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Context of 'February-September 11, 1996: Investigation of Bin Laden Family Members Is Opened; Then Closed'

This is a scalable context timeline. It contains events related to the event **February-September 11, 1996: Investigation of Bin Laden Family Members Is Opened; Then Closed**. You can narrow or broaden the context of this timeline by adjusting the zoom level. The lower the scale, the more relevant the items on average will be, while the higher the scale, the less relevant the items, on average, will be.

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1986-October 1999: New Jersey Firm Investors List Is 'Who's Who of Designated Terrorists'



Soliman Biheiri. [Source: *US Immigrations and Customs*]

BMI Inc., a real estate investment firm based in Secaucus, New Jersey, is formed in 1986. Former counterterrorism "tsar" Richard Clarke will state in 2003, "While BMI [has] held itself out publicly as a financial services provider for Muslims in the United States, its investor list suggests the possibility this facade was just a cover to conceal terrorist support. BMI's investor list reads like a who's who of designated terrorists and Islamic extremists."

Investors in BMI include: [US CONGRESS, 10/22/2003]

- Soliman Biheiri. He is the head of BMI for the duration of the company's existence. US prosecutors will later call him the US banker for the Muslim Brotherhood, a banned Egyptian militant group.

Biheiri's computer will eventually be searched and found to have contact information for Ghaleb Himmat and Youssef Nada, leaders of the Al Taqwa Bank, which is founded two years after BMI (see

1988). After 9/11, the US and UN will designate both Himmat and Nada and the Al Taqwa Bank as terrorist financiers, and the bank will be shut down (see November 7, 2001). US prosecutors say there are other ties between BMI and Al Taqwa, including financial transactions. Biheiri also has close ties with Yousuf Abdullah Al-Qaradawi. Qaradawi is said to be a high-ranking member of the Muslim Brotherhood, a shareholder in Al Taqwa, and has made statements supporting suicide bombings against Israel. In 2003, US investigators will accuse Biheiri of ties to terrorist financing. He will be convicted of immigration violations and lying to a federal agent (see June 15, 2003). [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003; FORWARD, 10/17/2003] Biheiri will be convicted of immigration fraud in 2003 and then convicted of lying to federal investigators in 2004 (see June 15, 2003).

- Abdullah Awad bin Laden, a nephew of Osama bin Laden. He invests about a half-million dollars in BMI real estate ventures, earning a profit of \$70,000. For most of the 1990s he runs the US branch of a Saudi charity called World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY). He is investigated by the FBI in 1996 (see February-September 11, 1996), and WAMY will be raided by US agents in 2004 (see June 1, 2004). The raid is apparently part of a larger investigation into terrorism financing. In 2001, at least two of the 9/11 hijackers will live three blocks away from the WAMY office (see March 2001 and After). [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003; WASHINGTON POST, 4/19/2004]

- Nur and Iman bin Laden, two female relatives of Osama bin Laden. Abdullah Awad bin Laden will invest some of their money in a BMI real estate project. While their bin Laden family ties are intriguing, neither have been accused of any knowing connections to terrorist financing. [WASHINGTON POST, 4/19/2004]

- Mousa Abu Marzouk. He has identified himself as a top leader of Hamas. The US declares him a terrorist in 1995 (see July 5, 1995-May 1997). BMI makes at least two transactions with Marzouk after he is declared a terrorist. [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003]

- Yassin al-Qadi, a Saudi multimillionaire. His lawyers will later claim he has no terrorism ties and had only a passing involvement with BMI and liquidated his investment in it in 1996. However, another company operating from the same office as BMI is called Kadi International Inc. and lists its president as al-Qadi. Al-Qadi is also a major investor in the suspect computer company Ptech (see 1994; 1999-After October 12, 2001). Al-Qadi and BMI head Biheiri have financial dealings with Yaqub Mirza, a Pakistani who manages a group of Islamic charities in Virginia known as the SAAR network (see July 29, 1983). These charities will be raided in March 2002 on suspicions of terrorism ties (see March 20, 2002). Shortly after 9/11, the US will officially declare al-Qadi a terrorist financier (see October 12, 2001). [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003]

