

severe consequences. Did the intelligence community fail the Director of Central Intelligence by not offering more support to the Counter-Terrorism Center, or did the Director of Central Intelligence fail the Counter-Terrorism Center by not bringing in more government-wide talent and skills?

Only after 9/11 did the various intelligence and law-enforcement entities begin to put aside their parochialism and work together in a more productive manner. With better leadership of the intelligence community, this condition would not have been prevalent before 9/11. It would not have taken that monumental disaster for our nation to get the members of the community to cooperate with one another.

One of the purposes of the Joint Inquiry, as stated in the preamble to the House and Senate committees' "Initial Scope" document, was to "lay the basis for assessing the accountability of institutions and officials of government." The JIS Report, however, apparently fails to identify which officials within the intelligence community had responsibility, before 9/11, for strategic and tactical warning of terrorist activity. Instead, Recommendation #16 suggests that discovering who is accountable should be the job of the Inspectors General of the various agencies.

Inadequate Scope

The failures that led to 9/11 occurred not only in the intelligence community. The JIS was selective about what threads of inquiry it was willing to follow beyond the intelligence community. Failure to examine the State Department's visa-issuance process must rank as the most glaring of these omissions because the answer to the question – could 9/11 have been prevented -- is yes, if State Department personnel had merely followed the law and not granted non-immigrant visas to 15 of the 19 hijackers in Saudi Arabia.

We repeat: If our own laws regarding the issuance of visas had been followed by the State Department, most of the hijackers would not have been able to obtain visas, and 9/11 would not have happened. Because the entire culture of the State Department is geared toward facilitating smooth relations with foreign governments, State Department personnel have tended to ignore the potential effect of their practices on national security.

An October, 2002 report of the General Accounting Office found that, before 9/11, there was among U.S. consular officers abroad a wide divergence of opinions and practices regarding