

~~SECRET~~

1

Ali Sanjar  
Commanding MacEachin  
Pat O'Brien

11/11/03

(S)

DECLASSIFIED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE  
INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,  
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

ISCAP APPEAL NO. 2012-048, document no. 20  
DECLASSIFICATION DATE: July 8, 2015

### Security Committee

UBL network investigation - oral description in '96  
Said Al Adl as head of Security Comm.

USS Cole case agent

verified the security committee

302 3 part ~~document~~ Naser Al Bahri aka Jandal

picked up after 9/11

verified him as the head

### Security of UBL and operations

Doc published Baker computers  
travel reqs.

(also Manchester document - one hand written manual)

"prepare for them all of you our forces"

role of security com: vetting, application screening  
advising on travel  
security guards

very strong structure and job for each and also  
loose

### Saying of the Prophet

code name -

"their names are aliases  
and their aliases are  
cities" or states

before Armageddon - you have to  
have an alias. saying of the  
prophet. and these names shall  
be cities. ~~SECRET~~

(2)

travel means99 - 2000 most ~~recruits~~ recruits96 - Recruits - wanted by sun govts  
obtained Yemeni passports, Egyptians etc  
eg East Africaeasy to get Y pp  
weak central govt, tribal, vouched by townsman  
to get a pp

1998 -

same for Saudis 85% got Yemeni pp  
used to travel to Afghanistan.

{ Khaled Al Sagaf - Yemeni KP to Pak & Af  
 Khaled Al Midhar

Yemeni pp cont'd to 2002  
no tech - to vet people

— Jamal Badwi - <sup>Al Tali</sup> ~~Badwi~~ <sup>fake names</sup> - used pp to  
 travel. alias Abdul Al Nahman Al Badwi  
a religious name, nom de guerre

• after marriage, gets real name pp so they  
 can take families to Afghanistan  
 Jordan

across  
 etc

③

Yemen

4 individuals to facilitate travel

your own name

then later a fraud NP  
airline ticketsend someone with you  
someone to meet in Karachibefore<sup>2000</sup> Karachi → Peshawar  
Afghani smugglers  
Abu Zubaydaafter 2000, Peshawar a den of spiesQuetta used as transit point to Kandahar  
where UBL was. bus to Quetta or Swif  
Airline for high level officials.  
Taliban guest house.Quetta facilitator to Arab guest house  
in Afghanistantake NP & money. put in a "amanat"  
securities. list deposit.

(4)

passports & comm. indicat'g requests sent  
Op. Challenge 1998 in London  
fraudulent passports  
EIT & AQ correspondence

Abu Zayda told Nassam to get pp  
told guys in UK to get  
married to obtain pp US, Bosnian, Canada

connections to black market - pay \$  
in Pakistan

Abu Zayda Christopher ben Sale to bin  
Attash associate

also tried to establish their own  
clean, legit visa, plastic  
1) Haron, & 2 assoc. from EA bond  
(Cameroon)

- 2) Osama Al Quini
- 3) Tanginia

Africa then Kander

Abu Yasser Al Jayeeri - Op. facilitator for AQ  
- visas expires, can fix  
- contacts in Pak.

~~Abu Yasser~~  
for long term operations - did it legally  
came under real name & visa  
bin Al Shub cld but had German pp

Tirana  
in Albania & UK an AQ  
96-99 fraudulent facility for AQ in Yemen  
intel Abu Asmail, Muhammed Salah

Qaeda al Jihad Feb March 2001 aka  
- intel & law enf. channel  
'member of Shura  
killed outside Kabul

Mexican passports,

Kander  
Suif Al  
Adl  
trainer  
manufacturer  
Operations

(S)

"I need a suit and I need some buttons on the suit"

recovered '98-'99

Yemen - central

USS ~~Blair~~ Cole bomber - Saudi: Ham Al Kamari →  
obtained pp w/out being there Khaled Al  
4-5 pp to be issued (Pemen ro  
10k riyal

19 use Yemeni pp?

~~fake Egyptian, Malaysian~~

Egypt, Albanian,

how is that info distributed?

→ Tirana - joint op w/ agency  
as the countries

Albanian - stamp 1998  
~~coll~~

- 
- extradition
  - citizenship status
  - S visas - recruit sources
  - suspected individual - airport to secondary point

6

Khaled went to Singapore and didn't get it in  
went to Bangkok w/ Khaled, Hajun, Midhan

Yememi -  
Bethel Washington

"If they want to come to the US they can"

"they only have to win once, we have to win every  
time"

"we need to coordinate w/ diff agencies"

tracking too many irrelevant Ahmeds

make it simple, stupid b/c they are stupid  
"we're a free country." look at Israelis.

fresh recruits

- new guys, not even go to Afghanistan

→ embedding process - more care and time  
tracking - cell in EA, married

4 came out of US recruited at

like white on rice

Ali Ah

Wadh Al Haj

arrest immediately

→ ships - job as a sailor?

Russian OC, Brighton Beach, East Euro smug

~~Al Qaeda~~ 11-12-05 10 am.

Security Committee - part of BL network  
Saif Al Adel - head of it  
POC - 9-11 - oral desc.  
from junior 1996

As part of Cole, inv. verified Saif  
Al Adel was head of S.C.

Nasir Al Bahri aka Janbal - Long 302  
- gave blueprint of AQ  
- post 9-11 was picked up.  
- Was then verified by Doc & Document  
- gave desc. as feared it was when  
went to Atg.

- continuous evolution.

\* S.C. basically sec. of UBL + practices  
- published docs  
- one in Baker Center  
- get prot. haircuts  
- Saif travel w/ wife  
- No Islamic perfume

[Saif Al Libi - Manchester Document]

- All AQ docs have Kaemi Verse  
"on them"  
"Prepare for them, all you can do  
of your own force!"

## Security Committee

① Not people who come in

- sent away people after interview  
int. w/ Al-Qaeda

- spies interrogated

② - advise when to travel + when not

③ - Bodyguards work for Saif Al Adl.

## Who in Afgh.

- fill out app. w/ name of person  
who recommended you.

- Travel had to have been facilitated  
by someone who knew you.

- Strong structure + job for each person

- Take code name in Afgh. - religious  
origin. - prophet says not  
have an alias - are cities.  
- prophet's Muhammad's words

Travel to Afg/Pak.

Sardis - 1996

In Sudan - most people wanted  
to COO

Obtained Yemeni ~~bomb~~ pps

- Masbi
- Emb. bombers

- Why weak central govt  
- only takes 2 days, so, vouch  
for yem. - threat based

- Egypt and Sudan use them

- Sardis - 85% went to Yemen  
+ travelled to Afg.

- Khalid Al Midhar - got Yemeni  
RP -

- Khalid Al Saqaf - travelled to  
Pak/Afg.

1996-1998 - using Yemeni pps.

- Thrayh in 2002

↳ Their names are aliases & their aliases  
are cities (or states)

After (de-fund) at all travelling to  
Afq. w/ Yemen pptB

Until married, they would use two pptB

Once married, they would w/ families  
have ~~to~~ one pptB.

AKAs eg.

Jamal Bedawi - original name

Jamal at Tali - <sup>AGS</sup> claim not false - it was real

Abu Abdul Rahman al Bedawi - religious

Momaddal Atta / Jamah - had religious names

Yemen

- 4 ind. who facilitate travel to Afq.
- they issue pptB - Yemen
- " get plane ticket
- " send you w/ someone who  
knows
- " call ahead

B/F I 000 took flight Karachi,  
Peshawar + then Zubayda  
smuggled into Afq.

Post 2000 - used Qetta

Camps in North also closed + moved  
to the South

AQ - UBL in (Charanhar instead  
In Qetta - stay in guest house  
- go by bus unless high  
rank, then said another

Guy facilitates travel to Arab gathering  
in Afgh.  
- Recruiter told

Amanat - security <sup>operations</sup> - take your #  
of passport - records kept  
of this -

If new classes - take your training  
camp.

- careful monitoring
- take asus well
- early pnyms
- leads to towers, fighting, or bodyguards

Knew days trying to obtain travel  
passports. 12

In London found in Sept. 1998  
- Operation Challenge

Eg. Zubayda told Reason got a  
Canadian ppt.

① Manned US + British wars &  
Bosnian women

② Connections to black mkt.  
Eg. Zubayda had British ppt.  
through Khalid Bin Attash country

③ Establish their own facility  
to accomplish these goals  
certain individuals

- Harun <sup>Cameroon</sup> & Faisal  
- Osama Al Qini  
- African or Tanzanian

} Route to Al Adel  
were in Africa  
until 1998 went to  
Charahar

is  
computer in  
Nairobi

Khalid Bin Yusef - Yemeni ppt.  
used to travel to  
Bangkok + K.L.

Albania + UK - had a guy who got passports.

Secretariat facility for AQ based in Yemen  
- Abu Ismail / Mohammad Salah - killed in 1998

Al Qaeda + ETJ joined + became  
Qaeda al Jihad - March 2001

Yemeni Facility 1996-1997-1998  
- 1999

Tirana plot  
- frustrated Egyptian ppts to people  
feeling heat

Another in Tirana caught in Tunisia  
- w/ frustrated Yemeni ppts

"Need a suit" - ppt  
"Need some buttons on the suit" - stamps

Received stamps in Tirana in 1998-1999  
at a Kuwaiti NAD

Also Yemeni officials were linked to getting  
out ppts. - + they have admitted

- AQ supplied photos + apps + off. stamps  
them

- This was Fern Cole -  
- suicide <sup>booby</sup> Hassan Al Karay - Sabri  
aka Khalid Mansour - Yemen  
- He never even presented himself

always  
lots of  
stamps

Stamps Docex - Intraqany facility  
Operation Challenge - ppt's & cars  
- London re: suits

Albania <sup>~ NGO car</sup> joint op w/ agency, 5 renders to East  
2 1998, 1 in Feb. 1999

Harun in Nairobi - stamps scanne  
(the manufacturer) into his computer

London

AA & EO have office  
fox place across street - operation  
- found claims of responsibility  
left at fox place  
- also found 25 prints on papers  
in their office.

Khalid goes to Singapore + is turned around

- applied in April in Yemeni embassy  
- said he wanted to go to Boston  
Washington

Abu Yasin Al-Jaziri - operational  
facilitator

One of big problems is visa for Pak expires  
& then need to get exit USA  
= Jaziri helps them AA get out.

Good questy

"If they want to come to the United States,  
they can."

"If they said 1,000, you will get through"

"They only need 1 to get through. to win  
whereas we need to stop 1,000 to win"

Says answer is better cooperation

Soundant paper travel - to places where it  
is easy to enter

Embedding Process - to go to west to  
do operations

Sudan - 1996

3 goals

1) Create network of AQ

2) Support w/umbrella other jihad groups  
Algerian, Moroccan, Egyptian

3) Drive U.S. from Saudi Arabia <sup>Umbrella plot in Africa Africa</sup>

Umar goes to Afg - 1996 <sup>Post May</sup>

- same as Dayton accords in Bosnia

UBL seeks to broaden jihad to include terror, something new for people used to fighting guerrilla wars.

UBL recruits at end of Ramadan - Oct.

- first major class of suicide bombing - types - 16 - Jund/Khalid/Nawab suicide Hamza al Sharbi - UBL bodyguard

Afg - 1996 - Jihad wal Khair / Al Faraj / Cardoz camps; not yet in Kandahar

UBL - moves to Kandahar later (? when)

- Taliban base

- Kandahar secure.

- allows him to get recruits

No. Iran involvement in 1996 fine b/c that border in hands of eg. Northern Alliance

1996 - UBL issues thesis & declares jihad against the crusaders & jews.

Note: He had used some rhetoric earlier to attack the US.

In beginning UBL used established routes into Pakistan → to guest houses → then into Afg.

1999-2000 Taliban orders all camps closed except UBL's. He closes that post 1998 US bombing, Khushk & Herat, poison camps, Af farouq moved so near Khushk & Herat & become a "mega camp."

WMD = They tried to buy uranium  
 - instead bought Osmium from Russian mob

- Baker does talk about means
- Abu Hubab - funded by people in London for bio weapons research.

- "They have plans" Abd Al Aziz "... but we don't see any results."

Prior to 9-11, UBL had people assigned go

Nashiri - Arabian Peninsula  
- from Yemen (ban to Mecca)

KSM - focus on U.S. + on S.E. Asia; based on his rel. w/ Philippines + Istanbul;

- KSM brought people w/ him

(Khalid) = Admin. guy.

- Taping b/f Nairobi
- going to Cole
- going to Bangkok w/ \$
- dinner at by Omar

- "a trusted ind. to facilitate travel"

Abu Zubaydah - cover was that not part of UBL

→ Saudi recruits - 1946 Fatwa - Adverse Referral Committee - class of 16 - Alliance of Saudi scholars  
Leaves passport + then killed - passports used

1998 - Army to liberate Mecca + Medina  
Rohingya Army of Occupation

- Most people arrested in Pak + in Guantanamo had no passports.

- Hijackers passports

~~SECRET~~**MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD****Event:** Interview with Ali Soufan**Type of event:** Interview**Date:** November 12, 2003**Special Access Issues:** Secret clearances**Prepared by:** Tom Eldridge, Janice Kephart-Roberts**Team Number:** 5**Location:** GSA Building SCIF**Participants – Non-Commission:** Ali Soufan, FBI – NY-JTTF, Pat O'Brien, General Counsel's Office FBI**Participants – Commission:** Susan Ginsburg, Doug MacEachin, Tom Eldridge, Janice Kephart-Roberts, Yoel Tobin, Nikki Grandrimo, Deiter SnellBackground

Mr. Soufan's background was described in earlier MFRs. This is a follow-up.

AQ goals in the Sudan

Soufan said AQ had three goals while in the Sudan.

1. Create a network of Al Qaeda operatives,
2. Support with the AQ umbrella other Jihad groups, including Algerians, Moroccans, Egyptians (plot to kill Mubarak in Addis Ababa).
3. Drive the U.S. from Saudi Arabia.

AQ after the move from Sudan to Afg.

When UBL left in May 1996, he sought to broaden the jihad to include terrorism, something new to people used to fighting a guerilla war. He issues his fatwa condemning jews and crusaders. He set up the camps: Jihad Wal, Khost, Al Faruq, Gardez. (None yet in Qandahar.)

In October 1996, UBL recruits a class of potential operatives – the infamous 16 – that includes Jandal, Khallad, and the Nairobi suicide bomber Hamza al Ghamdi (who first served as UBL's bodyguard). This recruitment coincides with his alliance with a group of radical Saudi scholars.

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Once Qandahar is secure as the Taliban base, UBL moves there and sets up camps there as well. The new security he enjoys allows him to get more recruits.

#### The Iranian front

Soufan said that there was no Iran connection initially in 1996, after UBL's move to Afg. Because the Iranian border was in the hands of the Northern Alliance.

#### Organization

Prior to 9-11, UBL had AQ organized somewhat along geographic lines.

Nashiri – from Yemen (tho born in Mecca) covered the Arabian peninsula

KSM – Focused on the U.S. and S.E Asia, based on his relationships with the Philippines and Hambali.

Khallad – was the administrative guy, “a trusted individual to facilitate travel.”

Abu Zubaydah – his cover was that he was not a part of the UBL network.

#### AQ and WMD

According to Soufan, they tried to buy uranium from the Russian mob, but instead bought osmium, a different element it turns out. Their efforts to acquire WMD are detailed in the Baku documents. They also tried to acquire bioweapons. Abu Habab was funded to do bioweapons research by people in London.

#### Security Committee

We asked Mr. Soufan about the AQ Security Committee. He said it was a part of the Bin Laden network well before 9-11. Its purposes were:

1. To provide security for UBL (bodyguards) and UBL's operations.
2. To write documents in support of security. Soufan said one was recovered in Baku. It described how operatives should get professional haircuts, not travel with their wife, not wear Islamic perfume, etc. Soufan said all AQ documents have a Koranic verse on them that can be translated as, “prepare for them, all you can out of your own force.” Soufan also mentioned the Manchester document as originating from one Saif al Libi.
3. vet recruits who arrive to see if they have the right stuff and to interrogate possible spies. Some individuals were rejected after an interview with al Adel.
4. Provide advice to operatives when to travel and when to not travel.