- Saleh Kamel. BMI allegedly receives a \$500,000 investment from the Dallah Al-Baraka banking conglomerate, which is headed by Kamel. For many years

before 9/11, Omar al-Bayoumi, an associate of 9/11 hijackers Khalid Almihdhar and Nawaf Alhazmi, will receive a salary from Dallah, despite apparently doing no work. Some will accuse al-Bayoumi of involvement in funding the 9/11 plot, but that remains to be proven (see August 1994-July 2001). Kamel reportedly founded a Sudanese Islamic bank which housed accounts for senior al-Qaeda operatives. He is a multi-billionaire heavily involved in promoting Islam, and his name appears on the Golden Chain, a list of early al-Qaeda supporters (see 1988-1989). He denies supporting terrorism. [US CONGRESS, 10/22/2003; WALL STREET JOURNAL, 6/21/2004]

- The Kuwait Finance House. According to Clarke, this organization is alleged to be a BMI investor and the “financial arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait. Several al-Qaeda operatives have allegedly been associated with the Kuwaiti Muslim Brotherhood, including Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, Suliman abu Ghaith, Wadih El-Hage, and Ramzi Yousef.” In 2003, an apparent successor entity to the Kuwait Finance House will be designated as a terrorist entity by the US. A lawyer for the Kuwait Finance House will later say the bank has never let its accounts be used for terrorism. [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003; US CONGRESS, 10/22/2003; WALL STREET JOURNAL, 4/20/2005]

- Tarek Swaidan. He is a Kuwaiti, an associate of al-Qadi, and a leading member of the Kuwaiti branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. It is unknown if he has made any denials about his alleged associations. [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003]

- Abdurahman Alamoudi. For many years he runs the American Muslim Council, a lobby group founded by a top Muslim Brotherhood figure. US prosecutors say he also is in the Brotherhood, and has alleged ties to Hamas. In 2004, the US will sentence him to 23 years in prison for illegal dealings with Libya (see October 15, 2004). [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 6/21/2004; WASHINGTON POST, 10/16/2004]

- The International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) and the Muslim World League, closely connected Saudi charities suspected of financing terrorism. They give BMI \$3.7 million out of a \$10 million endowment from unknown Saudi donors. The Financial Times will later note, “While it is not clear whether that money came from the Saudi government, [a 2003] affidavit quotes a CIA report that says the Muslim World League ‘is largely financed by the government of Saudi Arabia.’” Both organizations consistently deny any support of terrorism financing, but in early 2006 it will be reported that US officials continue to suspect them of such support (see January 15, 2006). [FINANCIAL TIMES, 8/21/2003] In 1992, a branch of the IIRO gives \$2.1 million to BMI Inc. to invest in real estate. The money disappears from BMI’s books. In October 1999, BMI goes defunct after it is unable to repay this money to the IIRO branch. The IIRO branch gives BMI the rest of the \$3.7 million between 1992 and 1998. BMI will use the money to buy real estate (see 1992). Eventually, some of this money will be given to Hamas operatives in the West Bank and spent on violent actions against Israel. This will eventually lead to

legal action in the US and a seizure of some of the money. [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 11/26/2002; WASHINGTON POST, 8/20/2003; WASHINGTON TIMES, 3/26/2004; WASHINGTON POST, 4/19/2004] By 1992, BMI has projected revenues in excess of \$25 million, based largely on their real estate investments in the US. [US CONGRESS, 10/22/2003] In early 1999, months before BMI goes defunct, the FBI hears evidence potentially tying BMI to the 1998 US embassy bombings (see 10:35-10:39 a.m., August 7, 1998), but an investigation into this will not be pursued (see Early 1999). It should be noted that BMI had many investors, and presumably most BMI investors would have had no suspicions that their money might be used to fund terrorism or other types of violence.

Entity Tags: Iman bin Laden, International Islamic Relief Organization, Muslim World League, Kuwait Finance House, Nur bin Laden, Mousa Abu Marzouk, Abdurahman Alamoudi, Richard A. Clarke, Soliman Biheiri, Abdullah Awad bin Laden, Yousuf Abdullah Al-Qaradawi, Tarek Swaidan, Yassin al-Qadi, Saleh Abdullah Kamel

Timeline Tags: Complete 911 Timeline

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February-September 11, 1996: Investigation of Bin Laden Family Members Is Opened; Then Closed



On the left: 5613 Leesburg Pike, address for WAMY's US office. On the right: 5913 Leesburg Pike, the 2001 address for hijackers Hani Hanjour and Nawaf Alhazmi. [Source: Paul Sperry]

The FBI begin an investigation into two relatives of bin Laden in February 1996, then close it on September 11, 1996. The FBI wanted to learn more about Abdullah Awad bin Laden, “because of his relationship with the World Assembly of Muslim Youth [WAMY]—a suspected terrorist organization.” [GUARDIAN, 11/7/2001] Abdullah Awad was the US director of WAMY and lived with his brother Omar in

