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The Sept. 11 commission's report blamed no individuals and proposed a major overhaul of the U.S. intelligence community. It found there was no "collaborative operational relationship" between Iraq and al Qaeda. Click below to read:

- [Full Report \(.pdf, 7MB\)](#)
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## INTERACTIVE

**Sept. 11 Commission**

Recommendations, key findings, a clues timeline, transcripts and panel member bios.

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## INTERACTIVE

[Sept. 11 And Since](#)[> E-MAIL THIS STORY](#)[> PRINTABLE VERSION](#)**9/11 Plotter Wanted 10 Planes**

WASHINGTON, June 16, 2004



Khalid Shaikh Mohammed (CBS/AP)

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## QUOTE

**The plot cost upwards of \$500,000, and no credible evidence has emerged that anyone in the United States provided financial support.**

final two days of hearings this week, focusing on the plot and the response by U.S. air defenses.

According to the [staff report](#), Mohammed initially proposed hitting CIA and FBI headquarters, unidentified nuclear plants and tall buildings in California and Washington state, in addition to the World Trade Center, Pentagon and White House or Capitol.

Mohammed, who is in U.S. custody at an undisclosed overseas location, told interrogators that rather than crashing his hijacked plane into a target, he wanted to land and make a political statement. Mohammed proposed killing every male passenger aboard, landing at a U.S. airport and making a "speech denouncing U.S. policies in the Middle East before releasing all the women and children."

That plan was rejected by Osama bin Laden, who ultimately approved a scaled-back mission involving four planes. Training for it began in 1999.

The report said Mohammed wanted more hijackers — up to 26, instead of the 19 who actually participated. The commission also identified at least 10 al Qaeda operatives who were to participate but could not take part for various reasons

(CBS/AP) Sept. 11 plot mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed originally envisioned an attack involving 10 hijacked planes with himself as the pilot of one in which all male passengers would be killed and he would deliver an anti-American harangue upon landing.

The assertion was among new details about the plot and the al Qaeda terrorist network revealed Wednesday in reports by the staff of the independent commission investigating the attacks.

Another revelation was that — contrary to assertions by Bush administration officials — there is **"no credible evidence"** of ties between Iraq and al Qaeda.

The Sept. 11 commission is working toward a July 26 deadline to release its final report. The panel is holding its



Chart the sequence of events on Sept. 11 and look back on the challenging days that followed.



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including visa problems and suspicion by officials at airports in the United States and overseas.

Far from a seamless operation, the report portrays a plot riven by internal dissent, including disagreement over whether to target the White House or the Capitol — a conflict that apparently never was resolved before the attacks. Bin Laden also had to overcome opposition to attacking the United States from Mullah Omar, leader of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, who was under pressure from Pakistan to keep al Qaeda confined.

The pilot of the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania, Ziad Jarrah, nearly quit the plot, leading Mohammed to consider replacing him with Zacarias Moussaoui, who was taking flight training in Minnesota, according to the report. Mohammed, however, has told his interrogators that Moussaoui actually was being considered for a second wave of attacks still in the early planning stages.

**Moussaoui** is awaiting trial on conspiracy charges. He's the only person charged in the United States in connection with the Sept. 11 plot.

Ultimately, Jarrah was persuaded to participate by Ramzi Binalshibh, who helped plan and finance the attacks from Germany. He also is in U.S. custody overseas.

Among other new disclosures in the commission report:

- Mohamed Atta, the pilot of one of the planes that struck the World Trade Center and leader of the 19 hijackers, never met with Iraqi agents in Prague, Czech Republic.
- Mohdar Abdullah, an illegal immigrant living in San Diego, provided assistance to two of the hijackers and later made jailhouse claims that he had advance knowledge of the attacks. Abdullah last month was deported to Yemen.
- Bin Laden originally wanted the attacks to occur on May 12, 2001, seven months after the al Qaeda attack on the USS Cole in Yemen that killed 17 sailors. Later, bin Laden sought to have the attacks occur in June or July 2001 because Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was scheduled to visit the White House. In both cases, Mohammed insisted the teams were not ready. Ultimately, Atta picked Sept. 11 because Congress would be in session.
- Bin Laden wanted the fourth plane to strike the White House, but Atta believed the White House was too difficult to hit. Eventually, Atta agreed to the White House but kept the Capitol in reserve. However, based on other exchanges between the hijackers, it remains unclear exactly which was the target on Sept 11.
- Atta said the hijackers planned to crash their planes to the ground if problems arose during the flights. Atta himself planned to crash his into the streets of New York if he couldn't strike the World Trade Center. The fourth plane crashed into a Pennsylvania field after passengers fought back against the hijackers.
- The plot cost upwards of \$500,000, and no credible evidence has emerged that anyone in the United States provided financial support. There also is no evidence that Saudi Princess Haifa al Faisal, wife of that country's U.S. ambassador, Prince Bandar, provided any money to the conspiracy, directly or indirectly.

In making the case for war in Iraq, Bush administration officials frequently cited what they said were Saddam's decade-long contacts with al Qaeda operatives.

In recent days, administration officials have reiterated their claims of a link. Vice President Dick Cheney said Monday at a reception in Florida that Saddam "had long established ties with al Qaeda."

But the Sept. 11 panel said that while a senior Iraqi intelligence official reportedly met with bin Laden in 1994 in Sudan, and bin Laden asked to set up training camps in and for help with weapons, "Iraq apparently never responded."

Among other expected findings in this week's hearings: The nation's air defense was woefully outdated, focused more on intercepting Soviet bombers than hijacked airliners.

According to a published report, Mohammed may have been subjected to

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Director



extreme interrogation methods by U.S. agents, including near drowning. It is not clear if any of the information in Wednesday's report was obtained using such tactics.

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