He said he received an oral description of it from “Junior” in 1996. Saif Al Adel was the head of it. This fact, Soufan said, was verified through the Cole investigation. Nasir al Bahri, aka Jandal, described the blueprint of AQ in a “long 302” of an interrogation that took place after 9-11. Jandal gave a description of the Security Committee as he learned it existed when he went to Afghanistan. Soufan said this Jandal description was verified by a DOCEX document collected in Afghanistan.

Soufan said this committee was continuously evolving as AQ evolved.

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Soufan on Mobility generally

“If they want to come to the United States, they can.”

“If they send 1,000, four will get through.”

“They only need one to get through to win whereas we need to stop 1,000 to win.”

Knowledge of Saudi involvement in AQ

We asked Soufan about prior knowledge of Saudi involvement in al Qaeda terrorist training in Afghanistan before 9-11. Soufan said they knew about Saudi travel to Afghanistan and Pakistan for terror training in 1996.

Yemen

Soufan said that when AQ operatives were in the Sudan with UBL, most operatives were wanted in their countries of origin. This included Saudis. For this reason, most of them tried to obtain Yemeni passports to travel outside the Sudan. This was true, for example, for Masri, one of the East Africa Embassy bombing suspects. Soufan said Yemeni passports were the passport of choice because there were weak government controls. It only took two guys vouching for you to get a passport. The system was “tribal based” according to Soufan, who said Egyptian, Saudi and Sudanese terrorists were using Yemeni passports extensively between 1996 and 1998, and right through 2002.

According to Soufan, Yemeni officials were bribed to give out passports. AQ supplied photos and applications and Yemeni officials stamped them for the terrorists. One such AQ operative, Khalid Moussama, was the suicide bomber in the Cole attack. Soufan said the FBI did not believe Moussama even presented himself when he applied for his passport.

Soufan said the terrorists would have two passports to travel with until they got married. Once they were married, then they would travel with their families and have only one passport. Soufan said that the fact that so many terrorists were traveling with Yemeni passports was discovered after the Cole bombing.

According to Soufan, 85% of the Saudis who were AQ operatives went to Yemen to get a Yemeni passport and then traveled from there to Afg. Soufan said the Khalid al Mihdhar had a Yemeni passport in the name Khalid al Saqaf, under which he traveled to Pakistan and Afg.. Khallad Bin Attash traveled under a Yemeni passport with the name Khallad Bin Yousef.

Soufan said that they knew before 9-11 of four travel facilitators in Yemen for AQ who would help recruits by :

1. getting them Yemeni passports,
2. getting them a plane ticket,

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3. sending someone with the recruit who would be known to the AQ coordinator in Pakistan, and
4. call ahead and give advance notice of the recruit's arrival.

One of these was Abu Ismail, aka Mohammad Salah, who was killed in Afg.

#### How to get into Afghanistan

Before 2000, Soufan said recruits would take a flight to Karachi, go overland to Peshawar, and then get smuggled into Afg, by Abu Zubaydah.

After 2000, Soufan said AQ was using Qetta as the jumping off point from Pakistan to Afg. Soufan said this was in part because the camps in the North of Afg. Were closed at that time and moved to the South. UBL and AQ were based in Qandahar at this time.

Once in Qetta, recruits would stay in a guesthouse, then go to Afg. Often by bus.

#### In Afg.

When individuals arrived in Afg, they would fill out applications supplying information including the name of the person who recommended the recruit. All travel had to have been facilitated by someone known and trusted by AQ leadership. There was a strong structure and a job within that structure for each person.

Recruits would take a codename while in Afg. The codename was religious in origin. This was based on the fact that in the Koran, the prophet says "their names are aliases and their aliases are cities (or states)." Soufan says this admonition is in the prophet Mohammed's words, giving it special power for these believers.

Once in Afg., recruits would be taken to an AQ guesthouse. The recruiter would be informed their recruit had arrived. The recruit would have their money and passport taken away from them. This was termed "A Manat" or security depository. Soufan said good records were kept of these deposits. [Note: This practice led to the fact that many of the individuals captured in Afg. And in Pakistan had no passports with them at the time of capture.]

If there was a new terrorist training class starting, the recruit would be taken to the camp where it was to begin. Once in the camp, the AQ instructors would carefully evaluate each recruit to see whether they, for example, take orders well and engage in early prayers indicating their devotion.

Based on the instructor's evaluation of them, the recruit could be selected for a terror mission, sent to the front to fight the Northern Alliance, or be sent to become a bodyguard to UBL.

In 1998, after the embassy bombings and the U.S. missile strikes, UBL closed the Khost camp.

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In the 1999-2000 time-frame, the Taliban ordered all camps closed except those run by UBL. AQ moves al Farouq camp to near Qandahar where it becomes a "mega camp."

#### Exit from Afg.

Abu Yasir al Jaziri was an AQ operational facilitator. One of the operatives' biggest problems with getting out was that their visa to Pakistan would expire and they would then need to get an exit visa. Jaziri would help them to get out.

#### AQ mobility tactics

Soufan said the FBI knew before 9-11 that AQ was always trying to obtain fraudulent passports. He cited a number of sources for this belief. In Sept. 1998, he saw evidence of passport fraud as part of Operation Challenge. He also said that Ahmed Ressay was told by Abu Zubaydah to get a Canadian passport in order to help carry out the Millennium plot. Among the tactics he said were:

1. Marry a U.S., British, or Bosnian woman.
2. Use other AQ connections. Soufan said that Abu Zubaydah had a British passport obtained through a connection of Khallad Bin Attash
3. Establish an AQ facility for producing forged passports. Soufan named the following individuals as Al Qaeda facilitators. Harun (a Cameroonian) and Fasul; Osama al Qini, and an individual in Africa, possibly in Tanzania. He said these individuals reported to al Adel who was in Africa until 1998 when he went to Qandahar.

#### Knowledge of AQ use of travel stamps

Soufan said they knew before 9-11 about AQ use of fraudulent passports and travel stamps. He said AQ used code words.

"Need a suit" = need a passport

"Need some buttons on the suit" = Need travel stamps on the passport

Soufan cited three sources for this knowledge:

1. London – Operation Challenge. Included references to suits and buttons.
2. Albania -- Tirana Plot – and the Stamps. They recovered some stamps from a Kuwaiti NGO in Tirana. When they broke up this plot in 1998-1999 learned that the plotters were giving fraudulent Egyptian passports to plotters who were feeling the heat. They ended up catching a number of operatives, including one who they caught in Turino, Italy with a fraudulent Yemeni passport.
3. Harun in Nairobi (the manufacturer). Soufan said they recovered stamps scanned into his computer.

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### 9-11 plotters

According to Soufan, Khallad tried to get a visa to come to the U.S. using his Yemeni passport in April 2000. Soufan said he put on his application that he wanted to go to Bethel, Washington.

### JKR questions late in the afternoon

**Kahtani.** Soufan debriefed Kahtani. "his lies ended in a confession. I never asked for a detailed debriefing of his interview" by Mr. Melendez-Perez, (the inspector who had Kahtani removed from Orlando Int'l Airport August 4, 2001). "Kahtani did say he told the inspector he was a used car salesman. Kahtani was deeply religious. Kahtani said he wore all black to the US so Atta would know who he was. Everyone is Mohammad to Kahtani, although in the instance of who was meeting him at Orlando, the information is correct." [Note: review of the 302s written about these encounters with Kahtani does not indicate Kahtani "confessed" to being part of the 9-11 plot.]

**GMTO questioning.** There was a standard litany of questions that were put to all detainees originally, but doesn't believe that is now the case. I move in and out of the detainee interrogations, and the work is run by DOD, so you should ask them. I never asked specific travel related questions as a matter of course.

**Evidence of Al Qaeda guidance on getting past US border security.** In Pennsylvania, there was found a notebook. One set of entries is what to say to an immigration inspector. That's in evidence in the Concordance system. Some of the guesthouses had a tremendous amount on CDs on American history, maps, computers, and cultural training. KSM was training on these things.

**The role of border security in the war on terror.** Help and assist governments who are suffering from their own bad documents. DOS did this in Yemen, and has worked well. The Yemenis were told all the problems with their travel documents. Yemen then established a computer system and a national id card that is hard to get. This id card is also an electoral id. Need the national id to get other ids, like a passport. Thinks INS is doing a good job; the best they can.

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RFBT 03009447

ALL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE  
PERTAINING TO THE DEPARTURE OF SAUDI  
ARABIAN NATIONALS FROM THE UNITED  
STATES ON SEPTEMBER 13 AND  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2001.

**FINAL DRAFT of RESPONSE to OCTOBER  
2003 *VANITY FAIR* ARTICLE  
(RE: BINLADEN FAMILY DEPARTURES  
AFTER 09/11/2001)**

**RESPONSIVE  
to  
REQUEST #14-4**

**"SECRET MATERIAL ENCLOSED"**

***"THIS PACKET CONTAINS SENSITIVE CRIMINAL  
AND/OR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION PERTAINING  
TO TERRORISM RELATED INVESTIGATIONS"***

**COMMISSION COPY**

# **9/11 COMMISSION TASK FORCE** **DOCUMENT DELETION CODES**

[As of August 11, 2003]

- "A" - **SOURCE/INFORMANT INFORMATION** - Information, the disclosure of which would tend to reveal the identity of an informant or source where confidentiality is expressed or implied.
- "B" - **FBI TECHNIQUES AND/OR METHODS** - Information on sensitive FBI techniques and/or methods which would impede or impair the effectiveness of that technique and/or method.
- "C" - **NON-RELEVANT FBI CASE INFORMATION** - Information neither relevant nor responsive to the Commission's requests.
- "D" - **FBI PENDING CASE INFORMATION** - Information which would impede or jeopardize a pending investigation of the FBI.
- "E" - **STATUTORY** - Information legally prohibited from release by statute.
- "F" - **PRIVACY/SECURITY** - Information, the disclosure of which would be an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy or jeopardize the safety of law enforcement personnel and/or their family members  
Material redacted under this code includes (1) social security numbers;  
(2) date and place of birth; (3) home address and telephone numbers;  
(4) personnel cell phone and pager numbers
- "G" - **FOREIGN GOVERNMENT INFORMATION** - The identity of a foreign government and/or foreign service to include the names of foreign law enforcement employees/officials.

~~SECRET FISA NOFORN ORCON~~

# F I N A L D R A F T

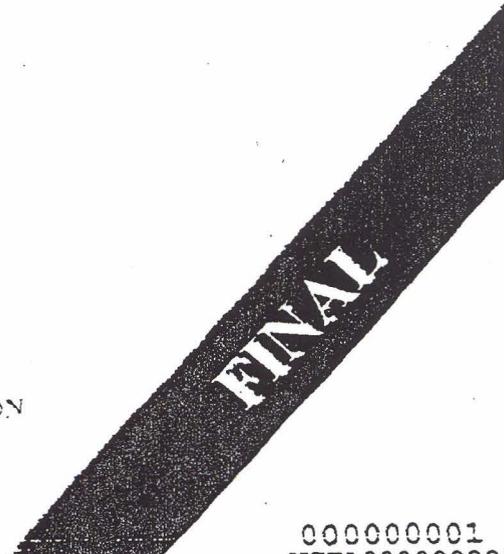


Response to October 2003 *Vanity Fair* Article  
 (Re: Binladen Family Departures After 09/11/2001)

September 24, 2003

PENTTBOM Team /  
 Arabian Penninsula Unit

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REQ 14-4

000000001  
NCTA000088229

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- F. *Vanity Fair* Issues
- G. Senator Feinstein's Questions
- H. Saudi FCI Details
- I. *Vanity Fair*, October 2003 Article, "Saving The Saudis", by Craig Unger
- J. Time Lines (Separate Charts)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FBI Executive Summary  
Response to October 2003 *Vanity Fair* Article,  
"Saving the Saudis"

(U//LES) The article in *Vanity Fair* alleges a group of Saudi royals traveled by air from Tampa, Florida to Lexington, Kentucky on September 13, 2001, prior to FAA authorization for these types of flights. It also alleges that a chartered flight left the United States (US) with several members of the Binladen family without investigation by the FBI. Both of these allegations are false. There are many other inaccuracies contained within the article.

(U//LES) The FBI conducted investigations prior to the departure of six chartered flights, hired by Saudis wishing to return to Saudi Arabia. None of these flights violated FAA restrictions. The investigations identified 141 passengers aboard these flights. As air traffic recovered, numerous Saudis departed aboard commercial as well as other chartered flights.

(U//LES) In reference to the six flights, the FBI and other law enforcement agencies conducted interviews, database checks and security sweeps prior to allowing any of the flights to depart the US. Before departure, all passengers' identities were confirmed and compared against watch lists. Investigators verified that there were no unauthorized passengers aboard any flights, and swept the aircraft and luggage for prohibited items. Further investigation was conducted following departure where it was determined to be necessary. No information of investigative value was learned from the interviews or following the departure of these individuals.

~~(S//NF,OC)~~ On September 20, 2003, several members of the Binladen Family and their staff departed the United States on Ryan Air flight #441. One of the passengers, Omar Binladen, had previously been the subject of a FBI Preliminary Inquiry (PI), because his father, Abdullah Binladen, has been connected to World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), a charity with ties to terrorism. This PI was closed as no derogatory information concerning Omar Binladen was revealed. Abdullah Binladen departed the US sometime in January 2001. Neither case has been reopened as alleged in the article.

(U//LES) Investigation of the other passengers yielded no information pertinent to the attacks of September 11, 2001, or the investigation of Osama Bin Laden. None of the Binladen family members on this flight had been in recent contact with Osama Bin Laden. All of the passengers were either half-siblings or the children of half-siblings of Osama Bin Laden. None of the individuals aboard were suspected of having ties to terrorist organizations.

(U//LES) A chartered flight departed from Lexington, Kentucky on September 16, 2001 with fourteen passengers. Four members of the party, to include the son of Prince Ahmed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz, arrived in Lexington from Tampa by car. These four individuals had disobeyed the Prince by traveling by car, instead of by jet as the Prince had instructed them. Hired security personnel, who have been quoted in the article and in interviews with the FBI, have perpetuated the cover story that the four had flown from Tampa by consistently stating there was a charter flight into Lexington. No flights arrived or departed from Lexington on September 13, 2001. In addition, one of the members of the private protection detail has confidentially told FBI agents in Lexington the truth about how the four arrived in Lexington.

OVERALL BRIEF POINTS

Saudi Departures Following 09/11/2001

- 09/18/2001 - 09/20/2001 Bin Laden family Charter, Ryan International Airlines Flight 441
  - 23 Passengers, no children, 20 Passengers were interviewed based upon the discretion of the FBI.
    - A maid was not interviewed.
    - The wife and son of Khalil Bin Laden were present during interviews, but were not interviewed separately.
  - Khalil Bin Laden was interviewed twice prior to the departure date. He then called the interviewing agent and requested security assistance in getting to the airport. A third interview was conducted during the ride.
  - Searches of the aircraft and passenger luggage were conducted, identities were checked against the manifest, and record checks were conducted.
  
- Prior to 09/23/2002, several chartered flights which contained Saudi passengers drew a considerable amount of attention. These flights are summarized below. After 09/23/2002, an undetermined number of Saudis departed the United States aboard commercial and chartered aircraft.
  
- 09/14/2001 Providence Rhode Island Charter flight
  - 4 Passengers, no children.
  - Extensive investigation including follow-up interviews were conducted into 2002.
  
- 09/16/2001 Jetlease USA Charter flight from Lexington, KY
  - 14 Passengers, no children.
  - All passengers were identified and confirmed prior to departure. INS, USCS, and FBI records were checked.
  
