

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE**

January 2000 Malaysia meeting of al-Qaeda terrorists, which included the person responsible for planning the U.S.S. Cole attack. The CIA official at the meeting denied the FBI agent's request and withheld basic and relevant information about the suspected terrorists because he did not believe he had the authority to share the information.

Two and half months after this June 11, 2001, meeting, and after the two terrorists had been determined to have entered the country and were watchlisted, a FBI New York agent pressed FBI headquarters to use full criminal resources to find these at-large members of al-Qaeda. The agent's request was denied by the FBI's National Security Law Unit which cited a "wall" that prevented the sharing of intelligence information with criminal case agents. Invoking this so-called "wall" was erroneous however, and, as a result, the FBI's search for the terrorists in the two weeks leading up to the attacks was unnecessarily hamstrung.

**(LES)** The FBI's Minneapolis field office opened an international terrorism investigation of Zacarias Moussaoui and soon after arrested him on August 16, 2001. After the arrest, the CIA urgently solicited its stations around the world for additional information on Moussaoui, who it characterized as a "suspect airline suicide attacker" who might be "involved in a larger plot to target airlines traveling from Europe to the U.S." And yet, over the next three weeks FBI Minneapolis officials were frustrated in their efforts to obtain a FISA search warrant of Moussaoui's belongings by legal officials at FBI headquarters based on an incorrect reading of the search warrant requirements, a mistake now acknowledged by the FBI. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, Moussaoui's belongings revealed links to al-Qaeda officials which connected him to the planners of the terrorist plot.

Finally, while the Joint Inquiry report addresses at length the FBI's mishandling of the July 10, 2001, Phoenix Electronic Communication, it fails to note that many of the individuals identified by the FBI Phoenix agent as being part of a suspected al-Qaeda cell infiltrating the American civil aviation industry were the subject of "UBL-related investigations" by the FBI

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