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Attackers Studied Mistakes in Prev	ious Assaults	-12
By Peter Slevin and Walter Pincus Washington Post Staff Writers Thursday, September 13, 2001; Page A24		
Plotters of the assault on the World Trade Cent of their terrorist predecessors, reducing the cha effectiveness of their attack, intelligence exper-	nces of early detection and increasing the deadly	Pr
with other cultures and languages. "If we had a warning and missed it, that is a fai being briefed by Attorney General John D. Ash	Unlike earlier conspiracies foiled by an indiscreet comment or an intercepted conversation, the hijackers and their superiors launched Tuesday's coordinated attack with what appeared to be total surprise. Significant players in the intelligence community learned about the assault from television. U.S. intelligence agencies find themselves defending their abilities in the aftermath of the deadliest terrorist assault in the country's history. Sen. Richard C. Shelby (R-Ala.), vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said the incident demonstrates the need for a broader array of recruits familiar	• Arm Flight • Poll Appri • CIA • Bus • Pak Requ • 190 • Con multir and m • 190 • Con multir and m • Sec • New • Add • Edit Opini • To (Dionn • Mor
Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.), intelligence commu whether the failure was a result of the limitatio doing their jobs. He suspects authorities did no terrorist organization in the United States or ab communicated by computer, taking advantage electronic traffic.	ns of intelligence gathering or from people not thave sources capable of penetrating the broad. He also said the group likely	Video Audio Video Audio Video Video Inves
	's carnage. U.S. intelligence sources believe the Osama bin Laden, a wealthy Saudi Arabian who entalists. Early evidence suggests the	The S Bin L Work Attac Fligh

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participation of disciplined warriors operating in small cells likely communicating face-to- face and leaving few written records.	Towe Pent:
"This is the hardest target there is," said Daniel Benjamin, a former National Security Council counterterrorism specialist. "There's going to be an awful lot of witch-hunting in the weeks ahead, but it is fair to say that the intelligence community has been knocking itself out and has known that bin Laden is a major threat."	Attac Natio Reop • Pho
Bin Laden has been the most important target of U.S. counter-terrorism forces for years, according to CIA sources. Earlier this year, U.S. authorities warned Americans living abroad that bin Laden's network planned attacks on U.S. targets overseas.	• List
There was a time when U.S. agencies monitored bin Laden and his associates by following the signal of his satellite telephone. As with other Middle Eastern terrorist groups, they often boasted about their intentions or their successes. About two years ago, word leaked about the bin Laden intercepts, and his phone went silent.	• Crin • Ney • Ney
Not all sources have been shut down, however. After the attacks on Tuesday, intelligence officers listened to a conversation between bin Laden associates who said they had hit two targets in the United States, Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) told reporters.	Click H
Certain details of the devastating World Trade Center assault suggest that the perpetrators of Tuesday's terror studied the flaws of 1990s conspiracies, including an attempt to destroy one of the twin towers.	<u>Photos</u>
A car bomb that exploded in a World Trade Center basement, killing six people, was designed to topple the 110-story buildings, Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, mastermind of the operation, told a Secret Service agent. Indeed, the operation was intended to include attacks on the United Nations headquarters, the George Washington Bridge, the Lincoln Tunnel and the New York building that housed the FBI.	
"And he said that Americans would realize, if they suffered those type of casualties, that they were at war," Secret Service agent Brian G. Parr testified at Yousef's 1997 trial.	
The terrorists discovered that a single van full of explosives would not bring down the skyscrapers, and they vowed to try again. Just four days after the 1993 bombing, a group calling itself the Liberation Army Fifth Battalion warned of additional attacks against American civilian and military targets.	
"The American people must know that their civilians who got killed are not better than those who are getting killed by the American weapons and support," the letter said.	
Investigators found a second letter on a suspect's computer that warned of violence against the World Trade Center. It read, "We promise you that the next time it will be very precise and WTC will continue to be one [of] our targets in the U.S."	

A New York jury convicted Yousef of masterminding the 1993 bombing. He also was found guilty of a 1995 conspiracy to bomb a dozen airplanes and kill 4,000 passengers as they flew over the Pacific Ocean. The bombing of a Philippine Airlines jet in 1994 -- which killed one person -- was a reported test run.

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In testimony at the Yousef trial, potential terrorists learned the twin towers could withstand being hit by a Boeing 707, so they used two heavier planes Tuesday. The two hijacked planes also hit between the 40th and 70th floors, sites calculated to produce the greatest damage.

The U.S. intelligence community is concerned that terrorists are plotting a fresh attack away from Washington and New York that does not involve a hijacked airplane.

"They are not convinced it is over," said Rep. Jane Harman (D-Calif.), a ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee. A former intelligence official added: "The community believes something suspicious is going on and there is a reason for there to be more. Americans tend to let down their guard after a couple of days."