- 09/19/2001 Las Vegas Charter Flights (three flights)
  - 48 Passengers (three children) on 09/19/2001, 18 passengers (no children) on 09/20/2001, 34 passengers (one child) on 09/24/2001
  - FBI SAC of Las Vegas made contact with the Saudis at the Hotel prior to departure and obtained copies of passport and passenger lists.
  - Record checks were conducted and interviews were conducted where necessary.
  - 5 individuals in the party were interviewed because of information in IIIA.
    - 3 departed on 9/19/2001, with no derogatory information in IIIA.
    - One departed on 9/20/2001, with no derogatory information in IIIA

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stranded.

- Investigation was conducted, which included interviews and record checks.
  - The passenger list consisted of 26 crew and 92 passengers.
  - This flight departed after the flight restrictions were lifted.
- 
- In addition to Saudis we identified a UAE 747 which departed from Lexington, KY on 09/15/2001. No Saudis were aboard the flight. We have included this information because the *Vanity Fair* article includes a reference to a 747. No children were on board the flight.
  -

INDIVIDUAL FLIGHT

BRIEF POINTS

Ryan International Flight 441 (commonly referred to as the Binladen family flight)

Flight route: St. Louis, MO: Los Angeles, CA: Orlando, FL: Washington, DC: Boston, MA

- Ryan International Flight 441, Boeing 727, departed United States at approximately 2:05 am EST on 9/20/2001.
- Flight 441 originated in St. Louis, Missouri. It departed on 9/18/2001 at 11:00 am EST, with no passengers, and made 4 additional stops:
  1. Los Angeles, California (landed 12:30 pm 9/18/2001) - 1 passenger embarked, left on 9/19/2001 at 8:00 am.
  2. Orlando, Florida (landed 4:12 pm on 9/19/2001)- 3 passengers + 1 security representative embarked, left on 9/19/2001 at 6:00 pm.
  3. Washington, DC (landed Dulles International 7:36 pm on 9/19/2001 )- 5 passengers embarked, left on 9/19/2001 at 8:30 pm.
  4. Boston, Massachusetts (landed 11:00 pm on 9/19/2001)- 14 passengers + 3 security embarked, first security representative disembarked, left on 9/20/2001 at 12:30 am.
- On 9/20/2001, Flight 441 departed Boston at 12:30 am en route to Paris with a total of 23 passengers and 3 security representatives and made the following stops:
  1. Goose Bay, New Foundland, arrived at 3:18 am and departed at 5:00 am on 9/20/2001
  2. Keflavik, Iceland, arrived at 10:54 am and departed at 1:00 pm on 9/20/2001
- In Paris, France all passengers disembarked at 6:30 pm on 9/20/2001 and continued to other destinations. Flight 441 departed Paris with 3 security representatives at 12:01 pm on 9/21/2001.
- From Paris, Flight 441 returned to the United States with 3 security representatives via:
  1. Reykjavik, Iceland: arrived 1:01 pm and departed at 1:31 pm on 9/21/2001.
  2. Gander, New Foundland: arrived 2:31 pm and departed at 3:01 pm on 9/21/2001.
  3. Cincinnati, Ohio: arrived at 5:07 pm on 9/21/2001
- Searches/Investigative Steps:
  - FBI LA searched Flight 441 on 9/18/2001 prior to departure from Los Angeles, CA. Produced negative results.
  - FBI Boston searched Flight 441 on 9/20/2001 prior to departure from Boston, MA. Produced negative results.
  - FBI checks, INS checks, Watchlist, and various consent searches were conducted. Responding Special Agents determined 20 of the 23 passengers necessitated interviews. 22 interviews were conducted of those 20 passengers. Khalil Binladen had been interviewed a total of three times (refer to Note section). Each produced negative results.
  - Two family members who were accompanying Khalil Bin Laden were not interviewed.
  - A maid who was accompanying the party of Bin Laden's who boarded in Boston

was not interviewed

- Note:
  - Due to concerns for her safety, Najiah Binladen contacted FBI LA on 9/18/2001 to request an escort to the airport for her flight out of Los Angeles on 9/19/2001. FBI LA transported Najiah Binladen to the LAX terminal without incident.
  - Voicing similar concerns as those of Najiah Binladen, on 9/17/2001, Khalil Binladen requested an FBI escort for himself, his wife and his son to the Orlando airport on 9/19/2001. Khalil had been interviewed a total of three times, once telephonically on 9/12/2001, at his residence on 9/14/2001 and while being escorted to the airport on 9/19/2001. FBI TP transported Khalil and his family to Orlando without incident.
- Other Agencies involved:
  - FAA; INS; US Customs; ATF; LAPD; Mass. SPD; Ryan International Airlines Security; Signature Flight Support Security

Chartered flight for Saudi Arabian group out of Lexington, Kentucky

- On Sunday, September 16, 2001, at 4:30 p.m., a chartered luxury Boeing 727 aircraft landed at the airport in Lexington, Kentucky. The flight was chartered through Jetlease USA, 3700 Airport Road, Suite 204, Boca Raton, Florida 33431, telephone number 561-362-8282.
- After boarding its passengers, the chartered flight departed the United States during the evening hours of Sunday, September 16, 2001.
- The passengers included the following fourteen (14) individuals, none of which were juveniles:
  - H.R.H. Prince Ahmed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz
  - H.R.H. Sultan Bin Fahad Bin Salman Abdulaziz
  - Ahmad O.H. Al-Biebi
  - Hashim Abdelmagid Bashir
  - Ali Ben Mohamed Aouni
  - Jesus Calda
  - Jack Rusbridge
  - Salah Al-Hammadi
  - Ehab Abuagla Salim Mohamed
  - Ahmed A.M. Al-Hazmi
  - Talal M.M. Al-Mejrad
  - Mohamed Osman Ahmed El-Marazki
  - Aboulsalam A.M. Al-Haddad
  - Fahad A.A. Al Zeid
- The plane was scheduled to fly to Goose Bay, Labrador for refueling prior to continuing on to London, England, and then to Saudi Arabia.
- Searches/investigative steps:
  - Prior to departure, FBI Louisville agents together with an officer from US Customs checked the crew from Florida and inspected the aircraft. During boarding, each passenger was identified by passport by a US Customs officer. Only the 14 passengers listed above boarded the chartered 727.
- Note:
  - Prior to September 11, 2001, a group of Saudi Arabian nationals traveled to Lexington, KY, to attend the Keeneland horse auctions. Following the terrorist attacks, members of this group made several unsuccessful attempts to gain authorization for the usual Saudi government airplane to enter the United States. As a result, the group made arrangements for a chartered luxury Boeing 727 from Florida to fly to Lexington, KY.
  - According to a SA on site, after the September 11 attacks, H.R.H. Prince Ahmed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz attempted to arrange for his son and his son's friends

to fly from Florida to Lexington, KY on a chartered jet. H.R.H. Prince Sultan Bin Fahad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz filed a flight plan in Florida, but that flight plan was rejected. As a result, H.R.H. Prince Sultan Bin Fahad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz, Fahad A.A. Al-Zeid, Talal M.M. A-Mejrad and Ahmed A.M. Al-Hazmi drove to Lexington, KY from Florida. Because this violated an explicit directive from his father, the Saudi prince and his companions, and their security detail perpetuated the cover story that the group had traveled by private jet. Lexington Airport Police Chief Scott Lanter confirmed that no planes took off or landed at the airport until the FAA lifted the ban on flights.

- Other Agencies involved:
  - US Customs, Lexington, KY Police Department

REPUBLIC OF GABON-FLAGGED (from Las Vegas)

- Chartered Republic of Gabon-flagged DC-8-73, Tail number TR-LTZ, departed United States on 09/19/2001.
- Flight DC-8-73 departed from Las Vegas, Nevada destination Geneva, Switzerland.
- On 09/19/2001, Flight DC-8-73 departed with 46 Saudi Arabian Royal Party and entourage passengers logged at airport prior to departure . There were three (3) Saudi minors on board aged 11, 9 and 5.
- Searches/Investigative Techniques:
  - Telephone records were provided by Hotel Security on 09/11/2001 and 09/12/2001 regarding Saudi Arabian Royal Party staying at the Four Season's Hotel and Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas, Nevada.
  - On 09/18/2001, SAC FBI & SAC USSS met with Prince Abdul Majced Abdul Aziz to discuss plans for the Royal Party.
  - On 09/18/2001, Manifest of Royal Party was provided along with copies of passports.
  - FBI and Watchlist checks were conducted.
  - In response to information in IIIA, 3 persons were interviewed on 9/18/2001.

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## Agencies involved:

- FBI; USSS; USCS; INS

CHARTERED (Flight B 727-21 from Las Vegas)

- Chartered B 727-21, tail number N727PX departed the United States on 09/20/2001.
- Flight B 727-21 departed from Las Vegas, Nevada destination Stanstead Airport (London), England.
- On 09/20/2001, Flight B 727-21 departed with 18 Saudi Arabian Royal Party and entourage passengers logged at airport prior to departure.
- No Saudi children on board

## Searches/Investigative Techniques:

- Telephone records were provided by Hotel Security on 09/11/2001 and 09/12/2001 regarding Saudi Arabian Royal Party staying at the Four Season's Hotel and Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas, Nevada.
- On 09/18/2001, SAC FBI & SAC USSS met with Prince Abdul Majeed Abdul Aziz to discuss plans for the Royal Party.
- On 09/18/2001, Manifest of Royal Party was provided along with copies of passports.
- FBI and Watchlist checks were conducted.
- 1 person was interviewed on 9/18/2001 because of information (which was not derogatory) contained in IIIA.

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## Other Agencies involved:

- FBI; USSS; USCS; INS

AMERICAN TRANS AIR (Flight ATA L-1011 from Las Vegas)

- Chartered American Trans Air (ATA) L-1011, Tail number N189AT, departed United States on 09/24/2001.
- Flight ATA L-1001 departed Las Vegas, Nevada destination Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris, France and London, UK.
- On 09/24/2001, Flight ATA L-1011 departed with 34 Saudi Arabian Royal Party, including entourage logged at airport prior to departure. There was one (1) Saudi minor aboard this flight aged 16.

## Searches/Investigative Techniques:

- Checks conducted against FBI Watchlist and IIIA produced negative results.

## Agencies involved:

- FBI; USCS

Northstar Aviation flight to Paris, France from Providence, Rhode Island

- Pacific Jet Company made a flight reservation for 9/14/2001 to travel from Providence, Rhode Island at 11:00 am EST to Paris, France via Northstar Aviation. Type of aircraft is undocumented.
- The reservation was made for 4 individuals: Sheik Mashour Al Ibrahim, Abdullah Al Shwran, Aly Haffan Soliman, and Younef Brahim Jaballah.
- Flight was paid for by Alan Robert Sawaya's American Express credit card totaling \$75,00.00 for the trip including 1500 lbs. of luggage at the request of Sheik Mashour Al Ibrahim's business manager. Sawaya, who was interviewed on 9/14/2001, is a stockbroker for CREDIT SUISSE FIRST BOSTON of which the aforementioned are members.
- Rene Lannoy is a security guard and coordinator of travel for Al-Ibrahim and Al-Shwran. Lannoy made the flight arrangements for the aforementioned individuals.
- Searches/Investigative Steps:
  - On 9/14/2001, FBI RI identified and interviewed, Al Ibrahim, Al Shwran, Soliman and Jaballah at Northstar Aviation in Warwick, RI.
  - In addition to interviews and ID checks, luggage was searched with negative results.
  - FBI checks, INS checks, Watchlist, and various consent searches were conducted. Each produced negative results.
- Extensive investigation revealed no information to suggest travel by Al Ibrahim, Al Shwran, Soliman and Jaballah within New England was connected to any terrorist or criminal activity.
- Other Agencies involved:
  - USCS; USINS; DCIS; Rhode Island SPD; Warwick PD; Boston PD; and TF Green PD

SUPPORTING SUMMARIES

PENTTBOM  
09/17/2003

Ryan International Flight 441 from St. Louis, MO; Los Angeles, CA; Orlando, FL; Washington, DC; and Boston, MA

Reference allegations about Osama Binladen relatives departing the US before the lifting of flight restrictions.

On 09/19/2001, Ryan International Airlines, flight number 441, was contracted by the Saudi Embassy to make several stops in the US to pick up various Saudi individuals for expeditious departure from the United States. Ryan International Flight 441 ultimately departed Boston, MA to leave the country at approximately 2:05 am EST on 09/20/2001. Flight restrictions had been lifted at this time.

Ryan International Airlines flight 441 originated in St. Louis, Missouri and made stops in Los Angeles, California; Orlando, Florida; Washington, District of Columbia (Dulles); and Boston, Massachusetts before departing the United States. Flight 441 picked up the following passengers at those airports:

Name	Departure City	Interviewed by the FBI?	Case Opened?
Najia Binladen	Los Angeles, CA	Yes	No
Khalil Binladen	Orlando, FL	Yes	No
Sultan Binladen	Orlando, FL	No	No
Maria M. F. Bayma	Orlando, FL	No	No
Shafiq Binladen	Washington, DC	Yes	No
Akberali Moawalla	Washington, DC	Yes	No
Omar Awad Binladen	Washington, DC	Yes	No
Kholoud Osama Kurdi	Washington, DC	Yes	No
Badr Ahmed Binladen	Washington, DC	Yes	No
Nawaf Bakr Binladen	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Reem Hamza Asar	Boston, MA	Yes**	No
Omar Saleh Almadoudi	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Faisal Saleh Almadoudi	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Mohammed Saleh Binladen	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Salman Salem Binladen	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Tamara Khalil Binladen	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Sana'a Mohammed Binladen	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Mohammed Awed Aljohi	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Hasan Awed Aljohi	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Suyati B. T. Sumiran Sadar	Boston, MA	No***	No
Faisal Khalid Binladen	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Salem Ali Salem Alyafeai	Boston, MA	Yes	No
Almtasim Mazen Alsawwaf	Boston, MA	Yes	No

\*Sultan Binladen and Maria M.F. Bayma accompanied Khalil Binladen, who had been interviewed three times.

\*\*Reem Hamza Asar was present during the interview of Faisal Saleh Almadoudi.

\*\*\*Sadar was not interviewed because she was the maid for the group

Najiah Binladen was escorted by FBI LA to a charter terminal at LAX.

Khalil Binladen and his family were escorted by FBI TP to the airport in Orlando, FL.

REPUBLIC OF GABON-FLAGGED (from Las Vegas)

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- On 09/11/2001, SA's interviewed management of the Four Seasons Hotel and Caesar's Palace. Telephone records of the FAISAL BIN ABDULMAJEED party were provided to SA's by Caesar's Palace Security. On 09/12/2001, telephone records from the Four Season's Hotel, for the MOHAMAD AL-TAYHA party were provided.
- On 09/18/2001, SAC [ ] FBI Las Vegas and SAC [ ] United States Secret Service (USSS), met with Saudi Arabian Prince ABDUL MAJEED ABDUL AZIZ and his representatives. The Saudi Arabian's were asked to provide a manifest of their entire party and photocopies of each person's passport. A total of 69 names with identifiers were checked against the current FBI Watch List and ran for IIIA reports. No Watch List matches were discovered.
- 3 individuals from this flight were interviewed by the FBI because of the following non-derogatory information in IIIA:
  - [ ]
  - [ ]
  - [ ]
- On 09/19/2001, Flight DC-8-73, Tail number TR-LTZ a chartered, Republic of Gabon-flagged DC-8-73 departed Las Vegas, Nevada with the final destination of Geneva, Switzerland. The FBI cleared 46 Saudi passengers to board this flight. There were three (3) children under the age of 18 aboard this flight ages 11, 9 and 5.
- Prior to its departure, the aircraft was swept, perimeter security was provided, and all persons boarding were matched to a previously-obtained manifest and photocopies of passports by Agents and Officers of the USCS.

