

STATEMENT OF THOMAS J. PICKARD
BEFORE THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON TERRORIST ATTACKS UPON THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 13, 2004

I AM HERE TODAY AT YOUR INVITATION TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AS DIRECTLY AS I AM ABLE BASED ON WHAT I CAN RECALL. CLEARLY, NOTHING I CAN SAY WILL EASE THE SUFFERING OF THOSE WHO LOST FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES ON SEPTEMBER 11TH NOR CAN I EASE THE TORMENT FOR ALL WHO WITNESSED THE HORRIFIC EVENTS OF THAT DAY. AMONG THE 3,000 WHO LOST THEIR LIVES THAT DAY WERE NEW YORK FBI AGENT LENNY HATTON AND RECENTLY RETIRED FBI AGENT JOHN O'NEILL, BOTH OF WHOM DIED TRYING TO HELP THE VICTIMS. BECAUSE OF ALL THESE TRAGIC LOSSES, I HOPE THAT I CAN CONTRIBUTE IN SOME SMALL WAY TO HELPING AMERICA UNDERSTAND HOW THIS HAPPENED AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BETTER TO PROTECT US IN THE FUTURE.

I KNOW MANY INCLUDING MYSELF WHO, OVER AND OVER, RE-LIVE THE DAYS PRIOR TO 9-11, SEARCHING BOTH OUR MEMORIES AND OUR ACTIONS FOR MISSED CHANCES THAT MAY HAVE AVERTED 9-11. I KNOW OF AN INDIVIDUAL WHO WAS IN THE WORLD TRADE CENTER ON 9-11 AND SURVIVED. THIS INDIVIDUAL WAS TORMENTED BY THE ACTIONS HE, UPON REFLECTION, THOUGHT HE SHOULD HAVE TAKEN. HE TOLD A NUMBER OF PEOPLE ABOUT HIS THOUGHTS. SOME MONTHS LATER, FOR THIS AND PROBABLY OTHER REASONS, LIFE BECAME TOO DIFFICULT FOR HIM, AND HE TOOK HIS LIFE. NO ONE KNOWS THE TORMENT THIS EVENT MUST HAVE GIVEN HIM TO TAKE THIS TRAGIC STEP. THOSE OF US WHO WERE IN THE FBI AT THE TIME ARE NO EXCEPTION. NO ONE KNOWS HOW DEEPLY MANY EMPLOYEES OF THE FBI ARE TROUBLED BY THE HAUNTING EVENTS LEADING UP TO THAT DAY.

IN MY VIEW THE TRAGEDY OF 9-11 CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THE HIGH COST FOR THE COLLECTIVE U.S. GOVERNMENT FAILURE TO PENETRATE THE INNER WORKINGS OF AL QAEDA OR TO DEAL WITH TERRORISM AS IT WAS THEN AND IS NOW, A WAR AGAINST THE UNITED STATES INTENDED TO INFLICT AS MANY AMERICAN CASUALTIES AS POSSIBLE. FOR MANY AND VERY COMPLEX REASONS, WE DID NOT DEVELOP THE NECESSARY INTELLIGENCE, EITHER THROUGH OUR OWN RESOURCES OR THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITIES TO SUFFICIENTLY UNDERSTAND AND REACT TO THEIR PLANNING, COMMUNICATIONS, CONTROL, AND CAPACITY TO DO US HARM.

I WAS THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE FBI DURING THE SUMMER OF 2001. THE INTELLIGENCE AND EXPERIENCE THAT I HAD AVAILABLE TO ME AT THAT TIME WERE WHAT I ACTED UPON.

AS I RECALL, DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY-SEPTEMBER 2001, THE FBI RECEIVED OVER 1,000 THREATS. MANY OF THESE THREATS HAD GREAT SPECIFICITY AND OTHERS WERE VERY GENERAL IN NATURE. ALL WERE TAKEN SERIOUSLY BUT THE VOLUME WAS DAUNTING. THE INCREASE IN THE "CHATTER" WAS BY FAR THE MOST SERIOUS BUT IT WAS ALSO THE MOST DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH. THERE WAS NO SPECIFICITY AS TO WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN. WE KNEW THE WHO, BUT ONLY THAT IT WAS AL QAEDA.

