

**Opening Statement of Federal Bureau of Investigation
before the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks
Upon The United States
June 16, 2004**

Chairman Kean, Vice Chairman Hamilton, and members of the Commission, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and the American people today to discuss the FBI's investigation into the attacks of September 11, 2001, code-named "Penttbom." All of us in the FBI appreciate your efforts to examine the past and make recommendations that will help us meet the challenges of the future.

Penttbom is the largest investigation ever conducted by the FBI. Immediately after the attacks, agents and officers from virtually every law enforcement agency in the United States, along with dozens of our international law enforcement colleagues, mobilized to mount this investigation, which is so large the FBI still has a team dedicated to the case. This team consists of Agents and officers from the FBI and the New York Police Department and, previously, the Port Authority Police Department and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The body of knowledge about the 9/11 plot that has been uncovered reflects a tremendous effort and dedication on the part of countless law enforcement agencies around the world. On behalf of the entire FBI, I would like to thank all of our domestic and international partners who have cooperated in this investigation in such an extraordinary way.

I would like to recognize and thank the families of the victims of the

September 11 attacks. You have been extremely patient and helpful throughout the course of this investigation. You have courageously agreed to be interviewed time and time again, and you have provided the FBI everything we've asked. It has truly been an honor to have worked with so many gracious, accommodating and strong people as we work to ensure America never wakes up to another September 11.

In turn, the FBI has made an effort to keep the families informed of progress in the case and important information relative to the victims of 9/11. A website was established which can only be accessed by victims' families, and Director Mueller has invited family members to meet with him on an ongoing basis. The Penttbom Team also meets with families from time to time in an attempt to ensure that information about each victim is passed on to their families.

As part of the Penttbom investigation, thousands of FBI Agents from every field office were shifted to counterterrorism. Agents, intelligence analysts and linguists worked around the clock to track down leads, translate incoming intelligence, and ensure that information is shared with our partners in law enforcement and intelligence. Let me give you a sense of the scope of this undertaking:

1. So far, over 500,000 leads have been covered and over 165,000 interviews conducted.
2. The four crash sites constitute the largest crime scene ever processed by the FBI. In New York alone, over 1.8 million tons of debris were processed for victim identification and investigative leads.

3. The FBI Laboratory has received over 6000 items with requests to conduct everything from fingerprint examination to DNA analysis to document examination, and more.

As you know, the September 11 terrorist attacks were the culmination of more than a decade of rhetoric, planning, coordination and action by Usama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network against the United States and its allies. We know that they remain committed to future acts of terrorism. Together with our law enforcement and intelligence partners worldwide, the FBI is determined to prevent future attacks. We are also committed to following every lead, collecting every piece of intelligence, and every piece of evidence in the investigation into the 9/11 attacks.

As a result of the ongoing Penttbom investigation, the FBI has been able to: assist in the disruption of terrorist operations around the world; identify other al-Qaeda operatives worldwide, many of whom have been interviewed and/or arrested; develop valuable new intelligence, which is shared with our intelligence partners; better understand al-Qaeda tradecraft; and, develop new and better working relationships with our law enforcement colleagues overseas. Individually and collectively, these efforts are helping us identify additional terrorists, cut off sources of financial support, and prevent future attacks.

Each Agent sitting with me today is investigating a specific facet of the Penttbom investigation. In answering your questions, we will work collaboratively as a panel to have the most knowledgeable person answer the question in order to give you the most complete answers possible

about every aspect of the investigation.

On behalf of the panel, I thank the members of this Commission for your dedication and for the outstanding and important work you are doing on behalf of the American people.

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