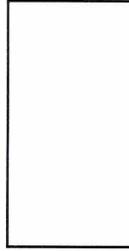
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REPUBLIC OF GABON-FLAGGED (Flight DC-8-73)Supporting Summary: (Saudi Nationals Boarding Flt. DC-8-73)

Name	Date of Birth
1. Prince Abdulmajeed bin Abdulaziz	
2. Princess Sara bint Abdul Mohsen al-Anyary	
3. Prince Faisal bin Abdulmajeed	
4. Prince Abdulaziz bin Faisal bin Abdulmajeed	
5. Prince Turki bin Faisal bin Abdulmajeed	
6. Princess Sultana bint Ibrahim A. al-Brahim	
7. Princess al-Anoud Bint Faisal	
8. al-Jouharah Moheisen al-Anyary	
9. Mr. Mohammed A. al-Tayari	
10. Hesham Ahmed Aki	
11. Amani M. M. al-Sharif	
12. Fatimah M. S. Khati	
13. Omar Y. M. Taraweh	
14. Roqayah H. Sh. Fallata	
15. Hussein Abdelrahim	
16. Khalid H. A. al-Assaf	
17. Ahmed Abd al-Razek	
18. Aisha B. A. Trawi	
19. Sultan S. A. A. al-Amri	
20. H. A. M. Hassan	
21. Salma Kassem Daou	
22. Norma Tamano	
23. Abdallah Issa Zineh	
24. Moustafa Maher al-Behidy	
25. Hassan Mohammed Abd al-Razek	
26. Salah Naser al-Din	
27. Medhat Mohammed Rizk	
28. Mohammed Shawkat Ali	
29. Mohammed A.M. al-Shihiri	
30. Talaat Aly Zenhoum	
31. Hayat H.A. al-Hazmi	
32. Ali Faizy Delwar	
33. Saeedah A.M. al-Mobarak	
34. Faisal M.S. al-Harbi	
35. Rahma Saeed O. Ali	
36. Fatmah S. O. Ali	
37. Hussein Y.A. Ashnawi	
38. Tariq Y. Houthan	
39. Badr A. S. Durayin	
40. Mohammed A. M. al-Zahrani	

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41. Khalid A. S. al-Jamili
42. Medhat Mohammed Taha
43. Hassan Sayed Soliman
44. Samir Saber Soliman
45. Mansour S. R. al-Harbi
46. Mohammad S. S. al-Harbi



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CHARTERED (Flight B 727-21 from Las Vegas)

- On 09/11/2001, SA's interviewed management of the Four Seasons Hotel and Caesar's Palace. Telephone records of the FAISAL BIN ABDULMAJEED party were provided to SA's by Caesar's Palace Security. On 09/12/2001, telephone records from the Four Season's Hotel, for the MOHAMAD AL-TAYHA party were provided.
- On 09/18/2001, SAC [redacted] FBI Las Vegas and SAC [redacted] United States Secret Service (USSS), met with Saudi Arabian Prince ABDUL MAJEED ABDUL AZIZ and his representatives. The Saudi Arabian's were asked to provide a manifest of their entire party and photocopies of each person's passport. A total of 69 names with identifiers were checked against the current FBI Watch List and ran for IIIA reports. No Watch List matches were discovered.
- One (1) individual from this flight was interviewed by the FBI because of the following non-derogatory information in IIIA:
  - [redacted]
- On 09/20/2001, 18 members of the Saudi Arabian Royal Party and members of their entourage arrived for the departure of Flight B 727-21, Tail number N727PX, a chartered, B 727 scheduled to depart Las Vegas, Nevada with the final destination of Stamstead Airport (London), England. There were a total of 18 Saudi passengers aboard this flight. There were no children aboard this flight.
- Prior to its departure, the aircraft was swept, perimeter security was provided, and all persons boarding were matched to a previously-obtained manifest and photocopies of passports by Agents and Officers of the United States Customs Service (USCS).

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CHARTERED (Flight B 727-21)Supporting Summary: (Saudi Nationals Boarding Flt. B 727-21)

Name	Date of Birth
1. Saad M. A. al-Sowailem	[REDACTED]
2. Ali Abdulrahman	
3. Moteb R. O. al-Oufi	
4. Waleed S. A. al-Ajrourh	
5. Nasser M. A. al-Swelim	
6. Zouheir Karim Chehayeb	
7. Badr Mohamed Hassan	
8. Ashraf Gharib Taher	
9. Mohamed Ishak Tolba	
10. Hesham Mahmoud Selim	
11. Gualberto Glore	
12. Hazem Abdul Karim	
13. Gamel Ibrahim al-Taiwany	
14. Sulaiman E. A. al-Eissa	
15. Abdullah D. A. al-Shahrani	
16. Mohammed Abdalla Abou Gabil	
17. Gilles Gerard	
18. Fahd A. S. al-Salem	

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 under 36 C.F.R. § 1256.56**

AMERICAN TRANS AIR (Flight ATA L-1011 from Las Vegas)

- On 09/24/2001, 34 members of another Saudi Arabian Royal Party and members of their entourage, lodged at the Bellagio Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada arrived for the departure of Flight American Trans Air (ATA) L-1011, tail number N189AT, a chartered, L-1011 scheduled to depart Las Vegas, Nevada with an initial destination of Charles de Gaulle Airport (Paris), France and a final destination of London, UK.. There were a total of 34 Saudi passengers aboard this flight. There was one (1) Saudi minor aboard this flight aged 16.
- The names of all passengers and associated identifiers on the manifest were checked against the current FBI Watch List, and ran for potential IIIA reports. Both checks met with negative results.
- Prior to departure, the aircraft was swept, perimeter security was provided, and all persons boarding were matched to a previously-obtained manifest and photocopies of passports by Agents and Officers of the United States Customs Service (USCS).

AMERICAN TRANS AIR (Flight ATA L-1011)

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Supporting Summary: (Saudi Nationals Boarding Flt. ATA L-1011)

## Name

## Date of Birth

1. Princess Medhawi bint Abdulaziz al-Saud
2. Prince Turki bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
3. Prince Saud bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
4. Prince Sarah bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
5. Prince Alanoud bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
6. Dr. Badr Hassan bin Shalhoub
7. Mohammed al-Yahya
8. Samilrah Hammad
9. The(illegible) Hammad
10. Nouf al-(illegible)
11. Luhway Abdul M(illegible)
12. Sharif al-Sayed Hegazy
13. Ashraf Abou Shakrah
14. Tyaha Soliman Karrar
15. Agata Ok(illegible)
16. Fadhila Rojeb
17. Boubaker Bou(illegible)
18. Hind K(illegible)
19. Zkrea B(illegible)
20. Bcdrays Ahmed C(illegible)
21. Rugalya Adam Mohammed
22. Wagd? Abdul Samad Abbas
23. Ab(illegible) Yaqoub Ahmed
24. Greta A(illegible)
25. Princess Abta bint Abdulaziz bin Saud
26. Mahmoud F. El(illegible)
27. Hind Mahla
28. Aisha A. Asir?
29. Gala? Mahmoud Me?w(illegible) Al-Agz
30. Amaar B(illegible) Abdul Mut(illegible)
31. Fatima I(illegible) Mohammed N(illegible)jumudeen
32. Mumun B. T. A(illegible)min Saleh
33. Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al Saudi
34. Princess Taghraed bint Abdulaziz al-Saud

Empty box for Date of Birth
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Note: Record checks were conducted based upon the names and identifiers contained in the identification documents.

BINLADEN FAMILY

APPENDIX

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## (U//FOUO) The Binladen Family

(U//FOUO) Usama bin Laden (UBL) is a member of a large and wealthy Saudi family. The family patriarch, Mohammed Awad Binladen, came to the kingdom from Hadramout (South Yemen) sometime around 1930.<sup>1</sup>

- In Saudi Arabia, UBL's father became a construction magnate, completing prestigious projects such as the renovation of the holy mosques in Mecca and Medina. As a result, the Binladens are a highly respected family both within the Saudi royal household and with the public.

(U//FOUO) There is some confusion as to the total number of UBL's siblings.

- Some cite that he is the youngest of some 20 sons,<sup>2</sup> while others claim he is the seventh son.<sup>3</sup>
- The total number of his siblings might be 50,<sup>4</sup> 52,<sup>5</sup> or 54.<sup>6</sup> In an interview, UBL seemed unsure as well, citing that he had 25 brothers—although he could remember the names of only 20.<sup>7</sup>
- Nearly all of these siblings are half-brothers or half-sisters, as UBL's father had multiple wives. UBL's own Syrian mother, Hamida, is cited as having only one son.<sup>8</sup>

(U//FOUO) The Binladen family has denounced UBL repeatedly.

- In 1994, the Binladen family issued a statement expressing its "regret, denunciation and condemnation of all acts that Osama bin Laden may have committed, which we do not condone and we reject."<sup>9</sup>
- After the attacks on the US on September 11, 2001, the current head of the family, Sheik Abdullah Awad Aboud Binladen, said "The family has previously announced its position [to distance itself] from Usama and condemned his acts.

<sup>1</sup> "A Biography of Osama Bin Laden." PBS Frontline, 26 September 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Miller, Judith. "Bin Laden: Child of Privilege Who Champions Holy War." 14 September 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Krushelnicky, Askold. "Afghanistan: Who is Bin Laden and What Makes Him Tick?" Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. 14 September 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Krushelnicky

<sup>5</sup> Dobbs, Michael. "Bin Laden: A 'Master Impresario.'" Washington Post. 13 September 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Abu-Nasr, Donna. "Bin Laden Aims to Ride 'Infidels'." Associated Press, 15 September 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Lakshmanan, Indira. "Bin Laden Reportedly Says He Has Armed Afghanistan." Boston Globe. 26 September 2001.

<sup>8</sup> Abu-Nasr.

<sup>9</sup> "Bin Laden Denounced by His Family." Independent Television News. 15 September 2001.

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All the family members condemn all violent and terrorist acts, even if Usama is behind them."<sup>10</sup> Sheik Abdullah is UBL's uncle.

(U//FOUO) UBL's own family situation is as unclear as many of the other aspects of his personal life.

- UBL first married at the age of 17 to a Syrian girl who was a relative.<sup>11</sup>
- One source reports that UBL now has at least three wives and more than 20 children.<sup>12</sup> Another source says that UBL is married to four women and has 14 to 18 children.<sup>13</sup>
- In an interview, UBL is reported to have said that he has only three wives, not the five reported in some accounts. The report said UBL resisted personal questions, saying only that he has three wives and 16 children.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "A Biography of Osama Bin Laden."

<sup>12</sup> "Bin Laden Still Calling the Shots in War with United States." Agence France-Presse. 25 September 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Abu-Nasr

<sup>14</sup> Lakshmanan

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VANITY FAIR ISSUES

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Counterpoints:

(U) The *Vanity Fair* article reports the claims of retired Tampa police officer Dan Grossi. He claims that he and a former FBI agent Manuel Perez provided security for a flight from Tampa, Florida to Lexington, Kentucky.

(U//LES) A group of Saudis, who were accompanying Prince Ahmed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz had been in Lexington, Kentucky to attend a horse auction. After the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, these individuals made repeated attempts to leave the United States, but were unsuccessful until 09/16/2001, when they departed aboard a chartered 727. On 09/13/2001 they were joined by Prince Sultan Bin Fahad Bin Salman Abdulaziz, and three companions, who according to an FBI Agent from Lexington, Kentucky RA had arrived by automobile from Florida.

(U) "In addition, FBI documents marked 'Secret' indicated that two members of the bin Laden family, which has repeatedly distanced itself from Osama bin Laden, were under investigation..."

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(U) "they left the US without even being interviewed by the FBI"

(U//LES) Of the 23 Saudi passengers aboard Ryan International Airlines charter flight 441, responding agents determined that 20 individuals needed to be interviewed, 22 interviews were conducted of these 20 individuals.

(U) "Osama was not the only member of the immense bin Laden family--there are more than 50 siblings--with ties to militant Islamic fundamentalists."

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(U//LES) There were no siblings of UBL's with ties to Militant Islamic Fundamentalists aboard the flight.

(U) Richard Clarke: it was either the State Dept or the FBI who initiated the request for the Saudis to depart.

(U) All indications are that the Saudis initiated these flights on their own initiative.

(U) "Meanwhile, the Saudis had at least two other planes on call. Starting in Los Angeles on an undetermined date, one of them flew first to Orlando, Florida, where Khalil bin Laden boarded. From Orlando, the plane continued to Dulles International Airport, outside Washington, DC, before going on to Boston's Logan International Airport on September 19, picking up members of the bin Laden family along the way."

(U) See summary for Ryan International Airlines flight 441 and timeline.

(U) "Other stops for the Saudis are said to have included Houston, Cleveland, and Newark."

(U//LES) No FBI records of any such flights could be located to confirm or refute this allegation.

(U) "Khalil bin Laden, who boarded a plane in Orlando that eventually took him back to Saudi Arabia, won the attention of Brazilian investigators for possible terrorist connections. According to a Brazilian paper, he had business connections in the Brazilian province of Minas Gerais, not far from the tri-border region, an alleged center for training terrorists."

(U//LES) Khalil Bin Laden's wife, Isabel Bayma is from Brazil. He undoubtedly has business connections in Brazil. Even if we assume that the reports in the article are true, they do not indicate a connection to terrorists. There is no indication in FBI records that there is a connection between Khalil Bin Laden and terrorist training in the tri-border region.

(U) "...but the documents show that the file on Abdullah and Omar was reopened on September 19, 2001, while the Saudi repatriation was still under way. 'These documents show there was an open FBI investigation into these guys at the time of their departure,' says David Armstrong, an investigator for the Public Education Center, the Washington, DC, foundation that obtained the documents."

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FBI Statements attributable to the FBI:

(U) "I can say unequivocally that the FBI had no role in facilitating these flights one way or another." SA John Iannarelli

(U//LES) True, we did not facilitate the flights, but we did "escort" Saudis to their flight on two separate occasions for flight 441.

(U) "According to FBI spokesman John Iannarelli, FBI counterterrorism agents pursuing the investigation were stranded all over the country, unable to fly for several days. Yet now the same counterterrorism unit was effectively acting as a chaperone for the Saudis."

(U//LES) Agents were stranded even after the flight restrictions were lifted due to the backlog of passengers. Agents did provide security escorts for members of Bin Laden family who were afraid for their life. These two statements were made separately by John Iannarelli.

(U) "According to *The New York Times*, bin Laden family members were driven or flown under FBI supervision first to a secret assembly point in Texas and later to Washington. From there, the *Times* reported, they left the country when airports reopened on September 14. The FBI has said the *Times* report is 'erroneous.'"

(U) The FBI response to the times article is accurate.

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Indirect or Unofficial FBI Statements:

(U) Richard Clarke: "Somebody brought to us for approval the decision to let an airplane filled with Saudis, including members of the bin Laden family, leave the country. My role was to say that it can't happen until the FBI approves it. And so the FBI was asked--we had a live connection to the FBI--and we asked the FBI to make sure that they were satisfied that everybody getting on that plane was someone that it was OK to leave. And they came back and said yes, it was fine with them. So we said, 'Fine, let it happen.'"

(U) This is an indirect quote of an unknown FBI representative. We do not know who made the alleged FBI statements.

(U) "Altogether, about 140 Saudis were on the flights, according to an FBI source."

(U//LES) In the several flights we have identified there were a total of 141 Saudis who left the country between 09/16/2001 and 09/24/2001.

(U) "In fact, the FBI had been keeping an eye on some of the bin Ladens. A classified FBI file examined by *Vanity Fair* and marked 'Secret' shows that as early as 1996 the bureau had spent nearly nine months investigating Abdullah and Omar bin Laden, who were involved with the American branch of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY)..."

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(U) "But, according to Dale Watson, the FBI's former head of counterterrorism, such investigations into Saudis in the United States were the exception. 'If allegations came up, they were looked into,' he says. 'But a blanket investigation into Saudis here did not take place.'"

