

A Failure of Analysis?
A Examination of the Intelligence Failure
at Pearl Harbor and its Relevance to the
Events of the Present Day.

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"The unexpected can happen and often does"

Gordon Prange, from at "Dawn We Slept "(1)

Ghosts

In 1953, some twelve years after the Japanese Imperial Navy's attack on Oahu, a lawyer in the employ of Admiral Kimmel, the naval commander of Oahu at the time of the 7 December attack on the installation, remarked to him via a written letter, that "Pearl Harbor never dies and no living person has seen the end of it." (2).

Over half a Century later the words uttered by the Admiral's barrister have proved to be more than prophetic. Almost from the moment that the last Japanese bomb was dropped on the Pacific Fleet, historians and academics have debated who should shoulder responsibility for the attack.

It is no surprise then that those charged with finding the "truth" at the time (to include the Admiral's barrister) had a sense that historians and other interested parties would debate the issues surrounding the event for generations to come.

Some 60 years later, the debate still rages. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 while vastly different from the seminal assault on the Pacific Fleet by Japan's Imperial Navy, brought forth a host of analysis that attempted to draw comparisons between the two events. For many, the conclusion was clear: once again, just as at Pearl Harbor, those responsible for tasked with protecting our nation had failed. (3)

*try to
avoid the
bureaucratic
language*

The attacks of 9/11 not only raised a myriad of questions regarding the effectiveness of America's intelligence community in the present day, they also inadvertently renewed the debate on the failure to prevent the 1941 assault on Oahu. After all, even if there were stark differences between the two events, it was impossible not to ask the question, could the large-scale mistakes allegedly made by President

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) and his commanders hold the clues to the present day disaster. Had history repeated itself? (4)

Even before the horrific events of September 2001, dozens of revisionist texts had been published based on the cockamamie theory that FDR had prior knowledge of the attack. These conspiratorial claims were based on the false notion that US code breakers had broken Japan's Naval codes but, on the orders of the President, purposely failed to notify Hawaii in order to ensure that Japan's action would draw America into WWII.

Armed with these consistently provocative but nonetheless inaccurate "theories," interested groups and individuals have sought and continue to seek vindication for Admiral Kimmel, and General Short, the respective naval and army commanders at the time. This has led to the unfortunate conducting of disgraceful "what did FDR know and when did he know it," inquiries by individuals, (i.e. U.S. Senators, Congressmen, Admirals) who should know better. (5)

Thankfully, most of the grossly inaccurate charges of treason that have been hurled at FDR have long been stripped of their credibility. Like urban legends they continue at times to receive an inordinate amount of attention in the press. (6)

Also, the majority of responsible historians are in agreement that American policy makers, due to the breaking of Japan's diplomatic code America's leaders in 1941 clearly knew that Japan and America were going to war. They did not know the exact time and most especially the place. As David Kahn, the eminent historian of cryptologic history, noted in a 1997 interview:

Listen, "We're reading the codes, how come Pearl Harbor happened?" It's a very simple answer. Pearl Harbor happened because not one of the Japanese ambassadors in the United States or anywhere else

was ever told that there was going to be an attack on Pearl Harbor and it's therefore impossible for the code breakers to break a message saying they're going to attack Pearl Harbor. That's why even though when we're meeting the top Japanese, even though we're meeting the top Japanese diplomatic cipher system, we weren't able to prevent Pearl Harbor. That's basically, ~~that's basically~~ the simple reason that we weren't able to do it. No messages were ever sent saying we're going to attack Pearl Harbor. It is therefore impossible for the code breakers to read any. (7).

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So due to the efforts of credible historians like Kahn and a host of declassified documents, (8) the claims of conspiracy and deceit concerning the Roosevelt administration are now thankfully moot.

But while the question of conspiracy on the part of FDR has thankfully been left to be debated by the lunatic fringe of the historical realm, there are legitimate issues that have yet to be formerly put to rest, the most significant of which is why did the intelligence process fail to predict the attack. If there was no conspiracy, why did Pearl Harbor happen? Who dropped the ball? What actions could American intelligence professionals have taken to prevent the disaster?

Not surprisingly current pundits and historians have opined that similar kinds of questions can be asked regarding the problems that lay behind the alleged failures of September 11th. (9) This is a more than fair exercise in constructive criticism. After all, much if not all of the present day U.S. intelligence and defense community was created with one goal in mind, prevent another Pearl Harbor.(10) When the intelligence community failed to meet this minimum standard by failing to prevent the events of September 11th, many observers, with great justification, were of the opinion that history had repeated itself and that once again American had failed to learn from its past.