I HAD REGULAR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE CIA AND HIS DEPUTY, AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND HIS DEPUTY, ABOUT THE THREATS WE WERE RECEIVING AND TO LEARN IF THERE WAS ANYTHING MORE THAT WOULD HELP US UNDERSTAND THE FRAGMENTARY INFORMATION WE HAD. THE ONLY NEWS THAT I RECEIVED WAS THAT THE LEVEL OF "CHATTER" SUBSIDED IN EARLY AUGUST, 2001.

FURTHER, I SPOKE PERSONALLY, BOTH COLLECTIVELY AND INDIVIDUALLY, WITH EACH OF THE SPECIAL AGENTS IN CHARGE OF THE FBI'S 56 FIELD OFFICES AND WITH THE ASSISTANT DIRECTORS AT FBIHQ ABOUT WHAT WE KNEW AND WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING. MOST OF WHAT I HEARD POINTED OVERSEAS. FOR EXAMPLE, UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR IN NEW YORK AND THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, COUNTERTERRORISM, I REMOVED THE AGENTS WHO WERE IN YEMEN INVESTIGATING THE BOMBING OF THE U.S.S. COLE BASED UPON THE LEVEL OF THE "CHATTER" AND SPECIFIC THREATS ABOUT IMPENDING HARM TO THEM IF THEY REMAINED IN THE REGION. WE ALSO RECEIVED NUMEROUS THREATS RELATIVE TO THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN GENOA, ITALY, THAT WAS ATTENDED BY PRESIDENT BUSH.

DURING THAT SUMMER, WE CONTINUED TO PURSUE OUR INVESTIGATIONS OF THE BOMBINGS OF THE AFRICAN EMBASSIES AND THE U.S.S. COLE. THESE AND OTHER INVESTIGATIONS WERE NOT ONLY BRINGING THOSE RESPONSIBLE TO JUSTICE BUT WERE ALSO GIVING US VALUABLE INTELLIGENCE ON AL QAEDA. THESE INVESTIGATIONS DID MORE THAN ADVANCE THE PROSECUTION OF THESE MATTERS; THEY PROVIDED SOME OF THE BEST INTELLIGENCE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT POSSESSED ABOUT AL QAEDA. MANY OF THOSE ARRESTED AND BROUGHT BACK TO THE UNITED STATES STARTED TO COOPERATE WITH THE FBI. THEY PROVIDED US NOT ONLY INFORMATION ON THE BOMBINGS BUT ALSO BECAME VALUABLE RESOURCES IN IDENTIFYING AL QAEDA MEMBERS TO THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. THEY GAVE US UNIQUE INSIGHTS INTO AL QAEDA'S COMMAND, CONTROL, AND PLANNING, AND IN SOME INSTANCES REVEALED POTENTIAL PLOTS OR AREAS OF INTEREST WHERE AL QAEDA WAS FOCUSED. WE ALSO EXPLOITED THEIR POCKET LITTER, CELL PHONES, CALLING CARDS, CREDIT CARDS, AND HOTEL REGISTRATIONS FOR LINKS TO OTHER MEMBERS. THE AGENTS WERE TIRELESS IN PURSUING THESE BITS AND PIECES OF INFORMATION. THE NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE FBI, THE JOINT TERRORISM

TASK FORCE, AND THE U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK HAD BECOME VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE AND ADEPT AT EXPLOITING THESE INVESTIGATIONS.

THE FBI ALSO HAD INVESTIGATIONS AND FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE ACT (FISA) COVERAGE ON INDIVIDUALS IN THE UNITED STATES THAT EITHER WERE OR WERE BELIEVED TO BE IN CONTACT WITH KNOWN AL QAEDA MEMBERS OVERSEAS. THIS TOO GAVE US LINKS TO OTHER POSSIBLE MEMBERS OF AL QAEDA. THESE INVESTIGATIONS AND FISA COVERAGES WERE THE DIRECT RESULTS OF FBI INVESTIGATIONS AS WELL AS COMING FROM TIPS FROM THE UNITED STATES AND FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITIES.

