

“... The FY99 submission -- prepared in early 1998 -- continued the trend in requesting a substantial funding increase for offensive operations against terrorism. . . . The FY 2000 budget submission prepared in early 1999 described Bin Laden as ‘the most significant individual sponsor of Sunni Islamic extremism and terrorism activity in the world today.’ Our FY 2000 submission noted our use of a wide range of operational techniques, joint operations with foreign partners, and the recruitment of well-placed agents.”¹⁷

Director Tenet continued: “Despite these clear intentions and the daring activities that went with them, I was not satisfied that we were doing all we could against this target. In 1998, I told key leaders at CIA and across the intelligence community that we should consider ourselves ‘at war’ with UBL. I ordered that no effort or resource be spared in prosecuting this war. In early 1999, I ordered a baseline review of CIA’s operational strategy against Bin Laden.”¹⁸

In spite of Director Tenet’s claims of “daring activities” and not being satisfied that the CIA was doing all it could against terrorists, the JIS found that “There was a reluctance to take risks in which CIA officers might die.”¹⁹

But, back to the question of resources: What did Tenet do to follow up? Did he request more? Were the requests rejected? By whom? Why? If requests for money had been granted, would that have made any difference? And finally, how much has changed since 9/11?

¹⁷George Tenet, testimony before the joint committees, October 17, 2002.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Joint Inquiry Staff, Memorandum from the Joint Inquiry Staff to Eleanor Hill, dated November 6, 2002, Subject, “October 31, 2002, Questions from Senators Kyl and Roberts.”