A Failure of Analysis?

The consensus among many of these observers was that December 7, 1941, like September 11, 2002 occurred because of a lack of proper coordination and analysis within the US intelligence realm. (11)

A Failure of Analysis?

Thus it was not surprising to see a bevy of press stories after the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center that trumpeted the analysis of the eminent historian Roberta Wohlstetter, whose highly regarded 1962 treatise, "Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision," is regarded by many as a "classic." In sum, Wohlstetter held that the disaster at Pearl was due not to an inability to collect intelligence, but rather to a failure to separate critical intelligence from what she described as "the noise" (noise being defined as the huge amounts of information that are scooped up by technologically adept intelligence organizations) (12)

Prominent journalists such as Tim Weiner, one of a host of New York Times reporters who cover the US intelligence and defense community, concluded that "Well before dawn on Dec. 7, 1941, the American military, having intercepted and broken Japan's codes, knew at the highest levels that an attack was coming. If it failed to produce an accurate image of Japanese intentions and capabilities, it was not for want of the relevant materials," (13)

He quotes Wohlstetter as noting that "Never before have we had so complete an intelligence picture of the enemy." ... no one saw the big picture.(14) The result was a surprise attack." Weiner was not alone, Professor John Q. Wilson in his June 2002 article in the Wall Street Journal also paid homage to the conclusions of the book and went to great lengths to show how history had repeated itself. (15)

Only time will reveal whether Weiner and his fellow journalists are correct in applying Wohlstetter's insights to explain the failures of September 11, but one thing is certain: they are wrong to sign on to her conclusions regarding Pearl Harbor. And, if her conclusions regarding the analysis of intelligence related to Pearl Harbor is inaccurate, then it may also be unwise to utilize them to explain the failures of the

present day.

On one level it is easy to understand why those who make it their business to understand the inner workings of the intelligence community revere Wohlstetter's book. The book is well researched and paints a detailed portrait of the kinds of thing that can happen when too much information and too much bureaucracy get in the way of finding out the truth. However, where Wohlstetter falls short is not in her attempts to present a scholarly work on the attack, but rather in her conclusions regarding the reasons that the American intelligence community was caught napping.

Wohlstetter's argument was based on the thought-provoking but inaccurate premise that prior to the attack, elements of the United States intelligence apparatus had been successful in collecting the intelligence required to ascertain the Japanese Imperial Navy's intentions on the Pacific Fleet. She notes, however, that despite their success in collecting the critical material they sought, the powers that be on the American side failed to properly analyze the material. Wohlstetter noted further that this failure of analysis was due, as mentioned previously, to the sheer volume of traffic. She concluded that this massive amount of data had overwhelmed the process and that the lack of a cogent system to make sure that all the pieces of the puzzle could not only be put on the table but also fully assembled, was the true cause of America's failure to see the big picture. (16)

However, a closer examination of the facts clearly shows that Wohlstetter was only half right. There was indeed a lack of coordination between the services, and it is equally true that bureaucracy and malfeasance at times ruled the day. But the crucial point is that even if the operation had operated with the efficiency of a fine Swiss watch, it is likely that the American intelligence community would still not have had the foresight to predict that Dai Nippon would strike first at Hawaii. This is because the information collected, while valuable in many respects was as Dr. Kahn noted, devoid of any solid clues

as to Japan's intentions in the Pacific. (17)

In order to understand this conundrum, some background is in order. In short, just what kind of material was being collected by the Army and Navy code breakers? And, what was lacking from the intercepts that would have tipped off the "powers that be" at the time, that Pearl, rather than the Philippines or Southeast Asia, was Japan's real target.

Magic

In 1939 the Japanese government introduced what was referred to by the American codebreaking establishment as the Type B machine. This new device was invented solely for the purpose of allowing Japanese diplomatic stations throughout the world to communicate securely. Known as the "Purple" machine, it would take eighteen long months for the US to solve. (18)

Most of the work in solving this challenge was done by an intrepid team of cryptologists assembled by the gentleman who would one day be given the title of the Father of American Cryptology, William Friedman. Friedman, the son of Russian Jewish immigrants arrived in the United States in 1891 at the age of one. Like many great men, it took him a while to discover his *raison d'etre*. An interest in agriculture led to an interest in genetics. Genetics led him to Riverbank, a ^{??} latter day Brookings Institute, near Chicago. While at Riverbank, Friedman met one Elizebeth Smith; Ms. Smith had many talents but her forte was cryptanalysis and she had made a name for herself in the think tank's Department of Ciphers. Friedman made the fateful decision to pursue both Ms. Smith and the study of ciphers and would ultimately become intimately linked to both. (He would marry Elizebeth in 1917).