NONE OF WHAT WE KNEW OR LEARNED POINTED TO WHAT WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN ON 9-11. TO THE CONTRARY, ALL OF THESE STEPS WERE NOT ENOUGH GIVEN WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THE 19 HIJACKERS SINCE SEPTEMBER 11TH. THE PLOT WAS HATCHED PROBABLY IN AFGHANISTAN, IT WAS HONED IN GERMANY, AND FINANCED IN THE MIDDLE EAST. EACH OF THE HIJACKERS WAS SELECTED TO INSURE THAT HE COULD COME AND GO INTO THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT ATTRACTING ATTENTION, NOT A DIFFICULT THING TO DO WITH OUR OPEN AND OVERWHELMED BORDERS. THEY DID NOT RECEIVE SUPPORT KNOWINGLY FROM ANYONE IN THE UNITED STATES NOR DID THEY CONTACT KNOWN AL QAEDA SYMPATHIZERS IN THE UNITED STATES. THEY UTILIZED PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE INTERNET CONNECTIONS AND PRE-PAID CALLING CARDS TO COMMUNICATE AND ALSO TO ESCAPE INTERCEPTION OF THEIR COMMUNICATIONS BY U.S. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. THESE 19 AND THEIR SUPERIORS OPERATED FLAWLESSLY IN THEIR PLANNING, COMMUNICATIONS, AND EXECUTION OF THIS EVENT. THEY SUCCESSFULLY EXPLOITED EVERY WEAKNESS FROM OUR BORDERS TO COCKPIT DOORS.

THE MEMBERS OF AL QAEDA ARE A FORMIDABLE ENEMY. I HAVE PERSONALLY MET WITH RAMZI YOUSSEF, THE MASTERMIND OF THE 1993 WORLD TRADE CENTER ATTACK. HE IS POISED, ARTICULATE AND WELL-EDUCATED. HE SPEAKS ENGLISH WITH A BRITISH ACCENT AS WELL AS SIX OTHER LANGUAGES. HE HAS DEGREES IN CHEMISTRY AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING; AND IN 1995, HE WAS VERY PROFICIENT WITH A LAPTOP COMPUTER AND HAD AN ENCRYPTION PROGRAM ON IT. I HAVE ALSO LED TWO SEPARATE TEAMS OVERSEAS TO RETURN AYAD ISMAIL NAJIM, WHO DROVE THE VAN INTO THE WORLD TRADE CENTER IN 1993; AND OSAMA TURKISTANI, AKA WALI KAHN, WHO WAS PART OF THE MANILA AIR PLOT, BACK TO THE UNITED STATES TO STAND TRIAL. BOTH WERE FAIRLY WELL EDUCATED AND POISED YOUNG MEN DEDICATED TO A JIHAD AGAINST AMERICA.

I HAVE USED THE WORD ENEMY TO DESCRIBE THEM BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT THEY ARE. THEY ARE DEDICATED TERRORISTS WILLING TO EVEN COMMIT SUICIDE FOR THEIR BELIEFS. THE CAMPS IN AFGHANISTAN AND ELSEWHERE WERE GRADUATING THOUSANDS LIKE THEM WHO ARE EDUCATED, COMMITTED, AND EVEN COMPUTER SAVVY. AL QAEDA WAS TURNING OUT FIVE TIMES MORE GRADUATES FROM THEIR CAMPS THAN THE FBI AND CIA WERE GRADUATING FROM THEIR TRAINING SCHOOLS. I COULD ONLY UTILIZE HANDCUFFS ON THEM. PRESIDENT BUSH AND THE U.S. MILITARY GAVE THEM SOMETHING MORE EFFECTIVE -- BOMBS, BULLETS AND BAYONETS.

OVER THE LAST WEEK, I HAVE INTERACTED ONCE AGAIN WITH THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE FBI. DIRECTOR ROBERT MUELLER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR BRUCE GEBHARDT, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JOHN PISTOLE, AND THE FBI HAVE A VERY FORMIDABLE TASK IN PREVENTING THE NEXT ACT OF TERRORISM. AL QAEDA JUST HAS TO GET IT RIGHT ONCE BUT THE FBI WILL HAVE TO GET IT RIGHT EVERY TIME TO STOP THEM.