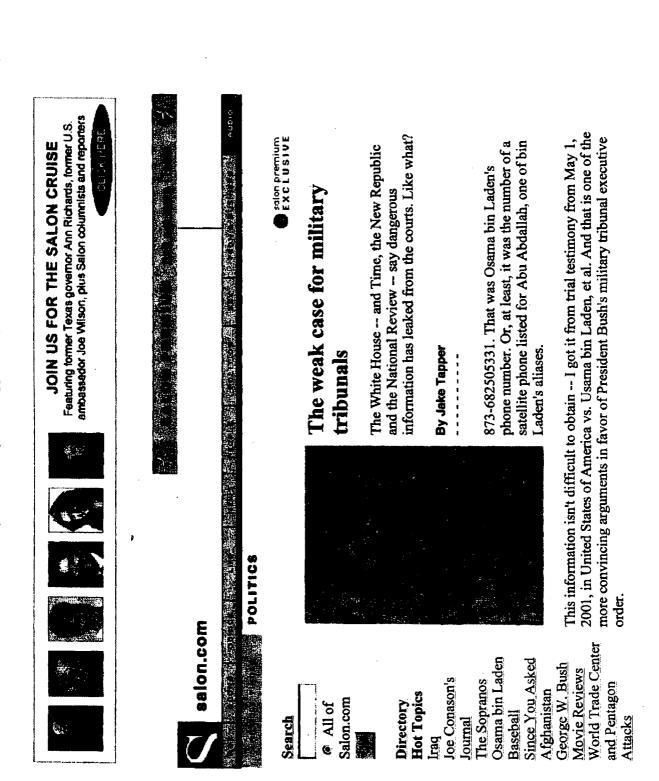
Graham said the CIA warned there was no "specific information to lead to who, where, when," but the intelligence community advised "caution for a considerable period of time."

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FOIA-06140



Page 1 of 3

FOIA-06141

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7/29/2004

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Writing in the National Review, Judge Robert Bork cites what happened in the trial of those responsible for the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania that killed 224 as a "conclusive argument that in open trials our government would inevitably have to reveal much of our intelligence information, and about the means by which it is gathered." Bork says the prosecution in that case had to reveal that U.S. intelligence had intercepted bin Laden's satellite phone calls, that as a result bin Laden stopped using the phone, and that after this revelation, intelligence sources lost bin Laden and were therefore unaware of his fiendish plot for Sept. 11.	Also used as an argument for the secrecy of a military tribunal is a theory about whether a specific type of jetliner was chosen to destroy the World Trade Center towers Sept. 11. "Because defendants in criminal trials are entitled under the Sixth Amendment to open proceedings, any information introduced in them becomes public which can cause problems," wrote the New Republic's Jason Zengerle. "In the 1997 trial of Ramzi Yousef for his role in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, it was disclosed that the twin towers were engineered to withstand a direct hit from a Boeing 707 plane. Is that why the Sept. 11 hijackers used planes bigger than the 707?"	Both points make for a compelling argument. And they feed the insecure post-9/11 part of us that wants to grant the executive branch omnipotence in order to protect us. There's just one problem with these two stories, which have emerged in the media with increasing frequency as among the best reasons for supporting the privacy afforded a military tribunal they're demonstrably false.	Mant to read more? This article is Salon Premium content and only available to Bubscribers. Find out more or if you're already a member log in here.
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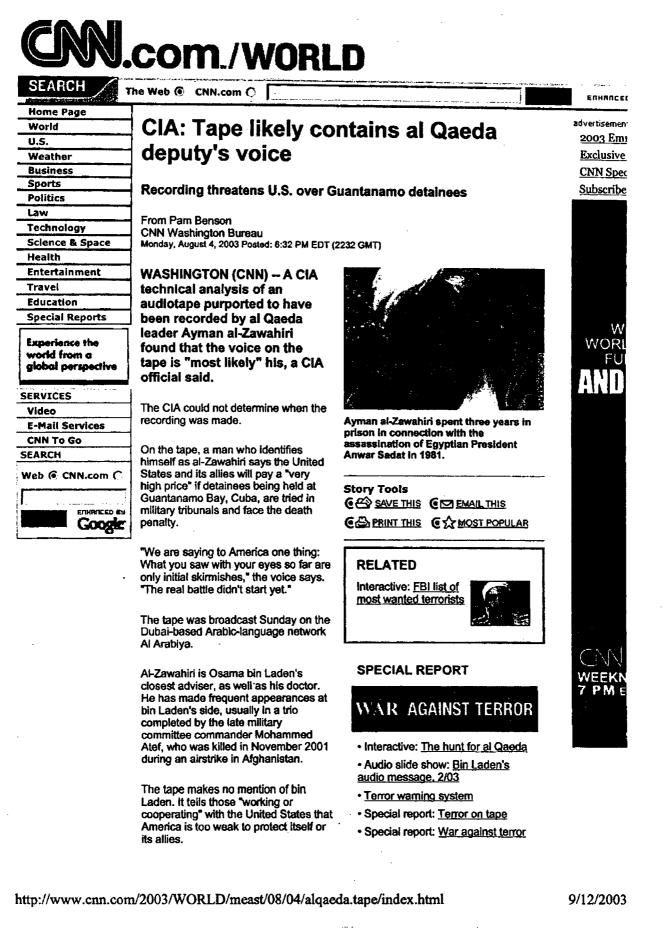
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CNN.com - CIA: Tape likely contains al Qaeda deputy's voice - Aug. 4, 2003

"The crusader America will pay a very high price for any harm that will affect

any of the prisoners that they are holding," the voice says. "Those who are allies or helping America will pay the same price. Those who are handing over our brothers will pay the same price.

"We haven't identified who actually submitted the tape," Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge said Sunday on CNN's "Late Edition with Wolf Biltzer." "But [coming] from a terrorist, threatening American interests is not really surprising.

"We take the threat, and have taken [every] threat since September 11, seriously," he said.

Ridge also said al-Zawahiri and bin Laden were among the "ever-diminishing number of al Qaeda leaders who have been able to avoid apprehension to date.

"I'm confident that, as the president said, the leaders, particularly one or two, will be brought to justice," he said.

The last purported al-Zawahiri tape was released in May, just after the nearsimultaneous suicide bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, that killed 23 people, including nine Americans.

Investigators believe al-Zawahiri played an important role in the terrorist attacks of September 11. He is on the U.S. government's list of most-wanted terrorists because of his indictment in the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

Intelligence suggests al-Zawahiri is not far from bin Laden, somewhere along the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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