

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of Pasquale D'Amuro, Assistant Director in Charge, NY Office, FBI

Type of Event: Interview

Date: January 20, 2004

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Christine Healey

Location: FBI New York office

Participants: Commission -- Healey, Barnes; Non-Commission -- Robert Sinton

Note: This is not a verbatim MFR. The following are some of the points made by Mr. D'Amuro.

1. You can better prevent terrorism when you have both criminal and intelligence tools together in one organization, e.g. Buffalo case. When you learn of criminal violations, you can disrupt a cell.
2. JTTFs should have both criminal agents and intelligence investigators. The important thing is good management.
3. UBL was discovered as part of the WTC 1 case. He was raising funds out of the Brooklyn mosque. The East Africa case showed that AQ had tentacles in Europe. After the embassy bombings, he felt UBL was out of control and more than law enforcement could handle. Diplomacy, sanctions, covert action, military action -- all should have been utilized with law enforcement.
4. The New York office has always been about prevention. It learned from Terrstop and the Manila air case.
5. He disputed Bernard Kerik, who he said did not put apply for a clearance. There was sharing of information coming into JTTF with NYPD. On the other hand, the Intelligence Bureau of NYPD doesn't always share with the FBI.
6. TTIC is going straight to state and local agencies, contrary to what Brennan said at the beginning.
7. FBI's relationship with CIA has come a long way but there needs to be more sharing and people on details should have better guidance about what they are supposed to do.
8. He feels Baginski is on the right track and the FIG is the Office of Intelligence. He was sharply critical of Bryant's ISD which he felt failed because it pulled analysts out of units away from operators. Co-location of agents and analysts is good but analysts can't get all their direction from operations. They need to get direction from headquarters.

9. Unqualified people were promoted in the past to analyst positions. This no longer occurs.
10. He does want NY to be able to disseminate its own reports to the IC. He doesn't feel HQ can keep up with the pace. He does think CIA disseminates reports too quickly without vetting its information to ensure it is credible.
11. The FBI's information technology system was a disaster.
12. The New York office has a big problem because it can not pay qualified professional support people enough. They can't replace good people who are retiring.
13. A dream analyst would have a lot of experience; area knowledge and know his/her place as agents do – neither can have final say and think they know it all. The FBI needs a career path for analysts.
14. HQ needs to provide oversight and a centralized CT database.
15.

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17. In 2001 the “walls” got to be ridiculous. Everyone was doing national security, but criminal agents could not see intelligence. He blames Judge Lamberth. Patriot Act has helped solve the problem but OIPR needs to be drastically expanded. Fran Townsend was a big help as head of OIPR.
18. Source development is a critical element. It was a mistake to downplay during Freeh's tenure. It is crucial for prevention. You need good training in this area.
19. FBI is looking at the issue of metrics in the CT area. He mentioned successful prosecutions but you could also use sources developed, reports issued, acts prevented, but he feels you have to get away from numbers and know the impact or benefit to a community.
20. The Padilla case is a huge problem – a problem of prevention.
 He feels they need to reach out to the private sector to inform them of soft targets and how Moscow buildings were blown up.
21. He said the Hazmi-Midhar case “haunts me.” He didn't know about them at the time. There was confusion about intelligence sharing,
CIA says they shared the information but FBI cannot find paper on it.
22. He says now the FBI is not the lead agency. He thinks eventually the pendulum will swing away from war and covert action, yet it is hard to keep up morale.
23. TTIC was the right decision at the time but there were lots of ruffled feathers. It was created to do threat analysis and fuse information. FBI did not have the analytic power to do this function at the time but they should get it eventually. He sees huge turf battles coming with DHS down the road. With Libutti, DHS is disseminating to state and local agencies. He believes in the JTTF process. Brennan is trying to make TTIC a one-stop shop but that makes no sense. FBI needs its own analysts.
24. The FBI's Office of Intelligence requirements process is critical since it will tell field offices what they need to collect.

25. Director asked him to run Pentbom from HQ which some agents saw as a slap in the face. He does feel there needs to be a central mechanism to monitor priorities and a centralized database. He used NY to do telephone analysis – this evolved into a headquarters communications exploitation unit run by Mike Fedarcyk. These capabilities should not be reproduced with every case.
26. He asked for a national threat assessment. What was produced is decent and it will get better. These products are good to do. They force analysts to look over the horizon and do strategic planning.
27. He thinks some people could be part of a dedicated CT cadre but he has enjoyed taking time off from it over the years. Change is not a bad thing. A good investigator is a good investigator.
28. These days good agents will want to do CT because it is the top priority of the Bureau.
29. He was not aware of the specifics of the Sibel Edmonds case but said that the quality of translations has always been an issue before going to court and issuing threat information. The problem is that there are not nearly enough translators. He thinks US students should be required to take a second language.
30. With threat information, he has never heard anyone say that can't be shared with a home agency. With operational information, there is always the concern that the case could be blown.
31. He is dead-set against an MI-5. A new agency would be a new stovepipe and no one brings to the table the collection capabilities of the FBI.
32. Also, giving the DCI a piece of the bureau makes no sense.