NEXT, I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS SOME MISCONCEPTIONS. IN MY EXPERIENCE, THERE WAS A VERY GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CIA AND FBI. GEORGE TENET, JOHN MCLAUGHLIN, AND I SPOKE FREQUENTLY ON SECURE TELEPHONE LINES AND MET AT FBIHQ OR CIAHQ REGULARLY. ON MY PERSONAL STAFF WAS A SENIOR EXECUTIVE OF THE CIA WHO WAS ASSIGNED FULL-TIME TO FBIHQ AND MET WITH ME AND OTHERS AT THE FBI EACH MORNING, INCLUDING ALL THE ASSISTANT DIRECTORS. IN ADDITION, THERE WERE A NUMBER OF CIA OFFICERS WHO HELD POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION OF THE FBI. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY ALSO WERE ASSIGNED FULL-TIME TO FBIHQ AND I MET WITH THESE INDIVIDUALS ON A REGULAR BASIS AS WELL.

RELATIVE TO THE STATE OF THE FBI COMPUTER SYSTEMS, EVERYONE WANTS THE LATEST AND FASTEST COMPUTER ACCESS, SOFTWARE, AND HARDWARE. THE FBI WAS NO DIFFERENT AND WE REPEATEDLY REQUESTED FROM THE ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS THE AUTHORITY AND FUNDS TO UPGRADE OUR COMPUTER SYSTEMS. WE WERE REPEATEDLY DISAPPOINTED BY THE DELAYS AND THE AMOUNTS FINALLY APPROPRIATED FROM CONGRESS. ULTIMATELY, TO SUPPLEMENT THE ASSISTANCE WE WERE RECEIVING FROM THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, WE RECRUITED A SENIOR EXECUTIVE FROM IBM TO BRING MORE HORSEPOWER TO OUR EFFORTS TO REVAMP OUR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS. IN THE INTERIM, THE FBI RESORTED TO SURPLUS DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMPUTERS. THE FBI COMPUTER SYSTEM WAS CONSIDERED THE JOKE OF WASHINGTON, D.C. THE FBI KNEW IT, DOJ KNEW IT, AND CONGRESS KNEW IT. IN MY VIEW, HAVING A STATE-OF-THE-ART SYSTEM WAS ALWAYS OUR GOAL, A GOAL NOT ACHIEVED FOR THE LACK OF TRYING. IT WAS A TOP PRIORITY AND WE WORKED FOR YEARS WITH JUSTICE OFFICIALS AND CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

TO REACH AGREEMENT AND PROCEED WITH IMPLEMENTATION. FINALLY, IN 2001, THE INITIAL TRILOGY SYSTEM WAS APPROVED AND FUNDED.

FOR TWO DECADES THE FISA COURT OPERATED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT, ONCE THE GOVERNMENT PROCEEDS ON A PATH TO CRIMINAL PROSECUTION, THE FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE INTERESTS CEASE. THIS RESULTED IN "WALLS" BEING INSERTED BETWEEN INTELLIGENCE AND CRIMINAL CASES, SO THAT THE INFORMATION COULD NOT BE SHARED. AN FBI SUPERVISOR WAS HEARD TO SAY "CREATE ENOUGH WALLS AND YOU BUILD A MAZE." THANKFULLY, THE WALLS ARE NOW DOWN AS A RESULT OF THE NOVEMBER, 2002, RULING OF THE U.S. FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE COURT OF REVIEW. THE REVIEW COURT HELD THAT THE FISA COURT MISINTERPRETED AND MISAPPLIED MINIMIZATION PROCEDURES. THE WALLS MAY BE DOWN BUT IT IS STILL A SLOW PROCESS FROM WHEN A STREET AGENT RECOGNIZES THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEEK FISA COVERAGE AND WHEN HE FINALLY GETS THE COURT'S APPROVAL. THE COMMISSION SHOULD RECOMMEND IMPROVEMENTS TO SPEED THE FISA PROCESS BY ADDING COURTS AND JUDGES OUTSIDE WASHINGTON, D.C.

MUCH HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT THE FAILURE OF THE FBI TO CONNECT THE SO-CALLED DOTS. I WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW THE DOTS AS I RECALL THEY EXISTED ON SEPTEMBER 10TH.

POINT #1 -- THERE WAS A MEETING IN MALAYSIA IN JANUARY, 2000, OF HIGH-LEVEL AL QAEDA OPERATIVES. THE INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS THEORIZED THAT AL QAEDA WAS PLANNING SOME KIND OF ATTACK. SINCE THEY WERE MEETING IN MALAYSIA AND NOT IN A CAMP IN AFGHANISTAN, THE CONJECTURE WAS THAT IT WAS PROBABLY AN OPERATION AGAINST AMERICAN FACILITIES IN THE REGION.

