

Part Four
Finding, Discussion and Narrative Regarding
Certain Sensitive National Security Matters

20. Finding:

[Through its investigation, the Joint Inquiry developed information suggesting specific sources of foreign support for some of the September 11 hijackers while they were in the United States. The Joint Inquiry's review confirmed that the Intelligence Community also has information, much of which has yet to be independently verified, concerning these potential sources of support. In their testimony, neither CIA nor FBI officials were able to address definitively the extent of such support for the hijackers globally or within the United States or the extent to which such support, if it exists, is knowing or inadvertent in nature. Only recently, and at least in part due to the Joint Inquiry's focus on this issue, did the FBI and CIA strengthen their efforts to address these issues. In the view of the Joint Inquiry, this gap in U.S. intelligence coverage is unacceptable, given the magnitude and immediacy of the potential risk to U.S. national security. The Intelligence Community needs to address this area of concern as aggressively and as quickly as possible].

Discussion:

[The Joint Inquiry reviewed information in FBI and CIA documents suggesting specific potential sources of foreign support for the September 11 hijackers. While the Joint Inquiry uncovered this material during the course of its review of FBI and CIA documents, it did not attempt to investigate and assess the accuracy and significance of this information independently, recognizing that such a task would be beyond the scope of the Joint Inquiry. Instead, the Joint Inquiry referred a detailed compilation of information it had uncovered in documents and interviews to the FBI and CIA for further investigation by the Intelligence Community and, if appropriate, law enforcement agencies. A detailed summary of the available information pertaining to this issue is included in the classified version of the Joint Inquiry final report].

[It should be clear that this Joint Inquiry has made no final determinations as to the reliability or sufficiency of the information regarding these issues that was found contained in FBI and CIA documents. It was not the task of this Joint Inquiry to conduct the kind of extensive investigation that would be required to determine the true significance of such alleged support to the hijackers. On the one hand, it is possible that these kinds of connections could suggest, as indicated in a CIA memorandum, "incontrovertible evidence that there is support for these terrorists [-----]". On the other hand, it is also possible that further investigation of these allegations could reveal legitimate, and innocent, explanations for these associations].

[Given the serious national security implications of this information, however, the leadership of the Joint Inquiry is referring the Joint Inquiry Staff's compilation of relevant information to both the FBI and the CIA for investigative review and appropriate investigative and intelligence action].