

[Ironically, this Inquiry has confirmed that at least some of the hijackers operated, without detection, within the scope of the FBI's coverage of radical Islamic extremists. Hani Hanjour, Mohamed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi, Nawaf al-Hazmi, and Khalid al-Mihdhar may have had contact with a total of 14 people who had come to the FBI's attention during counterterrorism or counterintelligence investigations prior to September 11, 2001. Four of those 14 were the focus of active FBI investigations during the time that the hijackers were in the United States. In fact, as noted earlier, two future hijackers had numerous contacts with an active FBI counterterrorism informant while in the United States. Despite their proximity to FBI targets and at least one FBI source, the future hijackers successfully eluded FBI attention].

Several examples illustrate not only the reliance of the hijackers on the potential support networks, but also the ease with which they operated despite the FBI's pre-September 11 domestic coverage. Shortly after their arrival in the United States, future hijackers Khalid Al-Mihdhar and Nawaf Al-Hazmi moved to San Diego at the suggestion of Omar al-Bayoumi, who had previously been the focus of an FBI counterterrorism [————] inquiry. In San Diego, they stayed at al-Bayoumi's apartment for several days until he was able to find them an apartment. He then co-signed their lease, paid [page 29] their security deposit and first month's rent, arranged a party to welcome them to the San Diego community, and tasked another individual to help them become acclimated to the United States. [—————]. The second individual served as their translator, helped them obtain bank accounts and drivers' licenses, and assisted them in locating flight schools.

[Other individuals in San Diego also provided the two hijackers with similar types of assistance. A manager of a local gas station, who was at the time being investigated by the FBI, hired al-Hazmi to work for him briefly, after receiving a call from a mutual friend at the mosque. In addition, a local imam, who was the subject of an FBI counterterrorism inquiry for part of the time that the future hijackers were in San Diego, served as their spiritual advisor when they were living in San Diego. Finally, al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar also maintained a number of other contacts in the local Islamic