POINT #2 -- THE LEVEL OF CHATTER WENT UP IN JUNE AND JULY, 2001, BUT DROPPED IN AUGUST, 2001. THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY NEVER HAD ANYTHING MORE SPECIFIC THAN THAT THE LEVEL OF CHATTER HAD INCREASED AND THEN DECREASED. THERE WAS NO SPECIFICITY TO THE CHATTER AS TO PRECISELY WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, OR HOW.

POINT #3 -- IN JULY, SPECIAL AGENT WILLIAMS IN PHOENIX NOTED THAT MANY MIDDLE EASTERNERS WERE TAKING FLYING LESSONS AS WELL AS ADVANCED DEGREE COURSES IN THE PHOENIX AREA. UNDER THE ATTORNEY GENERAL GUIDELINES, HE DID NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT PREDICATION TO OPEN A CASE BASED SOLELY ON THOSE FACTS. HE SENT THE INFORMATION TO FBIHQ FOR FURTHER THOUGHT AND ANALYSIS AND TO THE NEW YORK OFFICE, WHICH HAD THE MOST INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF AL QAEDA. WHAT WAS LEARNED IS THAT MOST PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD COME TO THE UNITED STATES TO LEARN TO FLY BECAUSE THE WEATHER IS GOOD, THE TRAINING IS INEXPENSIVE, AND UNITED STATES FLIGHTS SCHOOLS SET THE WORLDWIDE STANDARD. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THERE WERE OVER 30,000 M-1 AND M-2 VISAS GRANTED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN 2001 TO FOREIGNERS WISHING TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES TO LEARN AVIATION SKILLS. THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 108 FLIGHT CENTERS IN THE UNITED STATES WITH THOUSANDS OF FLIGHT INSTRUCTORS AND GROUND INSTRUCTORS. TO THIS DAY THERE IS NO PROHIBITION TO ANYONE COMING TO AMERICA TO LEARN TO FLY. NONE OF THE 19 CAME TO THE UNITED STATES ON AN M-1 OR M-2 VISA.

POINT #4 -- ZACARIAS MOUSSAUI ALLEGEDLY MADE A STATEMENT AT A FLIGHT SCHOOL IN MINNESOTA THAT HE DID NOT NEED TO LEARN HOW TO TAKE OFF OR LAND, JUST FLY. THAT HAS BEEN REPORTED REPEATEDLY BUT IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WAS NOT WHAT WAS SAID. THE SCHOOL WAS CONCERNED THAT AN INDIVIDUAL LIKE HIM WAS TAKING INSTRUCTION BUT HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY LEARNED TO FLY AND HAD PAID FOR HIS

INSTRUCTION IN CASH. AGENTS FROM THE FBI AND INS RESPONDED AND HE WAS ARRESTED ON AUGUST 16, 2001, FOR BEING AN ILLEGAL ALIEN. AN APPLICATION FOR A FISA WAS MADE TO FBIHQ BUT IT WAS NOT PRESENTED TO THE FISA COURT SINCE IT LACKED AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT. TODAY, 2½ YEARS LATER, HE HAS NEITHER BEEN ACQUITTED NOR CONVICTED OF ANY CRIME, NOR IS HE DIRECTLY LINKED TO ANY OF THE 9-11 HIJACKERS. HE HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY, NOT WITH BEING THE “20TH HIJACKER” AS HAS BEEN WIDELY REPORTED.

