

[The military has] exacting criteria that intelligence needs . . . that needs to be met before they can launch an operation. [_____

_____].