Falls Church, Virginia, a suburb of Washington. They are believed to be nephews of Osama bin Laden. The coding on a leaked FBI document about the case, marked secret, indicates the case related to national security. WAMY's office address is 5613 Leesburg Pike. It will later be determined that at least two of the 9/11 hijackers lived at 5913 Leesburg Pike for much of 2001 at the same time the two bin Laden brothers were working only three blocks away (see March 2001 and After). WAMY has been banned in Pakistan by this time. [BBC, 11/6/2001; GUARDIAN, 11/7/2001] The Indian and Philippine governments also will cite WAMY for funding Islamic militancy. The 9/11 Commission later will hear testimony that WAMY “has openly supported Islamic terrorism. There are

ties between WAMY and 9/11 hijackers. It is a group that has openly endorsed the notion that Jews must be killed.... [It] has consistently portrayed the United States, Jews, Christians, and other infidels as enemies who have to be defeated or killed. And there is no doubt, according to US intelligence, that WAMY has been tied directly to terrorist attacks.” [9/11 COMMISSION, 7/9/2003, PP. 66] A security official who will later serve under President Bush will say, “WAMY was involved in terrorist-support activity. There’s no doubt about it.” [VANITY FAIR, 10/2003] Before 9/11, FBI investigators had determined that Abdullah Awad had invested about \$500,000 in BMI Inc., a company suspected of financing groups officially designated as terrorist organizations (see 1986-October 1999). [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003] The Bosnian government will say in September 2002 that a charity with Abdullah Awad bin Laden on its board had channeled money to Chechen guerrillas, something that reporter Greg Palast will claim “is only possible because the Clinton CIA gave the wink and nod to WAMY and other groups who were aiding Bosnian guerrillas when they were fighting Serbia, a US-approved enemy.” The investigation into WAMY will be restarted a few days after 9/11, around the same time these two bin Ladens will leave the US (see September 14-19, 2001). [PALAST, 2002, PP. 96-99] (Note that Abdullah Awad bin Laden is Osama bin Laden’s nephew, and is not the same person as the Abdullah bin Laden who is Osama’s brother and serves as the bin Laden family spokesperson.) [PALAST, 2002, PP. 98-99; WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/15/2003] WAMY’s Virginia offices will be raided by US agents in 2004 (see June 1, 2004).

Entity Tags: Abdullah Awad bin Laden, Omar bin Laden, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency, World Assembly of Muslim Youth, Clinton administration

Timeline Tags: Complete 911 Timeline, 9/11 Timeline

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1998: Diplomatic Passports Help Stifle FBI Investigation into Bin Laden Family



Michael Scheuer, the head of the CIA Counter Terrorism Center’s special unit focusing on bin Laden from 1996 to 1999 (see February 1996), later will claim that before 9/11 members of the bin Laden family in the US are nearly completely off limits to US law enforcement. Author Douglas Farah, a former longtime Washington Post reporter, later will write that “All the bin Ladens living in the United States were granted Saudi diplomatic passports in 1996.... In 1998, when the FBI’s New York office actually sought to investigate some of the bin Laden family’s activities in this country because of suspicions of ties to terrorism, the State Department forced them to shut down the entire operation. Because the bin Laden’s were ‘diplomats’ and as such enjoyed diplomatic immunity, making such investigations illegal.” Scheuer will comment about the 1998 investigation, “My counterparts at the FBI

questioned one of the bin Ladens. But then the State Department received a complaint from a law firm, and there was a huge uproar. We were shocked to find out that the bin Ladens in the United States had diplomatic passports, and that we weren't allowed to talk to them." Scheuer believes that these unusual diplomatic privileges may help explain how the bin Ladens will be able to depart so quickly just after 9/11 (see September 13, 2001; September 14-19, 2001). Farah later says he interviewed Scheuer about this and claims to have found a second source to verify the information. [FARAH, 12/5/2004; DER SPIEGEL (HAMBURG), 6/6/2005] The issue of diplomatic passports for the bin Laden family has generally not been reported in the US media, although a 2005 New Yorker article will mention in passing that in 1996, "the State Department stymied a joint effort by the CIA and the FBI to question one of bin Laden's cousins in America, because he had a diplomatic passport, which protects the holder from US law enforcement." [NEW YORKER, 2/8/2005] This is a probable reference to the 1996 investigation of Abdullah Awad bin Laden (although he is bin Laden's nephew, not cousin (see February-September 11, 1996)). It is unclear what connection there may be, if any, between that investigation and this 1998 investigation.