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(U) "At times, the Saudis who had assembled for departure tried to get the planes to leave before the FBI had even identified who was on them. 'I recall getting into a big flap with Bandar's office about whether they would leave without us knowing who was on the plane,' says one FBI agent. 'Bandar wanted the plane to take off, and we were stressing that that plane was not leaving until we knew exactly who was on it.'"

(U//LES) The FBI did identify the passengers in all instances and interviewed those where an investigative interest existed. There is no indication in the documentation of these incidents that the Saudis were uncooperative in any way. In fact, passenger lists and copies of passports were provided by the Saudis. Additionally, several consent searches of bags and the aircraft were conducted.

(U) "In the end, the FBI decided it was simply not practical to conduct full-blown investigations. 'They were identified,' says Dale Watson, 'but they were not subject to serious interviews or interrogations.' The bureau has declined to release their identities."

(U//LES) No investigative decisions were based solely upon practicality. In some cases these individuals were interviewed days prior to the flight and in one case, multiple interviews were conducted.

(U) "An FBI agent says that they had a right to leave and that being related to Osama did not constitute grounds for investigation."

(U) Without knowing the identity of the FBI Agent who allegedly made this comment, we cannot determine the basis for the comment.

(U) "A number of experienced investigators expressed surprise that the Saudis had not been interviewed. 'Certainly it would be my expectation that they would do that,' says Oliver 'Buck' Revell, former associate deputy director of the FBI."

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SENATOR FEINSTEIN'S

QUESTIONS

Senator Feinstein's Questions

1. Sen. Feinstein believes there are inconsistencies in the FBI's statements as portrayed in the Vanity Fair article.

Which of the article's statements, attributed to the FBI, are accurate and which are inaccurate?

There are three official statements referenced in the article. While some are misconstrued from their original context they are accurate.

2. Who (which department of the government, etc.) initiated and authorized the departure of the Saudi citizens? If it was not the FBI, who informed us about the situation?

Unknown. Any decision regarding departure of aircraft would have been made in concert with the National Command Authority.

3. How many planes were involved in transporting the Saudi citizens out of the U.S.? Do we have the manifest(s)? How many people were on those planes?

(Reportedly, Richard Clarke recently testified on the Hill that he knew of only one plane involved. Clarke also stated that he did not know if the FBI interviewed anyone on the plane).

We have detailed several flights which departed shortly after flight restrictions were lifted. There were 141 Saudis aboard these flights. We have a passenger list and/or manifest from each of the flights in question. Once air traffic was restored there were numerous commercial and chartered flights which transported Saudis from the country.

4. Did the FBI conduct any follow-up investigation (interviews, etc.) of the people on the plane (or who were believed to be on the plane)? If so, was the Saudi Arabian government cooperative?

Yes. In addition to interviews, consent searches, record checks, and review of identification documents, further investigation was conducted where warranted. There is no indication that the Saudi government was uncooperative. In fact, passenger lists and copies of passports were provided by the Saudis.

5. What role did the FBI play in this whole affair?

a. Did we conduct "extensive" interviews of the Saudi's involved?

Some individuals were extensively interviewed others were not.

b. Did we conduct interviews at locations other than the airplane/airport of the Saudi citizens who were trying to leave the U.S.?

Yes. Several of the interviews were conducted at residences in the days prior to the flight. Agents went to various hotels and residences prior to the flight to obtain passenger lists and other

VANITY FAIR, OCTOBER 2003

ARTICLE,

"SAVING THE SAUDIS",

BY CRAIG UNGER

documentation in addition to the interviews.

c. Did the FBI conduct any other "background" investigations into those on the plane(s) or believed to be on the plane(s)? If so, what did our efforts consist of?

As described in our answer to number four, the FBI conducted interviews, consent searches, record checks, and reviews of identification documents. Further investigation was conducted where warranted, including follow-up interviews and analysis of telephone and travel records. No direct connection to the 09/11/2001 terrorists was established.

6. What other agencies worked with the FBI in regards to this situation? What was each of their roles?

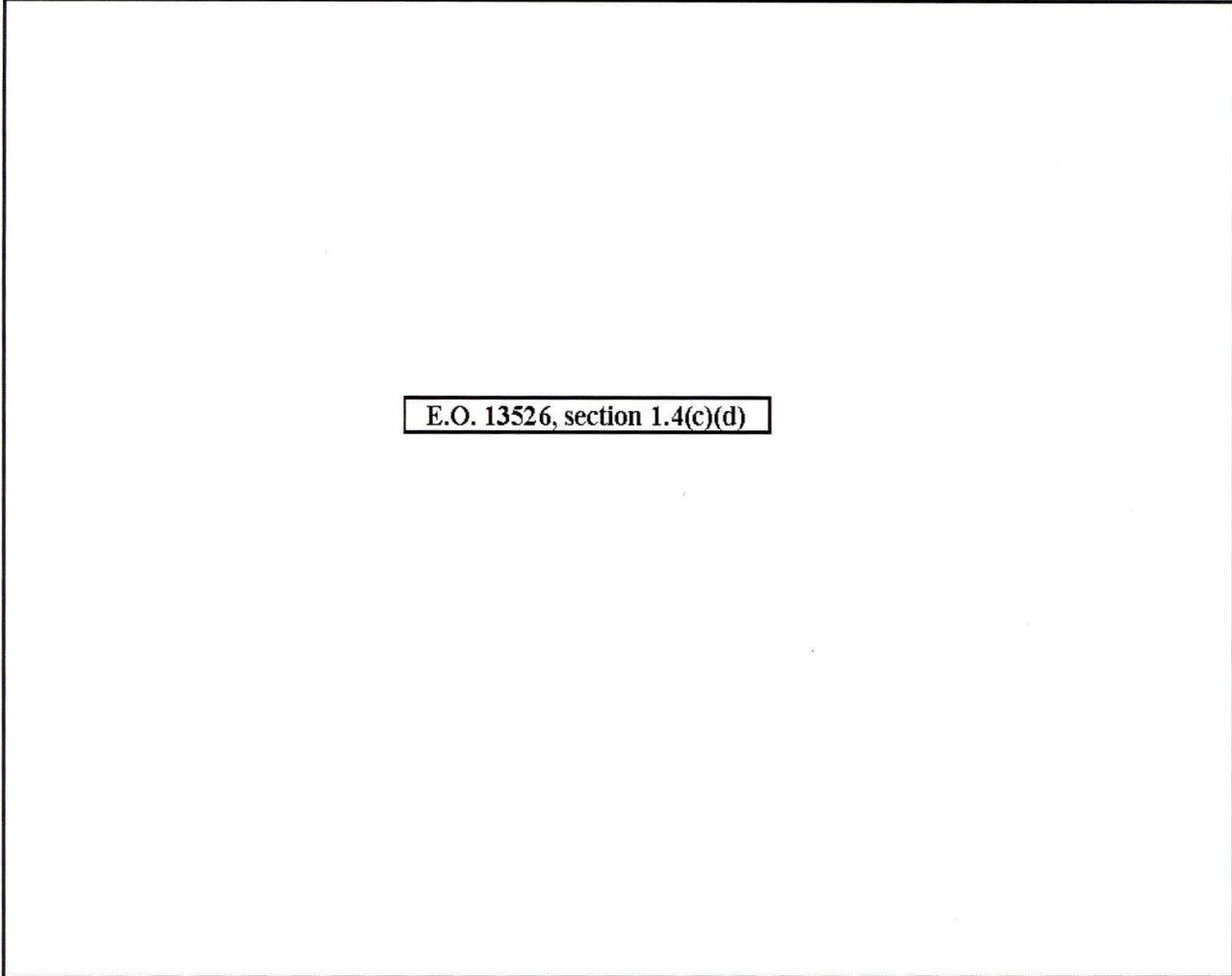
INS, USCS, USSS, Rhode Island State Police, Massachusetts State Police, Warwick, Rhode Island Police Department, Boston Police Department all participated in conducting interviews, verifying documents and conducting searches.

SAUDI FCI DETAILS

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E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)(d)

- During the last few months, the FBI has undertaken significant efforts to assess the Saudi intelligence threat.
- The FBI has also been working to identify and assess the Saudi intelligence threat. This includes the Saudi intelligence presence, which could provide cover or support for terrorist activities. The FBI is assessing the Saudi target.

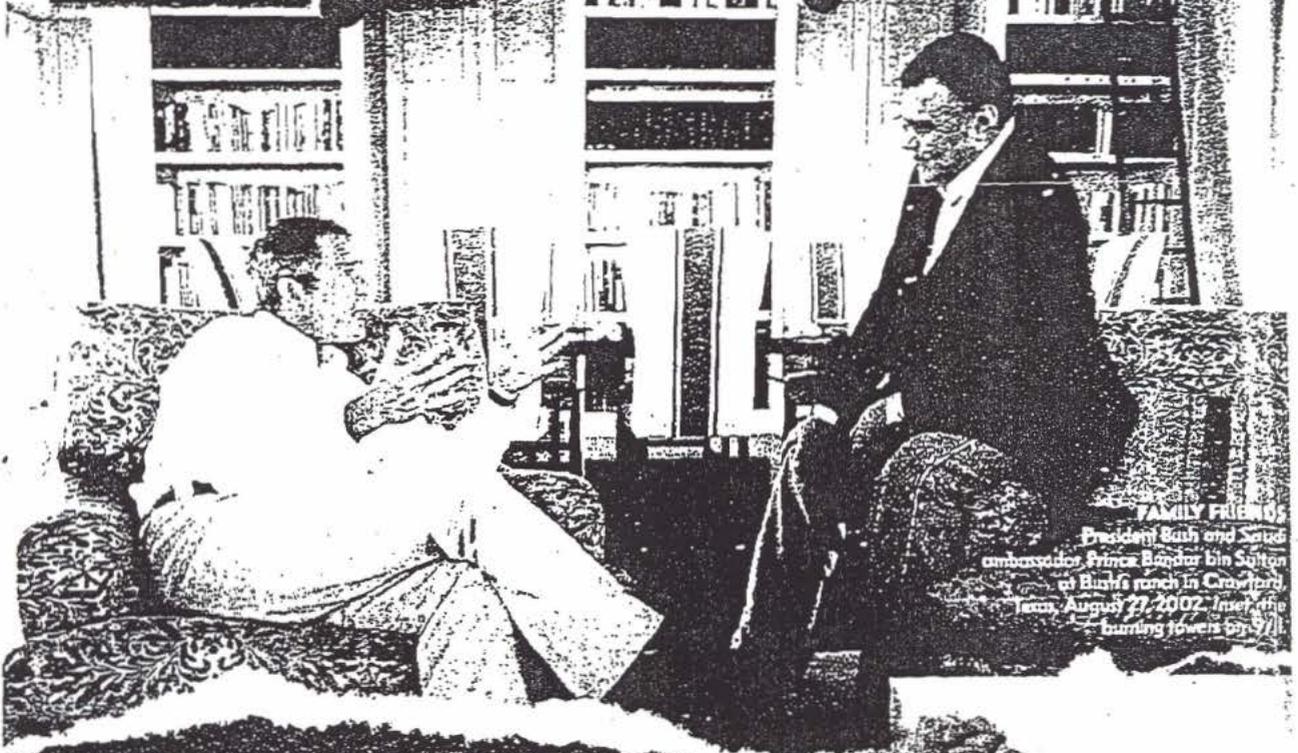
SAI D I N T E L L I G E N C E T H R E A T

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ARABIAN PENINSULA

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# THE WAR AT HOME



**FAMILY FRIENDS**  
 President Bush and Saudi ambassador Prince Bandar bin Sultan at Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, August 27, 2002. Inset: the burning towers on 9/11.

## SAVING THE SAUDIS

Just days after 9/11, wealthy Saudi Arabians, including members of the bin Laden family, were whisked out of the U.S. on private jets. No one will admit to clearing the flights, and the passengers weren't questioned. Did the Bush family's long relationship with the Saudis help make it happen?

BY CRAIG UNGER



**O**n the morning of September 11, 2001, a 39-year-old pilot named Dan Cross got an unexpected call from the Tampa Police Department. Cross had worked with the Tampa police for 20 years before retiring, and it was not particularly unusual for the police to call him about a race or sports event in spectator sport. But Cross, the "big guy" who was always the main attraction at the Tampa Police Department, was not a fan of the sport. He was a former professional football player and a former police officer. He was a former professional football player and a former police officer. He was a former professional football player and a former police officer.

protection since September 11, Cross recalls. "They asked if I was interested in escorting these students from Tampa to Lexington, Kentucky." Cross was told to go to the airport, where a small charter jet would be available to take him and the Saudis on their flight. He was sure as soon as the prospect of accomplishing his task came to mind. "I knew that if anything was going to happen, it was that night. This was a matter of life or death. I was not going to let anything happen to these people. I was not going to let anything happen to these people. I was not going to let anything happen to these people."

typical 45-minute flight of the attacks on 9/11, the Federal Aviation Administration had sent out a pre-flight notification called a "no-fly" notice to airlines, advising every airline to land in the United States to land at the nearest airport as soon as possible. It was a pre-flight notification, and it was not a "no-fly" notice. It was a pre-flight notification, and it was not a "no-fly" notice. It was a pre-flight notification, and it was not a "no-fly" notice.

the Wright brothers first flew. . . .  
Nevertheless, at 1:30 p.m. on the 13th, Dan Grossi received his phone call. He was told the Saudis would be delivered to Raytheon Airport Services, a private hangar at Tampa International Airport.

When he and Perez met at the terminal, a woman laughed at Grossi for even thinking he would be flying that day. Commercial flights had slowly begun to resume, but at 10:57 a.m. the F.A.A. had issued another notice to airmen, a reminder that private aviation was still prohibited. Three private planes violated the ban that day, and in each case a pair of jet fighters quickly forced the aircraft down. As far as private planes were concerned, America was still grounded. "I was told it would take White House approval," says Grossi.

Then one of the pilots arrived. "Here's your plane," he told Grossi. "Whenever you're ready to go."

Unbeknownst to Dan Grossi, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the 52-year-old Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States, had been in Washington orchestrating the exodus of about 140 Saudis scattered throughout the country who were members of, or close to, two enormous families. One was the House of Saud, the family that rules the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and that, owing to its vast oil reserves, is the richest family in the world. The other was the ruling family's friends and allies the bin Ladens, who, in addition to owning a multi-billion-dollar construction conglomerate, had spawned the notorious terrorist Osama bin Laden. Thanks to the bin Ladens' extremely close relationship with the House of Saud, the family's huge construction company, the Saudi Binladin Group, had won contracts to restore the holy mosques in Mecca and Medina, two of the greatest icons in all of Islam.

The repatriation of the Saudis is far more than just a case of wealthy Arabs being granted special status by the White House under extraordinary conditions. For one thing, in the two years since September 11, a number of highly placed Saudis, including both bin Ladens and members of the royal family, have come under fire for their alleged roles in financing terrorism. Four thousand relatives of the victims of 9/11 have filed a \$1 trillion civil suit in Washington, D.C., charging the House of Saud, the bin Ladens, and hundreds of others with wrongful death, conspiracy, and racketeering for having contributed tens of millions of dollars to charities that were al-Qaeda fronts. *Newsweek* has reported that Prince Bandar's wife, perhaps unwittingly, sent thousands of dollars to charities that ended up funding the hijackers. In addition, F.B.I. documents marked "Secret" indicate

that two members of the bin Laden family, which has repeatedly distanced itself from Osama bin Laden, were under investigation by the bureau for suspected associations with an Islamic charity designated as a terrorist support group.

Most recently, in July, the administration asked Congress to withhold 25 pages of its official report on 9/11. According to news reports, the classified section charges that there were ties between the hijackers and two Saudis, Omar al-Bayoumi and Osama Bassnan, who had financial relationships with members of the Saudi government. Saudi officials deny that their government was in any way linked to the attacks. The Saudis have asked that the pages be declassified so they can refute them, but President Bush has refused.