POINT #5 -- ON AUGUST 23, 2001, THE CIA NOTIFIED THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT THAT TWO INDIVIDUALS MAY HAVE ENTERED THE UNITED STATES AND THEY SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE VISA WATCH LIST. THE FBI RECEIVED AN INFORMATION COPY OF THE REQUEST TO STATE. THERE WAS NO URGENCY ATTACHED TO THE REQUEST OR ANY INDICATION THAT THEY CAME HERE FOR ANY WORRISOME REASON. ACCORDING TO IMMIGRATION RECORDS, WHEN NOTICE OF THEIR ARRIVAL CAME, THEY HAD ALREADY ENTERED THE UNITED STATES AT NEW YORK, STATING ONLY THAT THEY ARE DESTINED FOR THE “MARRIOTT” HOTEL. NOTHING FURTHER AS TO LOCATION, PURPOSE, OR CONTACT INFORMATION WAS REQUIRED TO BE PROVIDED. THE FBI CONTACTED ALL THE MARRIOTT’S IN NEW YORK AND THEN CONTACTED THE MARRIOTT’S CENTRAL RESERVATIONS SYSTEM IN BALTIMORE BUT COULD FIND NO ENTRY FOR THEM. COMPUTER CHECKS WERE DONE OF A VARIETY OF DATABASES BUT NO HITS RESULTED. NO ONE KNEW WHY THEY CAME TO THE UNITED STATES OR WHETHER THEY HAD ALREADY LEFT THE UNITED STATES AT THAT TIME, THERE WAS NO REQUIREMENT TO NOTIFY AUTHORITIES OF DEPARTURE FROM THE UNITED STATES.

DICK CLARKE, BEFORE THIS COMMISSION, STATED THAT IF HE HAD KNOWN ABOUT THESE TWO INDIVIDUALS, HE WOULD HAVE PUT THEM ON *AMERICA’S MOST WANTED*. IF WE KNEW THEN WHAT WE KNOW NOW, I AGREE

WITH HIM THAT JOHN WALSH WOULD HAVE PUT ON A SPECIAL SHOW ABOUT THEM. HOWEVER, ON SEPTEMBER 10TH, ALL WE KNEW WAS THAT THEY WERE TO BE PUT ON THE VISA WATCH LIST AND WE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO LOCATE THEM. THE FBI DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THEY HAD DEPARTED THE UNITED STATES AND WE CERTAINLY HAD NO INFORMATION, NONE, THAT THEY WERE HERE TO CARRY OUT AN ACT OF TERRORISM.

I WILL ALWAYS BELIEVE THAT HAVING SO LITTLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SPECIFIC INTENTIONS OF AL QAEDA WAS A TERRIBLE LAW ENFORCEMENT AND INTELLIGENCE FAILURE, ESPECIALLY WITH ALL THE RESOURCES OF THE UNITED STATES THAT COULD HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO BEAR. FOR YEARS PRIOR TO 9-11 AL QAEDA COMMITTED ACTS OF WAR AGAINST US, FROM THE BOMBING OF OUR EMBASSIES IN KENYA AND TANZANIA, TO THE ATTEMPTED SINKING OF THE U.S.S. COLE. CONNECTING THESE FEW DOTS WOULD NOT HAVE GIVEN US A PICTURE OF WHAT WAS TO HAPPEN ON SEPTEMBER 11TH BUT AS THIS COMMISSION HAS ALREADY CONCLUDED, MORE COULD HAVE BEEN DONE. I BELIEVE WHAT WE NEEDED WERE OLD-FASHIONED HUMAN SOURCES IN AFGHANISTAN, GERMANY, MALAYSIA, AND ELSEWHERE TO, AS GEORGE TENET STATED, STEAL THEIR SECRETS. AND WE NEEDED TO RESPOND TO WAR WITH WAR, NOT JUST ARREST WARRANTS AND LIMITED SECRET MISSIONS. THE PASSING OF THE USA PATRIOT ACT BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS WAS A GREAT BENEFIT TO THE FBI AND THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. I WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT IT NOT BE ALLOWED TO LAPSE BUT BE RENEWED AND STRENGTHENED BASED UPON THE EXPERIENCES OF THOSE IN THE TRENCHES FIGHTING THE WAR ON TERRORISM.

I HAVE MET WITH, OR SPOKEN TO BY TELEPHONE, A NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE FBI AND SOME WHO HAVE MOVED ON FROM THE FBI. MANY ASKED ME TO TELL THE FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS THAT EACH DAY THE FBI FAMILY SUFFERS WITH YOU THE MEMORY OF 9-11.

I AM NOW PREPARED TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND LATER THE FAMILIES' QUESTIONS AFTER THIS HEARING. I HAVE NOT MADE MYSELF AVAILABLE TO THE MEDIA OR ANYONE ELSE PRIOR TO MEETING WITH THIS COMMISSION BECAUSE I BELIEVE YOU HAVE A SOLEMN, NON-POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED ON SEPTEMBER 11TH AND TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROTECT AMERICA IN THE FUTURE.