Entity Tags: Bin Laden Family, Michael Scheuer, Douglas Farah, Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of State

Timeline Tags: Complete 911 Timeline

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February 15, 1999: Philippine Charities Exposed for Passing Money from Bin Laden to Militant Group, But Remain in Operation



A classified Philippine military report claims bin Laden is funding Muslim militants in the Philippines through known charity fronts. Some of the charities include World Alliance of Muslim Youth (WAMY), the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), and the Islamic Wisdom Worldwide Mission (IWWM). WAMY has been under investigation for ties militant groups in a number of countries, including the US (see February-September 11, 1996). The other two organizations are said to be connected to Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, bin Laden's brother-in-law. All the charities are accused of passing money on to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a militant group in the southern Philippines. [NEW STRAITS TIMES, 2/15/1999] Between this time and 9/11, the leader of the Abu Sayyaf militant group will say in an interview that "the primary purpose of the IIRO is to help groups like us." [NEWSWEEK INTERNATIONAL, 10/22/2001] Also in February 1999, the head of the MILF admits to getting funds from bin Laden, but says they are for humanitarian purposes only (see February 1999). The charities remain open after the report. In 2002, Mohammed Amin al-Ghafari, the head of the IWWM, will be arrested and deported. It will come out that he was arrested and then let go in 1995 after

being strongly suspected of involvement in the Bojinka plot (see June 1994). He also had protectors in the police and military who are IWWM directors. In 2002, one of them will admit to having helped prevent his deportation (see October 8-November 8, 2002). The US will not officially accuse the IIRO's Philippine branch of funding al-Qaeda until 2006 (see August 3, 2006).

Entity Tags: World Assembly of Muslim Youth, Osama bin Laden, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, Abu Sayyaf, International Islamic Relief Organization, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Mohammed Amin al-Ghafari, Islamic Wisdom Worldwide Mission

Timeline Tags: Complete 911 Timeline

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Late January 2001: US Intelligence Told to Back Off from Bin Laden and Saudis



A. Q. Khan receiving a medal.
[Source: Associated Press]

The BBC later reports, “After the elections, [US intelligence] agencies [are] told to ‘back off’ investigating the bin Ladens and Saudi royals, and that anger[s] agents.” This follows previous orders to abandon an investigation of bin Laden relatives in 1996 (see February-September 11, 1996), and difficulties in investigating Saudi royalty. [BBC, 11/6/2001] An unnamed “top-level CIA operative” says there is a “major policy shift” at the National Security Agency at this time. Bin Laden could still be investigated, but agents could not look too closely at how he got his money. One specific CIA investigation hampered by this new policy is an investigation in Pakistani nuclear scientist A. Q. Khan and his Khan

Laboratories. Khan is considered the “father” of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons capability. But since the funding for this nuclear program gets traced back to Saudi Arabia, restrictions are placed on the inquiry. [PALAST, 2002, PP. 99-100] Also in early 2001, FBI agent Robert Wright, attempting to pursue an investigation into Saudi multimillionaire Yassin al-Qadi, is told by FBI superiors, “it’s just better to let sleeping dogs lie”(see January-March 2001). Reporter Greg Palast notes that President Clinton was already hindering investigations by protecting Saudi interests. However, as he puts it, “Where Clinton said, ‘Go slow,’ Bush policymakers said, ‘No go.’ The difference is between closing one eye and closing them both.” [PALAST, 2002, PP. 102]

Entity Tags: Abdul Qadeer Khan, National Security Agency, Bin Laden Family, Yassin al-Qadi, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency, William Jefferson (“Bill”) Clinton, Osama bin Laden

Timeline Tags: Complete 911 Timeline, A. Q. Khan's Nuclear Network

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Dar al Hijrah mosque. [Source: Public domain]

After living together in Phoenix since December 2000, hijackers Hani Hanjour and Nawaf Alhazmi move to Falls Church, Virginia. [WASHINGTON POST, 9/10/2002; 9/11 COMMISSION, 1/26/2004] They live only a few blocks from where two nephews of bin Laden with ties to terrorism go to work (see February-September 11, 1996 and June 1, 2004). They

continue to live there off and on until around August. They begin attending the Dar al Hijrah mosque. [WASHINGTON POST, 9/10/2002] When they and Khalid Almihdhar lived in San Diego in early 2000, they attended a mosque there led by the imam Anwar Al Aulaqi. This imam moved to Falls Church in January 2001, and now the hijackers attend his sermons at the Dar al Hijrah mosque. Some later suspect that Aulaqi is part of the 9/11 plot because of their similar moves, and other reasons:

- The FBI says Al Aulaqi had closed door meetings with hijackers Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar in 2000 while all three of them were living in San Diego. [US CONGRESS, 7/24/2003
- Police later find the phone number of Al Aulaqi's mosque when they search "would-be twentieth hijacker" Ramzi bin al-Shibh's apartment in Germany. [US CONGRESS, 7/24/2003
- The FBI was investigating Al Aulaqi for ties to Islamic militant groups in early 2000 (see June 1999-March 2000).
- A neighbor of Al Aulaqi later claims that, in the first week of August 2001, Al Aulaqi knocked on his door and told him he is leaving for Kuwait: "He came over before he left and told me that something very big was going to happen, and that he had to be out of the country when it happened." [NEWSWEEK, 7/28/2003]

US officials will allow Al Aulaqi to leave the US twice in 2002, but by 2008 they will conclude that he is linked to al-Qaeda attacks (see Early September 2006-December 2007 and February 27, 2008).

Entity Tags: Hani Hanjour, Khalid Almihdhar, Germany, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Anwar Al Aulaqi, Nawaf Alhazmi, Ramzi bin al-Shibh, 9/11 Commission, 9/11 Congressional Inquiry, Central Intelligence Agency, Osama bin Laden

Timeline Tags: Complete 911 Timeline, 9/11 Timeline

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Khalil bin Laden at the Orlando, Florida, airport, about to be flown out of the country in the days after 9/11. [Source: Lions Gate Films]

Following a secret flight inside the US that is in violation of a national private airplane flight ban, members of the bin Laden family and Saudi royalty quietly depart the US. The flights are only publicly acknowledged after all the Saudis have left. [BOSTON GLOBE, 9/21/2001; NEW YORK TIMES, 9/30/2001] About 140 Saudis, including around 24 members of the bin Laden family, are

passengers in these flights. The identities of most of these passengers are not known. However, some of the passengers include:

- The son of the Saudi Defense Minister Prince Sultan. Sultan is sued in August 2002 for alleged complicity in the 9/11 plot. [TAMPA TRIBUNE, 10/5/2001] He is alleged to have contributed at least \$6 million since 1994 to four charities that finance al-Qaeda. [VANITY FAIR, 10/2003]
- Khalil bin Laden. He has been investigated by the Brazilian government for possible terrorist connections. [VANITY FAIR, 10/2003]
- Abdullah bin Laden and Omar bin Laden, cousins of bin Laden. Abdullah was the US director of the Muslim charity World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY). The governments of India, Pakistan, Philippines, and Bosnia have all accused WAMY of funding terrorism. These two relatives were investigated by the FBI in 1996 (see February-September 11, 1996) in a case involving espionage, murder, and national security. Their case is reopened on September 19, right after they leave the country. [VANITY FAIR, 10/2003] Remarkably, four of the 9/11 hijackers briefly lived in the town of Falls Church, Virginia, three blocks from the WAMY office headed by Abdullah bin Laden. [BBC, 11/6/2001]
- Saleh Ibn Abdul Rahman Hussayen. He is a prominent Saudi official who was in the same hotel as three of the hijackers the night before 9/11. He leaves on one of the first flights to Saudi Arabia before the FBI can properly interview him about this. [WASHINGTON POST, 10/2/2003]
- Akberali Moawalla. A Pakistani and business partner of Osama's brother Yeslam bin Laden. In 2000, a transfer of over \$250 million was made from a bank account belonging jointly to Moawalla and Osama bin Laden (see 2000). [WASHINGTON POST, 7/22/2004]