Terrorism experts say that the Saudis who were in the U.S. immediately after the attacks might have been able to shed light on the structure of al-Qaeda and to provide valuable leads for investigating 9/11. And yet, according to sources who participated in the repatriation, they left the U.S. without even being interviewed by the F.B.I.

Officially, the White House declined to comment, and a source inside asserted that the flights never took place. However, former high-level Bush-administration officials have told *Vanity Fair* otherwise.

How was it possible that, just as President Bush declared a no-holds-barred global war on terror that would send hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops to Afghanistan and Iraq, and just as Osama bin Laden became Public Enemy No. 1 and the target of a worldwide manhunt, the White House would expedite the departure of so many potential witnesses, including two dozen relatives of the man behind the attack itself?

The incident is particularly important in light of the special relationship the Saudis have long had with the United States—and the Bush family in particular. For decades, Saudi Arabia has been one of America's two most powerful allies in the Middle East, not to mention an enormous source of oil. The Bush family and the House of Saud, the two most powerful dynasties in the world, have had close personal, business, and political ties for more than 20 years. In the 80s, when the elder Bush was vice president, he and Prince Bandar became personal friends. Together, they lobbied through massive U.S. arms sales to the Saudis and participated in critical foreign-policy ventures. In the 1991 Gulf War, the Saudis and the elder Bush were allies.

In the private sector, the Saudis supported Harken Energy, a struggling oil company in which George W. Bush was an investor. Most recently, former president

George H. W. Bush and former secretary of state James A. Baker III, his longtime ally, have appeared before Saudis at fund-raisers for the Carlyle Group, arguably the biggest private equity firm in the world. Today, former president Bush continues to serve as a senior adviser to the firm, whose investors allegedly include a Saudi accused of ties to terrorist support groups.

"It's always been very clear that there are deep ties between the Bush family and the Saudis," says Charles Lewis, head of the Center for Public Integrity, a Washington, D.C., foundation that examines issues of ethics in government. "It creates a credibility problem." When it comes to the war on terror, a lot of people have to be wondering why we are concerned about some countries and not others. Why does Saudi Arabia get a pass?"

On a humid July day, Nail al-Jubeir, director of information for Saudi Arabia, sits in his office in the Saudi Embassy in Washington and recalls the morning of September 11, 2001. Like many people, al-Jubeir was on his way to work that morning, and as soon as he heard that a second plane had crashed into the south tower of the World Trade Center, he realized that terrorists had attacked.

Over the next few days, the Saudi Embassy was in turmoil. Innocent Saudi citizens in the United States were arrested. "That created an issue," al-Jubeir says. "How do we protect the Saudis who are being rounded up? Our concern was the safety of Saudis here in the United States."

Initially, Prince Bandar had hoped that early reports of the Saudi role in the attacks had been exaggerated—after all, al-Qaeda terrorist operatives were known to use false passports. But at 10 p.m. on the evening of September 12, about 36 hours after the attacks, a high-ranking C.I.A. official—according to *Newsweek*, it was probably C.I.A. director George Tenet—phoned Bandar and gave him the bad news: 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudis.

After two decades as ambassador, Bandar had long been the most recognizable figure from his country in America. Widely known as "the Arab Gatsby," with his trimmed goatee and tailored double-breasted suits, Bandar embodied the contradictions of the modern, jet-setting, Western-leaning member of the royal House of Saud. He knew that public relations had never been more crucial for the Saudis.

With the help of P.R. giant Burson-Marsteller, Bandar launched an international media blitz. He placed ads in newspapers across the country condemning the attacks and disassociating Saudi Arabia from them. On TV, he hammered home the same points: Saudi Arabia would support Ameri-

... in its fight against terrorist hijackers could not even be considered Saudis, he asserted, because "we in the kingdom, the government and the people of Saudi Arabia, refuse to have any person affiliated with terrorism to be connected to our country." That included Osama bin Laden, Bandar said, since the government had taken away his passport in response to his terrorist activities.

Osama bin Laden, however, was a Saudi, and not just any Saudi. Bandar knew the members of his prominent family well. "They're really lovely human beings," he told CNN. "[Osama] is the only one... I met him only once. The rest of them are well-educated, successful businessmen, involved in a lot of charities. It is a tragedy... He's caused them a lot of pain."

The bin Laden family neatly exemplifies the dilemma the United States faces in its relations with Saudi Arabia. On the one hand, the bin Ladens are products of Wahhabi fundamentalism, a puritanical Islamic sect that has helped make Saudi Arabia a fertile breeding ground for terrorists. Contrary to popular belief, Osama was not the only member of the immense bin Laden family—there are more than 50 siblings—with ties to militant Islamic fundamentalists. As early as 1979, Mahrous bin Laden, an older half-brother of Osama's, had befriended members of the militant Muslim Brotherhood and had played, perhaps unwittingly, a key role in the Mecca Affair, a violent uprising against the House of Saud in 1979 which resulted in more than 100 deaths.

Later, the Saudi Binladin Group became part of what was known as "the Golden Chain," a list of wealthy Saudis who nurtured al-Qaeda at its inception in the late 80s, some time before it was perceived as an international threat.

On the other hand, the bin Ladens years ago had disassociated themselves from Osama and his horrific terrorist acts. These were the Saudi billionaires who banked with Citigroup, invested with Goldman Sachs and Merrill Lynch, and did business with such icons of Western culture as Disney, Snapple, and Porsche.

The young bin Ladens and members of the House of Saud who were living in the United States in September 2001 were mostly students attending high school or college and young professionals. Several bin Ladens had attended Tufts University, near Boston. Sana bin Laden had graduated from Wheelock College, in Boston. Abdulrah bin Laden, a younger brother of

Osama, was a 1984 graduate of Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The bin Laden family had a "strong Saudi flavor" in the late 1980s, says Bandar.

When Osama bin Laden was bin Laden in 1989, he lived in Cambridge, Mass., and then in New York, S.H., and he considered pursuing a singing career. Partial to hip Manhattan night spots and restaurants such as Louis, the Market Kitchen, and Pacha, she happened to be in London on September 11 and fled in a train to the United States. Khaled bin Laden, in his 20s, and a cousin of Osama's, also frequented Manhattan nightclubs and, less than two months after 9/11, reportedly spent nearly \$30,000 in a single day at Prada Fifth Avenue boutique. He elected to stay in the United States. But half-brother Khalid Binladin decided to go back to Saudi. Khalid, who has a Brazilian wife, had been appointed Brazil's honorary

... foreign diplomat had the close personal strings at the White House in the form of a grant of non-immigrant status to Prince Bandar. The Saudis were not only adept at using their political connections to the U.S. administration, they built in the past 30 years—but no one did it better than Bandar. He had played a quiet but vital role in President Bill Clinton's operations for the late CIA director, Bill Casey, that were kept secret even from President Ronald Reagan. He was the man who had dashed away dozens of leaked attaché cases that held some of the deepest secrets in the intelligence world.

But it was his intimate friendship with



**OIL IS FORGIVEN**  
Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, and President Bush in the Oval Office nine days after the 9/11 attacks

**"It's always been very clear that there are deep ties between the Bush family and the Saudis. It creates a credibility problem."**

... consul in Jeddah, though he also owns a sprawling 20-acre estate in Winter Garden, Florida, near Orlando.

As for the Saudi royal family, its members were scattered across the United States. Some had gone to Lexington, Kentucky, for the September horse auctions, which were suspended on September 11 but resumed the next day. Saudi prince Ahmed Salman, a regular in Lexington, stayed and bought two horses for \$12 million on September 12. "I am a businessman," Salman said. "I have nothing to do with the other stuff. I feel as badly as any American."

Others felt more personally threatened. Shortly after the attacks, one of Osama bin Laden's brothers frantically called the Saudi Embassy in Washington seeking protection. He was given a room at the Watergate Hotel and told not to open the door. King Fahd, the aging and infirm Saudi monarch, sent a message to his emissaries in Washington to take measures to protect the innocent

the Bushes that truly set him apart. When George H. W. Bush became vice president in 1981, Bandar saw him for what he was—a Texas oilman who had enormous respect for the Saudis' vast oil reserves and was not a knee-jerk defender of Israel. The two began to have lunch regularly, and in the mid-80s, at a time when the press was assailing Bush as a "wimp," Bandar staged an extravagant soiree in his honor.

After Bush became president in 1989, Bandar acted as an envoy between him and Saddam Hussein, assuring Bush that the U.S. could count on Saddam to provide a bulwark against extremist Islamic fundamentalism. In August 1990, after Iraq invaded Kuwait, Bandar joined Bush at the president's family retreat in Kennebunkport, Maine, where the two men discussed going to war together against Saddam. A few months later, at Bush's urging, Bandar persuaded King Fahd of Saudi Arabia to join Bush as an ally in the Gulf War. In 1992, Bandar jets Bush's defeat by Bill Clinton as a personal loss. And after the

from election day. The flight on In-  
ternational Flight 77, which was  
captured by Bush, was a 12-hour  
flight from London to Washington  
with 60 passengers.

...in the... The Saudi  
... For the 4-  
... State Cl-  
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... R-

Before 9/11, President  
Bush had invited Bin Laden to the  
White House on September 11, 2001, to  
discuss the Middle East peace process. The  
meeting went down as a fiasco, but  
in the wake of the terrorist at-  
tacks, the political and legal system had  
longed dramatically. According  
to *The New York Times*, Bin La-  
den Bandar at the meeting that

... They were well connected. One of the  
... his father or his uncle was good  
... with George Bush Sr.

Both the *Tampa Tribune* and sources  
... that one of the  
... either the son or nephew  
... Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, the Saudi  
... minister of defense and Prince Bandar's  
... brother. Another passenger was said to have  
... in the son of a Saudi army commander  
... the Saudi Embassy declined to con-  
... firm their identities. The *Tribune* reported  
... that the request to repatriate the Saudi  
... had been made by a different Saudi

The process began in the bowels of the  
White House. At the time, the Bush ad-  
ministration was holed up in the Situation  
Room, a small underground suite with a  
plush, 18-by-18-foot conference room in the  
West Wing. Line links connected the room's  
occupants to the FBI, the State Depart-  
ment, and other relevant agencies. Vice  
President Dick Cheney, National Security  
Adviser Condoleezza Rice, and other offi-  
cials hunkered down and devoured intelli-  
gence, hoping to ascertain if other terrorist  
attacks had been planned. The most power-  
ful officials in the administration came and  
went, among them Colin Powell, CIA di-  
rector George Tenet, and Defense Secre-  
tary Donald Rumsfeld.

Within the cramped confines of that  
room, the White House terrorism czar,  
Richard Clarke, the head of the  
Counterterrorism Security Group  
of the National Security Council,  
chaired an ongoing crisis group  
making hundreds of decisions re-  
lated to the attacks. A true Wash-  
ington rarity, Clarke was a civil ser-  
vant who had ascended to the highest  
levels of policymaking. As characterized  
in *The Age of Sacred Terror*, by Daniel Ben-  
jamin and Steven Simon, Clarke was a  
man who broke all the rules. Beholden to  
neither Republicans nor Democrats, he re-  
fused to attend regular National Security  
Council staff meetings, sent insulting  
e-mails to his colleagues, and regularly  
worked outside normal bureaucratic chan-  
nels. One of only two senior directors from  
the administration of the elder George  
Bush who were kept by Bill Clinton, Clarke,  
abrasive as he was, had continued to rise  
because of his genius for knowing when  
and how to push the levers of power.

In the days immediately after 9/11—he  
doesn't remember exactly when—Clarke  
was approached in the Situation Room  
about quickly repatriating the Saudis.

"Somebody brought to us for approval  
the decision to let an airplane filled with  
Saudis, including members of the bin Laden  
family, leave the country," Clarke says. "My  
role was to say that it can't happen until  
the F.B.I. approves it. And so the F.B.I. was  
asked—we had a live connection to the  
F.B.I.—and we asked the F.B.I. to make sure  
that they were satisfied that everybody get-  
ting on that plane was someone that it was  
O.K. to leave. And they came back and said  
yes, it was fine with them. So we said, 'Fine,  
let it happen.'" Clarke, who has since left  
the government and now runs a consult-  
ing firm in Virginia, adds that he does not  
recall who initiated the request, but that it  
was probably either the F.B.I. or the State  
Department. Both agencies deny playing  
any role whatsoever in the episode. "It did  
not come out of [CONTINUED ON PAGE 75]

### In 2000, Prince Bandar flew off to go hunting in Spain with former president Bush.



**LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON**  
Then president George H. W. Bush  
and his good friend Prince Bandar  
(in the pink headdress) in Washington,  
D.C., August 9, 1989

royal, Prince Sultan bin Fahad

According to Grossi, about an  
hour and 45 minutes after takeoff  
they landed at Blue Grass Airport  
in Lexington. There the Saudis were  
greeted by an American who took  
custody of them and helped them  
with their baggage. On the tarmac  
was a Boeing 747 with Arabic writ-  
ing on it, apparently waiting to take  
them back to Saudi Arabia. "My under-  
standing is that there were other Saudis  
in Kentucky buying racehorses at that  
time, and they were going to fly back to-  
gether," Grossi says.

the US would hand over to the Saudis any  
captured al-Qaeda operative who could not  
be made to cooperate, implying that the  
Saudis could use any means necessary to  
get suspects to talk. Nad al-Iubeh says he  
does not know if Prince Bandar and the  
president discussed getting the bin Ladens  
and other Saudis back to Saudi Arabia.

The Tampa-to-Lexington flight, which  
was reported in the *Tampa Tribune* in  
October 2001, is the only document-  
ed incident in which Saudis had been  
granted access to American airspace when  
U.S. citizens were still restricted from fly-  
ing privately—access that required special  
government approval.

But the job began to get done all the  
same. In Tampa, on the same day  
that Bandar and Bush were meeting  
in the White House, private investigator  
Dan Grossi says, he and Manuel Perer  
waited until three Saudi men, all appar-  
ently in their early 20s, arrived. Then the  
pair took Grossi, Perer, and the Saudis to  
a well-appointed cabin assanger, Learjet  
They departed for Lexington, Kentucky, at  
10:45 a.m.

How did the phantom flight from Tampa  
get permission to take off? At the time, the  
F.A.A. denied the flight had taken place  
at all. "It's not in our logs," Chris White, a  
spokesman for the F.A.A., told the *Tampa  
Tribune*. "It didn't occur." On the record,  
the White House declined to comment, but  
privately a source there said the administra-  
tion was confident that no secret flights took  
place and that there was no evidence to sug-  
gest that the White House had authorized  
such flights. According to Nad al-Iubeh,  
before the repatriation had been approved  
at the highest level of the U.S. government

Grossi did not recall the names of the  
Saudis he was escorted to Lexington so

says one source at the State Department. "The likes of Prince Bandar did not need the State Department to get this done."

I can say unequivocally that the FBI had no role in facilitating the flight, one way or another," says Special Agent John Lannarelli, the FBI's spokesman on counterterrorism activities.

**W**ith just three Saudis on it, the Tampa flight was hardly the only mysterious trip under way. All over the country, members of the extended bin Laden family, the House of Saud, and their associates were assembling in various locations.



**BLOOD TIES**

From left: Osama bin Laden; his niece Wafah in London, 2003; his brother Bakr, center, with King Fahd, left, circa 1992; Osama's half-brother Yeslam, 2001.

According to *The New York Times*, bin Laden family members were driven or flown under FBI supervision first to a secret assembly point in Texas and later to Washington. From there, the *Times* reported, they left the country when airports reopened on September 14. The F.B.I. has said the *Times* report is "erroneous."

Meanwhile, the Saudis had at least two other planes on call. Starting in Los Angeles on an undetermined date, one of them flew first to Orlando, Florida, where Khalid bin Laden boarded. From Orlando, the plane continued to Dulles International Airport, outside Washington, D.C., before going on to Boston's Logan International Airport on September 19, picking up members of the bin Laden family along the way. Other stops for the Saudis are said to have included Houston, Cleveland, and Newark. Altogether, about 140 Saudis were on the flights, according to an FBI source.

