

354] knit together the threads from the flood of information.” Commenting on the CTC’s analytic record, the Director of Terrorism Analysis explained during a Joint Inquiry hearing:

[W]hile the unit's production had gone up dramatically—particularly in the area of current intelligence where the increase had been more than double—production of strategic research had, in fact, remained flat. Earlier correction of these shortcomings would not have enabled us to produce explicit tactical warning of the September 11 plot—the available data was only sufficient to support the strategic warning we indeed provided – but we did recognize our shortcomings and took several steps to address them.

In a Joint Inquiry hearing, DCI Tenet explained the importance of strategic analysis:

[T]he single lesson learned from all of this is the strategic analytical piece of this has to be big and vibrant to give you the chance to be predictive, even when you don’t have much information to go on. I think it’s a very important point. We’ve made a lot of progress.

FBI witnesses identified little, if any, strategic analysis against domestic al-Qa’ida activities before September 11, 2001. The Chief of the FBI’s National Security Intelligence Section testified to the Joint Inquiry that the FBI had “no analysts” dedicated to strategic analysis before September 11. In fact, as of that date, the FBI had only one analyst working on al-Qa’ida. FBI Assistant Director for Counterterrorism Dale Watson testified that he could not recall any instance where the FBI Headquarters analytical unit produced “an actual product that helped out.”

In regard to the September 11 attacks, witnesses confirmed the Bureau’s failure to connect information on al-Mihdhar, al-Hazmi, Moussaoui, and the FBI Phoenix memorandum in the summer of 2001. The FBI’s Deputy Assistant Director for Counterterrorism Analysis, recently detailed from the CIA to improve the FBI’s analytic capability, testified before the Joint Inquiry that the Bureau “didn’t have analysts dedicated to sort of looking at the big picture and trying to connect the dots, say between the Phoenix memo and Moussaoui and some other information that might have . . . suggested that there were individuals there who might be preparing to hijack aircraft.”

One of the primary reasons there was so little focus on strategic analysis in the Intelligence Community may have been the perception that operational matters were more [page 355] important to counterterrorism missions than analysis. Consistent with its traditional law enforcement mission, the FBI was, before September 11, a reactive, operationally-driven