In April of 1930 Friedman was given authority to hire three cryptologists at a salary of \$2,000 a year. The three men, Frank Rowlett, Abraham Sinkov, and Solomon Kullback would play a major role in the breaking of Japan's diplomatic codes prior to Pearl Harbor and would play an even larger role in

breaking the codes of America's adversaries during WWII and beyond. (19)

Like a manager of a successful baseball club, Friedman oversaw the entire effort to break Japan's diplomatic codes and left the details and legwork to the three mathematicians. His big picture role did not relieve him from having to deal with the stress of getting results. The challenges posed by the project were such that in December of 1940 Friedman suffered a nervous collapse. (20)

Despite the setbacks, the work done by the team was truly an unsurpassed feat of intellectual brilliance. (21) The cracking of the code was done first by simple pen and paper calculations; this required not only a good working knowledge of statistical analysis, but also the ability to think creatively and to take sometimes-wild perspectives and approaches to the problem at hand. Rowlett was the chief star of this process.

But the solving of the code was only one small part of the challenge. The Purple machine ushered in the machine age of cryptology and it became apparent that while one might understand a code and have the ability to crack it, if the message was machine generated, the total possibilities could be so numerous that the time required to find the final solution would be prohibitive. In short, a message generated by a machine would almost have to be deciphered by a machine. But, the reliable IBM sorting machines and punch cards would not be enough to do the job. In order to break Purple, the team would have to build a device similar to the one that was producing the original messages. This was not an easy thing to accomplish since no one on the team had ever laid eyes on such a device.

The task of creating the mechanism fell to one Leo Rosen, a former electrical engineering major at MIT who had joined an ROTC unit while in college and due to the war had been called to active duty. Rosen, after much thought, came upon the idea of using telephone switches to mimic the workings of the device.

“There was a simple reason that the stepping switches seemed so ...suited to the job: they were precisely what the Japanese had used...although neither Rowlett nor Rosen had any way to know it at the time.”(22)

The cracking of the Purple code was a seminal event in the world of cryptology. In time, additional Purple analog machines were constructed and distributed to the Army and Navy Departments. Distribution was a major issue with security being the major concern. Finally in early 1941, the intelligence chiefs of the Army and Navy agreed in principle to provide the information to a select group that included the President, the secretaries of State, War and the Navy, the Chief of Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations, the heads of the Army and Navy War plans divisions, and the heads of the Army and Navy intelligence divisions. (23)

As Kahn once again notes:

See above
“Thus by the fall of 1941, Magic was being demanded at the topmost level of government. It had become a regular and vital factor in the formation of American policy. Hull, (Cordell Hull the Secretary of State) was... at all times intensely interested in the contents of the intercepts. The chief of Army intelligence regarded Magic as the most reliable and authentic information that the War Department was receiving on Japanese intentions and activities. The Navy war plans chief thought that Magic, which was largely diplomatic...affected his estimates by about 15 percent. The high officials not only read Magic avidly... they acted upon it. (24)

It was clear then that throughout that fateful year of 1941, that the Magic decrypts were a driving force behind American policy. It would be Magic that alerted the administration to the fact that despite a host of diplomatic overtures from the ruling junta, Japan’s true goal was to grab as much territory as it could

and do whatever it took, including going to war, in order to protect the formation and existence of what the ruling Japanese militarists euphemistically referred to as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. It would be Magic that alerted America's intelligence community, in late fall and early winter of 1941, that Japan's diplomatic moves were likely a smoke screen and that it was only a matter of time before Japan would instigate offensive operation against the United States in an effort to solidify its position.

The Magic decrypts had made quite an impression. So much so that those who were enamored with the information began to believe that it was a panacea to each and every conundrum that Japan might present. (25) This was a fatal assumption. Because of the focus on Magic, personnel and resources were directed for the most part at solving the diplomatic pieces of the puzzle while those who were tasked with cracking (in hindsight) the far more informative operational codes went begging. (26)

JN-25

The solving of the Magic turned out to be a good news, bad news situation. On the positive side the American cryptologic community, despite the infighting and turf battles, had shown that given appropriate resources they could produce meaningful intelligence that could be of great use in discerning the intentions of the Japanese Empire.