By this time, the lockdown on air travel had begun to lift. The F.A.A. was allowing airlines to operate as long as they followed certain security rules. Private aviation was subject to more constraints, but even there

the F.A.A. had begun to allow flight-charter-service planes when the pilots filed flight plans. The F.A.A. has given all its records of air travel during the period a question to the Department of Homeland Security. A Freedom of Information Act request has been filed, but the documents have not yet been released.

Richard Clarke's approval for repatriating the Saudis had been conditional upon the FBI's vetting them. "I asked [the FBI] to make sure that no one inappropriate was leaving," he says. "I asked them if they had any objection to the entire event—to Saudis leaving the country at a time when air-

craft were banned from flying." Clarke adds that he assumed the FBI had vetted the bin Ladens prior to September 11. "I have no idea if they did a good job," he says. "I'm not in any position to second-guess the FBI."

In fact, the FBI had been keeping an eye on some of the bin Ladens. A classified FBI file examined by *Vanity Fair* and marked "Secret" shows that as early as 1996 the bureau had spent nearly nine months investigating Abdullah and Omar bin Laden, who were involved with the American branch of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), a charity that has published writings by Islamic scholar Sayyid Qutb, one of Osama bin Laden's intellectual influences. But, according to Dale Watson, the FBI's former head of counterterrorism, such investigations into Saudis in the United States were the exception. "If allegations came up, they were looked into," he says. "But a blanket investigation into Saudis here did not take place."

At times, the Saudis who had assembled for departure tried to get the planes to leave before the FBI had even identified who was on them. "I recall getting into a big flap with Bandar's office about whether they would leave without us knowing who was on the plane," says one FBI agent. "Bandar wanted the plane to take off, and we were stressing that that plane was not leaving until we knew exactly who was on it."

In the end, the FBI decided it was simply not practical to conduct full-blown investigation. "They were identified," says Dale Watson, "and they were not subject to serious interviews or interrogations. The mission was decided to release them immediately."

Some participants in the repatriation insist that the failure to interview the Saudis was insignificant, and, indeed, a persuasive case can be made that neither the bin Ladens nor the Saudi royals would knowingly aided terrorists. "For groups like al-Qaeda, their objective is to overthrow the Saudi government," says Nail al-Jaberi, the Saudi Embassy spokesperson. "People say

we pay [al-Qaeda] off, but that's simply not the case. Why would we support people who want to overthrow our own government?"

Most of those who were leaving were either students or young businessmen. The bin Ladens, moreover, had forcefully broken with Osama by issuing a statement expressing "condemnation of this sad event, which resulted in the loss of many innocent men, women, and children, and which contradicts our Islamic faith." An FBI agent says that they had a right to leave and that being related to Osama did not constitute grounds for investigation.

**B**ut 9/11 was arguably the biggest crime in American history. Nearly 3,000 people had been killed. A global manhunt of unprecedented proportions was under way. Attorney General John Ashcroft had asserted that the government had "a responsibility to use every legal means at our disposal to prevent further terrorist activity by taking people into custody who have violated the law and who may pose a threat to America." All over the country, Arabs were being rounded up and interrogated. By the weekend after the attacks, Ashcroft had already proposed broadening the FBI's power to arrest foreigners, to detain them, and trace money-laundering by terrorists. Hundreds of people were detained by the government while U.S. agents performed extensive background checks. Some were

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has been named as a defendant in the suit. At the heart of the allegations is the charge that the defendants knew some of their money was going to al-Qaeda and therefore had some responsibility for the September 11 attacks.

Many of the Saudis acknowledge that they contributed to the charities in question but say they had no knowledge that the money would end up in the hands of al-Qaeda. "The biggest problem we have with Saudi charities is poor and sloppy management," says Nail al-Jubair.

The plaintiffs' attorneys do not consider that a satisfactory answer. In addition, they believe that, by interviewing the bin Ladens and members of the royal family before they left the country, the government could have answered some key questions. "They should have been asked whether they had contacts or knew of any other Saudi contacts with Osama bin Laden," says Allan Gerson, co-lead counsel for the plaintiffs in the case. "What did they know about the financing of al-Qaeda? What did they know about the use of charitable institutions in the US and elsewhere as conduits for terrorism financing? Why was the Saudi government not responsive to U.S. pleas in 1999 and 2000 that they stop turning a blind eye to terrorist financing through Saudi banks and charities?"

All of which leads to the question of who made the decision to let the Saudis go. And why? Could the long-standing relationship between the Saudis and the Bush family have influenced the administration?

National-security experts such as Richard Clarke find that suggestion dubious. "Prince Bandar played a very key role during the first Gulf War," Clarke says. "He was very close to the Bush family. But I don't think it's accurate to say that he plays that role now. There's a realization that we have to work with the government we've got in Saudi Arabia. The alternatives could be far worse. The most likely replacement to the House of Saud is likely to be more hostile—in fact, extremely hostile—to the U.S. That's probably the reason the administration treats it the way it does—not any personal relationship." With the war on terror getting under way, the U.S. wanted Saudi cooperation, and repatriation was clearly a high priority at the highest levels of the kingdom.

Still, the Bush-Saudi relationship raises serious questions, if only because it is so extraordinary for two presidents to share such a long and rich personal history with any foreign power, much less one that is

both as vital to U.S. economic interests and as troublesome as Saudi Arabia.

It began in the mid-70s, when two young Saudi billionaires—Salem bin Laden, Osama's older brother and the head of the Saudi Binladin Group, and Khalid bin Mahfouz, a billionaire Saudi banker—first came to Texas hoping to forge political relationships. To represent their American interests, they chose a Houston businessman named James R. Bath, who knew George W. Bush from the Texas Air National Guard. Bath invested \$50,000 in Bush's new oil company,

After George H. W. Bush and James Baker returned to the private sector in 1993, they finally began to reap the benefits of their friendship with the Saudis. That year, Baker took a position as senior counsel with the Carlyle Group, the \$16 billion private-equity firm. Two years later, Bush signed on as senior adviser. In 1995, former British prime minister John Major joined the firm as well.

On several occasions, Bush, Baker, and Major flew to Saudi Arabia with Carlyle executives to meet with and speak before members of the royal family and wealthy businessmen such as the bin Ladens and the bin Mahfouzes, Saudi Arabia's richest banking family.

As world leaders who had defended the Saudis during the Gulf War, Bush, Baker, and Major had the potential to be star rainmakers for Carlyle, and the firm's practices allowed them to do so without sullyng their hands by asking for money directly.

"Bush's speeches are about what it's like to be a former president, and what it's like to be the father of a president," says Carlyle C.E.O. David Rubenstein. "He doesn't talk about Carlyle or solicit investors." After Bush's speeches, Rubenstein and his fund-raising team would come in for the money. "Carlyle wanted to open up doors," one observer told *The Independent*. "and they bring in Bush and Major, who saved the Saudis' ass in the Gulf War. If you got these guys coming in... those companies are going to have it pretty good." Rubenstein says Bush and Baker were not given special treatment in Saudi Arabia. "They were well received there, as they are throughout the world."

A source close to the Saudi government says that the royal family viewed investing in the Carlyle Group as a way to show gratitude to President Bush for defending the Saudis in the Gulf War. "George Bush or James Baker would meet with all the big guys in the royal family," the source says. "Indirectly, the message was 'I'd appreciate it if you put some money in the Carlyle Group.'"

According to *The Washington Post*, Prince Bandar was among those who invested. In 1995 the bin Ladens joined in. Khalid bin Mahfouz's sons Abdulrahman and Sultan became investors as well, according to family attorney Cheryl Sedky. Abdulrahman bin Mahfouz was a director of the Muwafaq Foundation, which has been designated by the U.S. Treasury Department as "an il-

**"We were in the midst of the worst terrorist act in history, and here we were seeing an evacuation of the bin Ladens!"**

Arbusto. He denies,

however, that his investment represented the Saudis' interests.

In 1986, George W. Bush sold the latest incarnation of his failing oil company to Harken Energy, an independent Texas oil company that was struggling itself, and took a seat on its board of directors. By then Khalid bin Mahfouz had become the largest stockholder in the Bank of Commerce & Credit International, or B.C.C.I., an international bank which financed drug dealers, terrorists, and covert operations and which became known as the most corrupt financial institution in history.

Once Bush was with Harken, a phantom courtship by Khalid bin Mahfouz and B.C.C.I. began. Neither George W. Bush nor Harken ever had any direct contact with bin Mahfouz or B.C.C.I. Yet once Bush took his seat on the board, wonderful things started to happen to Harken—new investments, unexpected sources of financing, serendipitous drilling rights. Among those with links to B.C.C.I. who came to Harken's aid were the Arkansas investment bank Stephens Inc., Saudi investor Sheik Abdullah Baksh, and the Emir of Bahrain, who unexpectedly awarded Harken exclusive offshore drilling rights. In 1991, a *Wall Street Journal* investigation into Harken's B.C.C.I. ties concluded, "The number of B.C.C.I.-connected people who had dealings with Harken—all since George W. Bush came on board—likewise raises the question of whether they mask an effort to cozy up to a presidential son."

Qaeda front." Abdulrahman al-Ladani made an investment in one of the Carlyle funds in 1998 which is in the neighborhood of \$30 million," Sedky wrote in an e-mail. "The investment is held for their benefit by Sami Ba'arma," an investment manager who has often worked with the bin Mahfouz family. Sedky added that the bin Mahfouz family condemns terrorism and denies that funds it has given to charities have been used to finance terror. Carlyle categorically denies that the bin Mahfouzes are now or have ever been investors. Reached on location in Michigan, Cherif Sedky stood by his original statement. "I assume that Carlyle has records of investments from somebody on the bin Mahfouz side, whether it is with Sami Ba'arma as a nominee or someone else," he said. He added that Ba'arma was a first cousin of the bin Mahfouz brothers.

In all, Carlyle officials say that the Saudis have invested \$80 million in the firm. It is unclear how much of that was raised following meetings attended by former president George Bush or James Baker. The bin Ladens put \$2 million in the Carlyle Partners II Fund, a relatively small sum that was said to be part of a larger package. One family member, Shafiq bin Laden, was attending an investor conference held by the Carlyle Group in Washington on September 11, 2001. But after the attacks of that day, Carlyle bought out the bin Ladens' interest. "At first I felt it was unfair to blame the other 53 half-siblings because of this guy they haven't seen in 10 years," Rubenstein says. "But then I realized, life isn't fair at times."

There is no evidence to suggest that Carlyle played any role in the repatriation of the Saudis, but public advocates argue that the Bush-Saudi ties create at least the appearance of a conflict of interest. "You would be less inclined to do anything forceful or dynamic if you are tied in with them financially," says the Center for Public Integrity's Charles Lewis. "That's common sense."

**O**n September 18, 2001, a specially reconfigured Boeing 727 flew at least five members of the bin Laden family back to Saudi Arabia from Logan airport.

On September 19, President Bush's speechwriting team was working on a stirring address to be delivered the next day, officially declaring a global war on terror. "Our war on terror ... will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated," he would vow. At the Pentagon, planning was

already under way to deal with the possibility of the hijacking.

That morning, the plane had a crewmate Eric L. Swartz and another pilot, Capt. and DCU recipient Robert Logan. Logan had been in the cockpit with the bin Laden family member Sami and board flight instructor Charles J. Farnsworth. Logan had been the pilot of the bin Laden plane on the night of the attack.

At the time Logan was in the cockpit, the airport was reeling from criticism that its security failures had allowed the hijacking to take place. After all, the two hijacked planes that had crashed into the World Trade Center had departed from Logan. As a result, exceptional measures were being taken. Several thousand cars were towed from the airport parking garage. "We didn't know if they were loosely-tapped or what," says Tom Kinton, director of aviation at Logan.

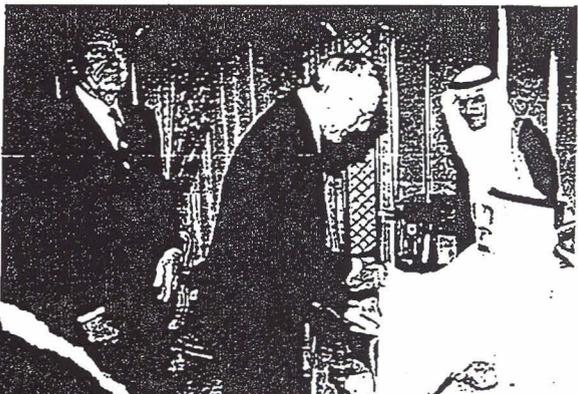
The FAA had allowed commercial flights to resume on September 13, as long as they complied with new security measures. Logan, however, because of various secu-

rious security issues, did not re-open until September 15, two days later. Even then, air traffic resumed slowly. So when a call came into Logan's Emergency Operations Center in the early afternoon of September 19 saying that the charter aircraft was going to pick up members of the bin Laden family, Kinton was incredulous. "We were in the midst of the worst terrorist act in history," he says, "and here we were seeing an evacuation of the bin Ladens!"

Like Kinton, Virginia Buckingham, then the head of the Massachusetts Port Authority, which oversees Logan, was stunned. "My staff was told that a private jet was arriving at Logan from Saudi Arabia to pick up 14 members of Osama bin Laden's family in the Boston area," she later wrote in *The Boston Globe*. "It is the FBI I know," staffers muttered. "Does the State Department know? Why are they re-

questing a private jet? How they questioned them, I'm not sure."

On September 19, about some planes, Logan's staff was trying a hard to be sure that the bin Laden family had been brought down in its entirety. According to FBI spokesman John Linnartz III, FBI agents were patrolling all over the country in order to find general days. Yet not the same counterterrorism unit was effectively acting as a chaperone for the Saudi. Astonishingly, the repatriation was routed through Logan and Newark, two of the airports where just a few days earlier, the hijacking had originated.



**DESERT STORMERS**  
George H. W. Bush and former British prime minister John Major visit King Fahd in Saudi Arabia, 2000.

**Bush, Baker, and Major flew to Saudi Arabia with Carlyle executives to meet with members of the royal family.**

As the bin Ladens began to approach Boston, the top brass at Logan airport were agog at what was taking place. But federal law did not allow them much leeway to restrict individual flights. "I wanted to go to the highest authorities in Washington," says Tom Kinton. "This was a call for them. But this was not just some mystery flight dropping into Logan. It had been to three major airports already, and we were the last stop. It was known. The federal authorities knew what it was doing. And we were told to let it come."

Kinton and his co-workers were also told to let the other bin Ladens board and to allow the plane to leave and return to Saudi Arabia. As Virginia Buckingham put it, "Under the cover of darkness, they did."

