

move, and prepare for the attacks without hindrance from the very federal officials whose job it is to find them. Sadly, the CIA seems to have concluded that the maintenance of its information monopoly was more important than stopping terrorists from entering or operating within the United States. Nor did the FBI fare much better, for even when notified in the so-called “Phoenix Memo” of the danger of Al-Qa’ida flight school training, its agents failed to understand or act upon this information in the broader context of information the FBI already possessed about terrorist efforts to target or use U.S. civil aviation. The CIA watchlisting and FBI Phoenix stories illustrate both the potential of sophisticated information-sharing and good information-empowered analysis and the perils of failing to share information promptly and efficiently between (and within) organizations. They demonstrate the need to ensure that intelligence analysis is conducted on a truly “all-source” basis by experts permitted to access all relevant information – no matter where in the IC it happens to reside.

The IC’s methods of information-sharing before September 11 suffered from profound flaws, and in most respects still do. In order to overcome bureaucratic information-hoarding and empower analysts to do the work our national security requires them to do, we need to take decisive steps to reexamine the fundamental intellectual assumptions that have guided the IC’s approach to managing national security information. As one witness told the Joint Inquiry, we may need “to create a new paradigm wherein ‘ownership’ of information belonged with the analysts