The bad news was that the sensation caused by the breaking of Magic had caused the entire community to neglect other cryptologic challenges that, had they been solved, could have provided an even more revealing perspective on Japan's ultimate objective. (27) The ~~previously mentioned~~ David Kahn has noted that having an effective signals intelligence capability is ^{akin} (akin to being able to "stick your nose in the other team's huddle." The problem was that prior to Pearl Harbor there was more than one huddle on the field, and the codebreakers of the Army and Navy were understandably focused almost exclusively

on the one composed almost entirely of diplomats. (27a)

The information obtained from the diplomats was no doubt valuable, but the problem was that none of it even remotely mentioned Pearl Harbor or the assiduous planning Admiral Yamamoto and his staff had been involved in prior to the attack. This was due to the unfortunate fact that JN-25, the Japanese Naval operational code, unlike Magic, had not yet been broken. As the historian Christopher Andrew notes that

this made the job of predicting the attack on Pearl Harbor a difficult task, *since thousands ... could not be decrypted even though they were intercepted the last 6 months of 1941*

"...Though thousands of naval signals were intercepted during the last six months of 1941, the great majority of which could not be decrypted... A detailed study by the postwar SIGINT (signals intelligence) agency, NSA, later concluded that the failure to break JN-25b was solely due to a shortage of ^{cryptanalysts} resources.

For most of 1939, 1940, and 1941, ~~usually two and never more than five cryptanalysts were assigned to work on ALL (author's emphasis) Japanese naval code and cipher systems. Not till late in 1941 was the number working on JN25 and JN25b raised to eight.~~ "If the Japanese navy messages had enjoyed a higher priority and [had been] assigned more analytic resources," writes the NSA historian, Fredrick D.

Parker, "could the U.S. Navy have predicted the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor? Most emphatically yes!" *As Andrew notes, a secret code was stolen by a* When the ~~unsolved intercepted messages of late 1941 were decrypted as part of a secret postwar study, they were found to reveal many of the preparations for Pearl Harbor.~~ Andrew goes further to

note that analysis was not the problem but *where is closure* "a want of relevant materials. Not a single Japanese decrypt available in Washington pointed to an attack on Pearl Harbor. Since no Japanese mission abroad was given advance notice of the attack, Magic made no mention of it. Japanese intercepts reporting ship movements between August 1 and December 6 included only twenty references to Pearl Harbor as compared with 59 to the Philippines and twenty-three to the Panama Canal. (28)

When one considers the above assertion by Andrews, Wohlstetter theory falls flat on its face. The truth

is that the failure to predict the attack was not due to a failure of analysis but as was noted in Parker's assertion, due instead to the decision by the American cryptologic community to concentrate almost exclusively on the diplomatic codes. (29)

In short, American code breakers in the time before Pearl Harbor were very much like a lab animal that has two buttons in its cage. If it pushes the button on the right 2 or 3 food pellets are dispensed; if it pushes the one on the left, 10 to 20 pellets are released. In time, the animal will understandably forget that the right button even exists. Such was the case with Pearl Harbor and the Magic decrypts.

Had we been able to read the Naval codes and still missed the attack, Wohlstetter's theory regarding the difficulty in separating the actionable information from the "noise" might have some validity, but as noted, JN-25, the code that would have most likely revealed the plot, was not broken until the spring of 1942, shortly before the Battle of Midway. (30)

Bomb Plot

Some will claim that enough key information was obtained from the diplomatic traffic to give the American intelligence community some insight into the attacks. For arguments sake, if one assumes that this is true, then the "failure of analysis" theory would again have some semblance of credibility.

With this in mind, it is appropriate to ask the question, how revealing was the diplomatic traffic in providing clues to Japan's intentions on Oahu. ~~This is worth exploring.~~ First it is indeed true that in hindsight it would appear that some diplomatic messages did contain strong hints that Hawaii might be in real danger.

One of the most revealing perhaps is the famous Bomb Plot message. It was no secret to the American counter-intelligence effort on Oahu that the Japanese Embassy was a nest of spies. Despite this knowledge no action was taken against the embassy personnel, mostly due to the State Department's concern that any harsh move against the embassy personnel would have a negative effect on the "negotiations" taking place between Japan and the US. Looking back some 60 years it is hard to believe that American policymakers, ~~to~~ include FDR, were hopeful even up to a few days before the attack that the crisis could be resolved diplomatically. (31) *They were just buying time*

Due to this caution, the intelligence and counterintelligence organizations on Oahu were content to keep a close watch on the activities. On 9 October the Japanese Consulate operatives received the following dispatch:

*Can you
at least
if this into a
paragraph &
just the rest?*

"Strictly secret.