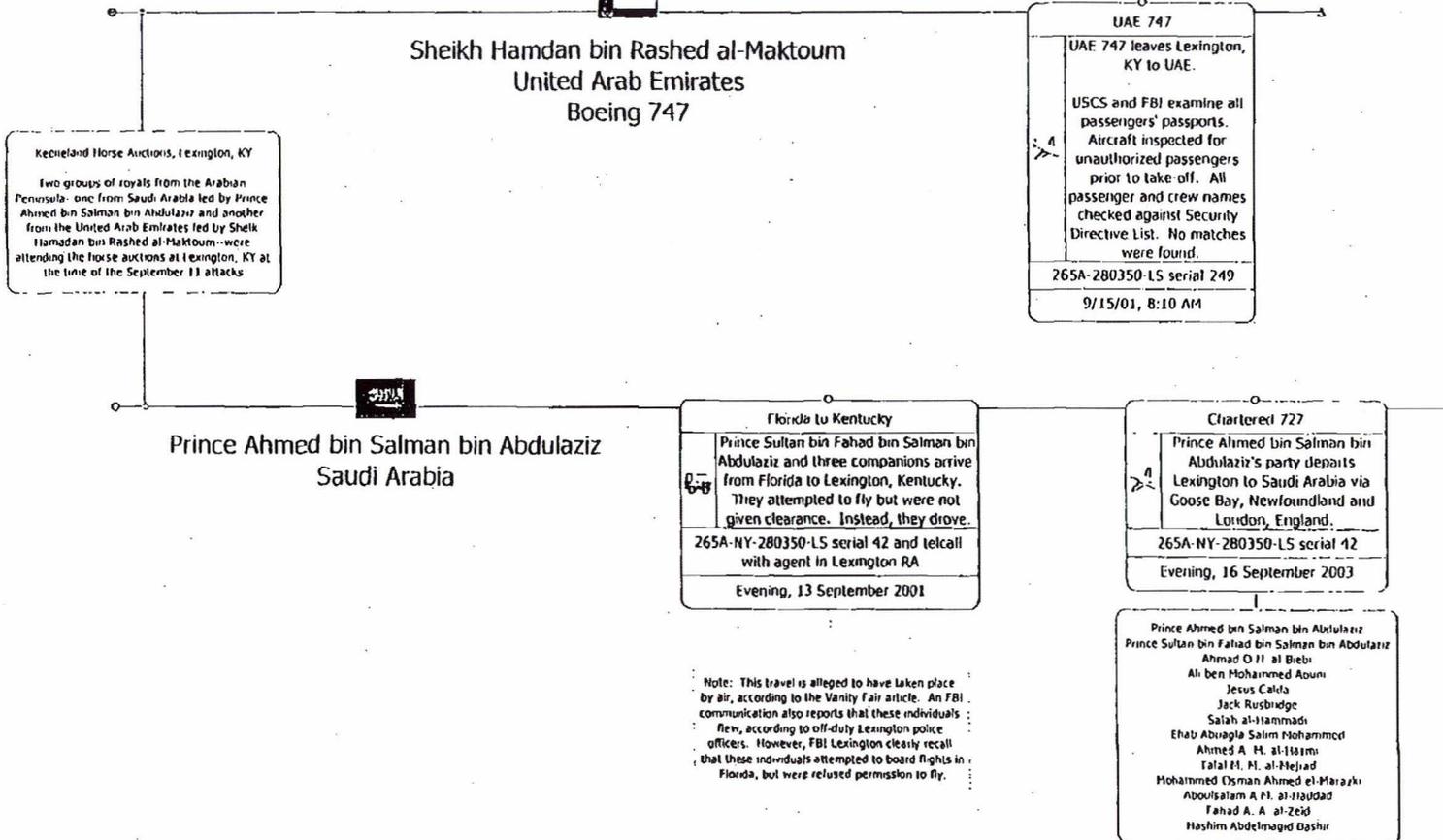
It was an inauspicious start to the just-declared war on terror. "What happened on September 11 was a horrible crime," says John Martin, the former Justice Department official. "It was an act of war. And the answer is no. This is not any way to go about investigating it."

TIME LINES

(SEPARATE CHARTS)

## Lexington, Kentucky Flights

REQ 1A-4



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REQ 14-4

### Providence Flight

Sheik al-Ibrahim



Sheik al-Ibrahim arrives in the US	
A	Sheik al-Ibrahim arrives in the US with the intention of going to school. He arrives with 18 pieces of oversize luggage. He and his companions travel throughout New England from 4 September to 11 September visiting schools.
265A-NY280350-LA serial 4757	
9/4/01	

Sheikh al-Ibrahim departs Providence	
A	Sheik Mashour al-Ibrahim's party departs Providence, RI to Paris, France on a chartered jet. The Sheik's father had instructed him to return to Saudi Arabia. All passengers were interviewed by FBI and INS agents. During the interviews, USCS and Rhode Island State Police searched the group's luggage with negative results.
265A-NY-280350-LA serial 4757	
9/14/01	

Sheik Mashour al-Ibrahim Abdoullah al-Shwran Aly Haffan Soliman Younes ben Brahim Jaballah
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000000053

# Las Vegas Flights

## Saudi Royal Family Members in Las Vegas

Prince Abdul Majeed Abdul Aziz contacts FBI:

Saudi Prince Abdul Majeed Abdul Aziz met with FBI Las Vegas and US Secret Service Las Vegas. They provide a manifest with 69 names. These names were checked against several databases. Several individuals were interviewed.

265A-280350-CD serial 8786

9/18/01

46 individuals depart Las Vegas

51 members of the Prince's party, including the Prince, leave on a Republic of Gabon-flipped DC-8, tail number TR-LTZ to Geneva, Switzerland. Before departure, the aircraft was swept, perimeter security provided, and all persons boarding were matched to the previously provided passports and a manifest. FBI, USCS and INS agents were present.

265A-280350-CD serial 8786

9/19/01

18 individuals depart Las Vegas

18 members of the Prince's party leave on a Boeing 727, tail number N727PX, to Stanstead Airport in London, England. Before departure, the aircraft was swept, perimeter security was provided, and all persons boarding were matched to previously provided passports and a manifest.

265A-280350-CD serial 8786

9/20/01

34 individuals leave Las Vegas

34 members of another Saudi Arabian royal party departed Las Vegas on an L-1011, tail number N189AT, to Paris, France. Before departure, the aircraft was swept, perimeter security provided, and all persons boarding were matched to a previously obtained manifest and photocopies of passports by agents and officers of the USCS. The names of all passengers on the manifest had been checked against FBI databases with negative results.

265A-280350-CD serial 8786

9/24/01

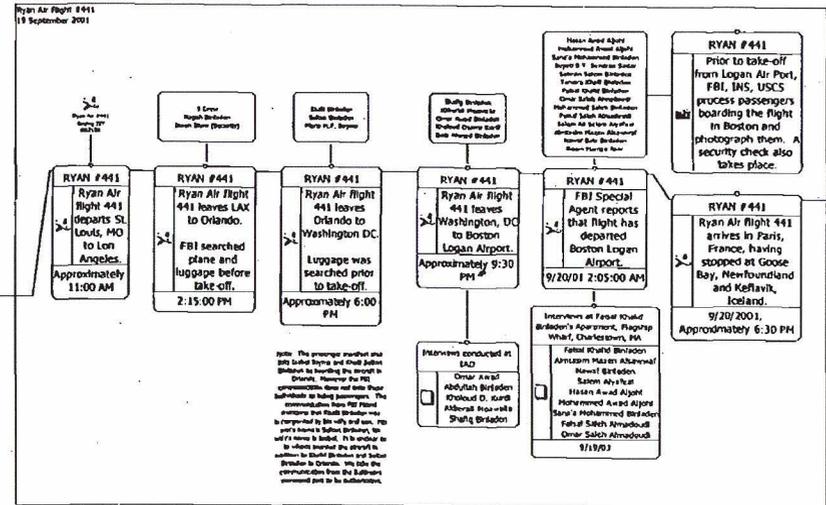
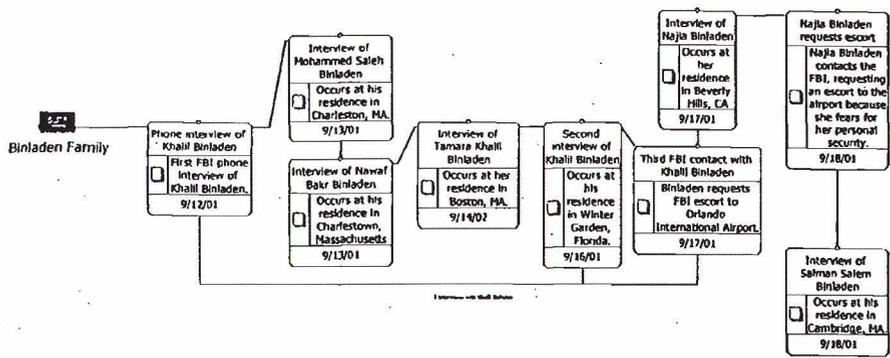
- Prince Abdulaziz bin Abdulaziz
- Princess Sara bint Abdulaziz
- Prince Fahad bin Abdulaziz
- Prince Abdulaziz bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz
- Prince Turki bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz
- Princess Salwa bint Ibrahim A. al-Faisal
- Princess al-Azoud Bint Fahad al-Jouharah Meheben al-Ansary
- Kr. Mohammed A. al-Tajer
- Hisham Ahmad Al
- Amari M. M. al-Sharif
- Fatihah M. S. al-Jalal
- Omar T. M. al-Sayid
- Abdullah M. M. al-Faisal
- Muhammad Abdalrhman
- Abdul H. M. al-Dosari
- David H. M. al-Rasheed
- Amjed Abd al-Rasheed
- Abba B. A. Trawel
- Sultan S. A. A. al-Jawfi
- M. A. N. Hassan
- Sahne Karam Dabu
- Norma Tamano
- Muhammad Mubayyid
- Nasir Mohammed Abd al-Rasheed
- Sahih Nasir al-Din
- Muhammad Mohammed Rik
- Muhammad Shawkat Al
- Muhammad A.M. al-Sharif
- Talal Ali Zuhair
- Muhammad A. al-Hamad
- Ali Fazy Dohar
- Saadah A.H. al-Habib
- Faisal M.S. al-Habib
- Rahma Saad O. Al
- Fahim S. O. Al
- Muhammad T.A. Al-Habib
- Tariq T. Houdari
- Radi A. S. Dazayh
- Muhammad A. M. al-Zahrani
- Qudus A. S. al-Jarrah
- Muhammad Mohammed Taha
- Nasir Saied Sotman
- Sami Saiter Sotman
- Muhammad S. B. al-Habib
- Muhammad S. S. al-Habib

- Saad M. A. al-Sowalim
- Ali Abdalrhman
- Muhammad B. O. al-Ouf
- Waleed S. A. al-Ajoudh
- Muhammad M. A. al-Sweid
- Zuhair bin Cheyeb
- Badr Muhammad Hassan
- Amr al-Dhahbi
- Muhammad Umar Taha
- Hisham Muhammad Selim
- Qudus Omer
- Muhammad Abdul Karim
- General Ibrahim al-Tajer
- Sulaiman E. A. al-Eisa
- Omer Omer
- Fahd A. S. al-Sabir
- Abdulrahman D. A. al-Shahrani
- Muhammad Abdallah Abou Gabil

- Princess Medhawi bint Abdulaziz al-Saud
- Prince Turki bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
- Prince Saad bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
- Prince Saad bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
- Prince Ali bin Saad bin Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud
- Dr. Saad Hassan bin Shaloub
- Muhammad al-Tajer
- Samiyah Hamud
- Sharif al-Sayid Hajar
- Abdul Aziz Dabbah
- Taha Sotman Karim
- Fahim Rajab
- Muhammad Ahmad Muhammad
- Princess Alia bint Abdulaziz bin Saad
- Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Saud
- Princess Taherah bint Abdulaziz al-Saud
- 17 additional individuals

Note: Fax from FBI Las Vegas was partly legible. Thus 17 names could not be listed individually. However, FBIHQ has been assured that all passengers on all flights leaving Las Vegas were monitored and processed by FBI, INS and USCS.

# The "Binladen Family Flight": Ryan Air Flight #441



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REQ 14-4

NCTA000088281

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by National Archives and  
Records Administration  
under 36 C.F.R. § 1256.50

TOP SECRET/

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

Office of General Counsel

11 February 2004

Mr. Daniel Marcus, General Counsel  
National Commission on Terrorist Attacks  
Upon the United States  
Third Floor  
2100 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20427

Re: (U) Response to Item No. 1 of Document Request No. 17

Dear Mr. Marcus:

(U) This responds to DCI Document Request No. 17 ("DR #17"), issued by The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the "Commission") on 7 August 2003. By agreement, this response is part of a "rolling" production in which the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is providing documents to the Commission as soon as they are identified as responsive.

(U) The first page of each enclosed document has been sequentially bates-stamped. In this, and all future document productions, the first digit of the bates-stamp identifies the specific DCI Document Request to which the document responds and the remaining digits refer to the document number.

(U) This production includes document numbers 1700101 through 1700102, responsive to Item No. 1 of DR#17. All of these documents are, by prior agreement, being retained by the Agency and are available for your inspection at CIA headquarters.

Downgrade to UNCLASSIFIED when  
Separated from attachments

CL BY:

CL REASON: 1.4(c)

DECL ON: X1

DRV FROM:

Withheld from public release  
by National Archives and  
Records Administration  
under 36 C.F.R. § 1256.50

TOP SECRET/

RO 04014971<sup>80</sup>

*Marcus*  
*Blum*  
*Sinsburg*  
*Acosta*

~~TOP SECRET~~/ [redacted]

Withheld from public release  
by National Archives and  
Records Administration  
under 36 C.F.R. § 1256.50

Mr. Daniel Marcus

(U) If you have any questions, please contact me at

[redacted]

Sincerely,

[redacted signature]

Robert P. Morean  
Assistant General Counsel

Enclosures:  
As stated

Withheld from public release  
by National Archives and  
Records Administration  
under 36 C.F.R. § 1256.50

~~TOP SECRET~~/ [redacted]



R0504014904

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

received 2/11/04

Marcus  
Dunne  
Will  
Hurley  
Coleman  
Ginsbury  
McColl

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//HUMINT//NOFORN//ORCON, EXDIS~~  
~~(SECRET when separate from attachments)~~

MEMORANDUM FOR DANIEL MARCUS  
GENERAL COUNSEL  
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON TERRORIST ATTACKS UPON THE  
UNITED STATES

SUBJECT: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States  
Request for Documents (Requests Nos. 1, 3 and 4) (U)

(U) This is in response to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks  
Upon the United States request for State Department documents.

(S) Attached are seventeen special compartmented documents responding  
to the Commission's first, third and fourth requests. They include documents  
received by Department principals concerning disruption of the financing of al-  
Qaida, communications from our embassies that discuss Usama bin Laden and  
al-Qaida, security at USG facilities in Pakistan, visa policy documents, and the  
USG investigation of Omar Ahmed Abdurrahman.

(U) Under Executive Order 12958, the Department of State may not  
disseminate classified information outside the Executive Branch except under  
conditions that ensure the same security afforded to such information within the  
Executive Branch. We ask that only appropriately cleared members of staff be  
granted access to the material and that it be protected by applying standards as  
least as stringent as E.O. 12958 on the handling of classified information.

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//HUMINT//NOFORN//ORCON, EXDIS//MR~~

~~(SECRET when separate from attachments)~~

Classified by: Derived from Multiple Sources

Reason: E.O. 12958 1.4 (c) and (d)

DECL: Sources marked X1

(U) We hope this information is useful to you. As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions.



Karl Hofmann  
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- 14905 1. Next Meeting of PCC Group
- 14906 2. Pakistan: Wrongheaded Security Assessment
- 14907 3. Pakistan: Threat Assessment
- 14908 4. Nayif Did Not Rule Out Foreign Involvement in Khobar Blast
- 14909 5. Terrorism: Usama Bin Laden
- 14910 6. Embassy Response to Recent Publication Entitled "Saudi Responsibility in the Spread of Militant Islam"
- 14911 7. Saudi Reaction to Pakistani Efforts to Expel Bin Ladin From Afghanistan
- 14912 8. Omar Ahmed Ali Abdurrahman - Request for Country Clearance for FBI Special Agent
- 14913 9. FBI Visit on Omar Abdel Rahman
- 14914 10. The Case of Omar Abdel Rahman
- 14915 11. FBI Visit on Omar Abdel Rahman
- 14916 12. Consular Operations in Khartoum: Irregularities in Consular Operations and NIV Issuance
- 14917 13. Visas Condor Criteria
- 14918 14. Removal of Malaysia from Visas Condor Program and Adoption of Appropriate Condor Education Criteria
- 14919 15. Review of Nonimmigrant Visa Issuance Policy and Procedures SIO/Z-03-09
- 14920 16. Visas Viper Procedural Update for 2003
- 14921 17. OIG Recommendations for Improving VISAS VIPER: Letters to CIA, NSA, and DIA
- 18. Incoming Commission requests (Nos. 1, 3 and 4)