There is a later dispute regarding how thoroughly the Saudis are interviewed before they leave and who approves the flights. Counterterrorism "tsar" Richard Clarke says he agrees to the flights after the FBI assures him none of those on board has connections to terrorism and that it is "a conscious decision with complete review at the highest levels of the State Department

and the FBI and the White House.” [US CONGRESS, 9/3/2003] Clarke says the decision to approve the flights “didn’t get any higher than me.” [HILL, 5/18/2004] According to Vanity Fair, both the FBI and the State Department “deny playing any role whatsoever in the episode.” However, Dale Watson, the head of the FBI’s Counterterrorism Division, says the Saudis on the planes “[are] identified, but they [are] not subject to serious interviews or interrogations” before they leave. [VANITY FAIR, 10/2003] An FBI spokesperson says the bin Laden relatives are only interviewed by the FBI “at the airport, as they [are] about to leave.” [NATIONAL REVIEW, 9/11/2002] There are claims that some passengers are not interviewed by the FBI at all. [VANITY FAIR, 10/2003] Abdullah bin Laden, who stays in the US, says that even a month after 9/11, his only contact with the FBI is a brief phone call. [BOSTON GLOBE, 9/21/2001; NEW YORKER, 11/5/2001] The FBI official responsible for coordinating with Clarke is Assistant Director Michael Rolince, who is in charge of the Bureau’s International Terrorism Operations Section and assumes responsibility for the Saudi flights. Rolince decides that the Saudis can leave after their faces are matched to their passport photos and their names are run through various databases, including some watch lists, to check the FBI has no derogatory information about them.” [9/11 COMMISSION, 8/21/2004, PP. 196-197, 209 ] Numerous experts are surprised that the bin Ladens are not interviewed more extensively before leaving, pointing out that interviewing the relatives of suspects is standard investigative procedure. [NATIONAL REVIEW, 9/11/2002; VANITY FAIR, 10/2003] MSNBC claims that “members of the Saudi royal family met frequently with bin Laden—both before and after 9/11” [MSNBC, 9/5/2003] , and many Saudi royals and bin Laden relatives are being sued for their alleged role in 9/11. The Boston Globe opines that the flights occur “too soon after 9/11 for the FBI even to know what questions to ask, much less to decide conclusively that each Saudi [royal] and bin Laden relative [deserve] an ‘all clear,’ never to be available for questions again.” [BOSTON GLOBE, 9/30/2003] Senator Charles Schumer (D) says of the secret flights: “This is just another example of our country coddling the Saudis and giving them special privileges that others would never get. It’s almost as if we didn’t want to find out what links existed.” [NEW YORK TIMES, 9/4/2003] Judicial Watch will disclose FBI documents that say, “Osama bin Laden may have chartered one of the Saudi flights.” [JUDICIAL WATCH, 6/20/2007]

Entity Tags: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Dale Watson, Khalil bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, Bin Laden Family, Abdullah bin Laden, Michael Rolince, Osama bin Laden, Bush administration, World Assembly of Muslim Youth, Omar bin Laden, US Department of State, Saleh Ibn Abdul Rahman Hussayen, Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, Charles Schumer, Richard A. Clarke

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A Bosnian government probe connects the Saudi charity Talibah International Aid Association to the funding of Islamic militant groups and an al-Qaeda front group. Talibah has been under investigation since shortly after 9/11 due to a foiled attack in Bosnia that has been connected to Talibah and al-Qaeda.

Abdullah Awad bin Laden, one of bin Laden's nephews, is a Talibah officer in its Virginia office. An investigation into him was cancelled in September 1996 (see February-September 11, 1996). The US has been criticized for failing to list Talibah as a sponsor of terrorism and for not freezing its assets. [WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9/20/2002]

Entity Tags: Talibah International Aid Association, Al-Qaeda, Abdullah Awad bin Laden

Timeline Tags: Complete 911 Timeline

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June 1, 2004: US Raids Saudi Charity Formerly Headed by Bin Laden's Nephew



WAMY logo. [Source: WAMY]

US agents raid the US branch of World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), a large Saudi charity. The branch was founded in 1992 by Abdullah Awad bin Laden, a nephew of Osama, and he

was still listed as president of the branch in a 2002 business listing. [WEEKLY STANDARD, 4/8/2002; WASHINGTON POST, 6/2/2004] In 1996, an FBI investigation into WAMY, Abdullah Awad, and his brother Omar, was closed down, apparently for political reasons (see February-September 11, 1996). At least two of the 9/11 hijackers lived about three blocks from WAMY's office for much of 2001 (see March 2001 and After). A new investigation of WAMY was launched one week after 9/11 (see September 14-19, 2001). All of WAMY's files and computer files are seized; one person is arrested on immigration charges. The raid appears to have taken place because WAMY came up in a terrorism investigation of the SAAR network (see March 20, 2002), located outside Washington and relatively close to the WAMY office. A federal affidavit alleges that WAMY has ties to Hamas. [WASHINGTON POST, 6/2/2004]

Entity Tags: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Hamas, World Assembly of Muslim Youth

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