"Henceforth, we would like to have you make reports concerning vessels along the following lines insofar as possible: "

1. The waters (of Pearl Harbor) are to be divided roughly into five sub areas (We have no objections to your abbreviating as much as you like.) "

Area A. Waters between Ford Island and the Arsenal. "

Area B. Waters adjacent to the Island south and west of Ford Island. (This area is on the opposite side of the Island from Area A.) "

Area C. East Loch. "

Area D. Middle Loch. "

Area E. West Loch and the communication water routes. "

2. With regard to warships and aircraft carriers, we would like to have you report on those at anchor (these are not so important) tied up at wharves, buoys and in docks. (Designate types and classes briefly.

If possible we would like to have you make mention of the fact when there are two or more vessels along

side the same wharf.)"(32)

Colonel Rufus Bratton of the Far Eastern Intelligence Section, agreed with many of his colleagues that the information contained in the message suspiciously resembled some kind of aerial bomb plot that pointed to the strong possibility that the Pacific Fleet was a target. Despite his efforts to sell this theory, his superiors in Washington dismissed his claims. (33)

Conspiracy theorists have seized on this dismissal as proof positive that any intrepid analysis that may have flowed to Washington concerning the attack was "spiked" by FDR and his henchmen lest it reveal the truth about what was to come. (34)

In truth, the Bomb Plot message is the key to Pearl Harbor, but not because it validates any kind of wild eyed conspiracy theory. Rather, the failure to take the message seriously reveals what this author believes to be the most valid reason that America was duped on 7 December, 1941 (and perhaps on 11 September as well), namely that that no one in the American chain of command, to include General Marshall was truly convinced that the Japanese had the capability or the nerve to carry out such a operation. The Chief of Staff's statement in April of 1941 speaks volumes about the assumptions the American leadership had towards Japan at the time.

This is a
good quote -
succinct + using
language relevant
to your point

"The island of Oahu, due to its fortifications, its garrison and its physical characteristics is believed to be the strongest fortress in the world...With our heavy bombers and our fine new pursuit planes, the land forces could put up such a defense that the Japanese wouldn't dare attack Hawaii." (35)

The attitude Marshall expresses was truly the key to the inability to predict the attack. Gordon Prange notes in "At Dawn We Slept," (what many consider to be the seminal work on Pearl Harbor) that

Bratton's superiors in Washington were of the opinion that the information requested by Tokyo in the Bomb Plot dispatch was nothing more than the usual routine intelligence information that most nations, including the United States, were accustomed to gathering. As Prange later notes, the thinking that lay behind this conclusion rested on the delusional premise so eloquently stated by Marshall, that Japan would never be foolish enough to attack Hawaii. (36)

In hindsight these conclusions by preeminent statesmen such as Marshall seem shocking. How could we have so underestimated the Japanese? How could we have so keenly looked into the mirror and seen only the reflection of our own intentions. (37).

The answer lies in the simple human emotion of hubris. At first glance it would seem that the missteps and grievous oversights that characterized the days that led up to the attack appear to be unique. However, it should be noted that certain aspects of human nature are constant, one of these traits is the propensity for individuals, even ^{smart?} bright, lucid and allegedly well informed individuals, to see only the positive aspects of a situation.

*Was there a racial aspect? Japan
Not up to definition?
Confusion - Same?*

Conclusions

Beth Fisher, writing in the recent book, Intelligence and the Cuban Missile Crisis, notes in chapter 6 that policy analysis as well as intelligence analysis is characterized by two types of approaches. She identifies the first as "theory driven" and the second as "data driven." In short, "theory driven" analysis is based on certain assertions and assumptions. These assumptions provide a high level of comfort to the person conducting the analysis. In addition, they often prompt individuals to try to meld information that clashes with their preconceived notions onto a previously constructed framework of ideas and theories that may very well have little or no relevance to the present situation. (38)

Fisher notes that "theory driven" processing undermines our ability to generate alternative interpretations of the data. When we reason in a "theory driven" manner, we attend first to our

preconceptions and then to the data. This in turn prompts us to interpret information in such a way as to use it to confirm what we already expect to happen. (39)

Fisher cites the excellent example of the inability of American intelligence analysts to detect the placing of offensive missiles on the island of Cuba by Khrushchev in 1962. Again like Pearl Harbor, the belief by the so-called experts was that Premier Khrushchev would never make such a deployment causing US analysts to be insensitive to information that such a deployment was indeed taking place. (40)

“Theory driven” thinking of course was not confined only to Pearl Harbor and the Missiles of October. One can find evidence of the same kind of thinking at the Battle of Kasserine Pass, the Battle of the Bulge and countless other places (i.e. Vietnam), where well-intentioned wishes and hopes overrode factual information that should have been noted by those responsible for knowing the facts. *Iraq??*

The opposite of “theory driven” analysis is “data driven” thinking, in which predictions concerning the future actions of an adversary are based not on wishful thinking but on cold hard facts. Professor Blight the author of the aforementioned tome on the Cuban Missile Crisis, reminds us in the final chapter of his book that, for the most part, it is impossible for anyone to engage in pure “data driven” analysis, because it is virtually impossible to totally separate ourselves from the many assumptions and preconceived notions that we have formed in our minds prior to conducting the analysis. (40a)

To summarize then, the major cause of the failure at Pearl Harbor was most assuredly not a conspiracy by FDR. No evidence of any kind exists that shows any kind of conspiracy, in fact the evidence proves otherwise. (41)

This paper has also discussed
~~We have also covered~~ the misguided notion so often quoted by supposed learned individuals, that the US should have known about the attack because “we had broken Japan’s codes.” This was in part true, we had broken Japan’s diplomatic code. However, the decision to devote the majority of our intelligence resources to the diplomatic traffic meant that breaking of the naval codes, which may have allowed the

*Oct 1962
the JCS
did believe
that Khrushchev
would send
missiles*

US to predict the attack, was given little to no attention. This meant that we were able to ascertain the fact that Japan was planning to break off negotiations and probably instigate hostilities, but clueless as to the time and place. (42)

Finally and most importantly, the crucial reason for the failure to predict the attack was not, as Barbara Wohlstetter had claimed (and many other present day “experts” have noted) a failure to separate the credible information from the noise. The attack did not occur because of a failure of analysis. There was, nothing in the traffic (that we could read at the time) that would have provided CLEAR evidence of an attack.

But the real reason for the debacle at Pearl Harbor was that American policy makers at the highest levels were engaging in “theory driven” thinking regarding Japan. Short of the intercept and decoding of a clearly worded message of Japanese origin that said “ We intend to attack Pearl Harbor on the morning of the 7th,” we would never have come to the conclusion that an attack on Hawaii was imminent, because that very notion was considered outside of the realm of possibility by the majority of those tasked with understanding the situation at the time. (43)

So what lessons does the failure to predict the attack on Hawaii hold for us in the present day? Are there parallels between that dark day and the horrific events of 11 September 2002?

Most emphatically, yes,

In a 21 September 2002 Washington Post editorial entitled the *Real Failure* noted that
“ *There is a temptation, in reading the first interim report by the House-Senate inquiry into intelligence failures preceding the Sept. 11 attacks, to focus on the tidbits of information the intelligence agencies had gathered before the attacks that offered hints of what was coming. The intelligence agencies for example, had received a series of indications that terrorists were interested in airplanes as weapons, and there were signs as well that Osama bin Laden was plotting a major, catastrophic attack on the U.S.*”

Quote for book

mainland. Yet the possibility of airplanes being used as weapons was never seriously studied, the report contends, and despite the signs of interest in a domestic attack, intelligence officials continued to focus chiefly on the possibility of attacks overseas. "

The major failure the report hints at is not the specific inability to stop the attacks given what was known at the time. It is, rather, a lack of seriousness and intensity about responding to the problem of al Qaeda as it developed. The report documents the increasing alarm that intelligence officials felt at Osama bin Laden's rise over the course of the 1990s. It also, however, documents the agencies' failure to shift resources in response. (44)

In conclusion, there can be no doubt that proper analysis is crucial to effective intelligence work; however, the critical point is that analysis that is conducted without the aid of a clear view of real conditions and a realistic appreciation of the capabilities of the adversary is no analysis at all, no matter how well it is collected and collated. One must always keep in mind that if your initial assumptions are wrong, it is unlikely that you will ever get to the truth of any situation, no matter how smart or efficient you may be.

you could read this part - it is not plagiarism because you are clearly using the report & it is not your work

Itaker

Footnotes

date of publication missing on each book

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