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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of FBI Special Agent [REDACTED]**Type of event:** Interview**Dates:** November 18, 2003**Special Access Issues:** DSM**Prepared by:** Dieter Snell, 12/7/03**Team Number:** 1A**Location:** FBI, San Diego Field Office**Participants – Non-Commission:** FBI Supervisory Special Agent Rick Kelly**Participants – Commission:** Dieter Snell, Raj De

Special Agent [REDACTED] entered on duty with the FBI in February 1997. He has spent his entire career with the Bureau in San Diego, starting in frauds before being assigned to an FCI squad (17) in August 2001. Immediately following the 9/11 attacks, [REDACTED] became Team Leader of Team 1, which was running down leads.

Omar Bakarbashat

An early lead pursued by [REDACTED] team on approximately 9/14 or 9/15 was that of Omar Bakarbashat, based on reporting of [REDACTED]. The team set up round-the-clock surveillance [REDACTED] on the Texaco station and then interviewed Bakarbashat at the boarding house where he was staying, which [REDACTED] estimates to contain approximately 2800 square feet [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] The consent search performed at that time yielded nothing of consequence.

During his interview, Bakarbashat admitted knowing the hijackers but denied having any advance knowledge of the 9/11 attacks. Bakarbashat impressed [REDACTED] as soft, willing to talk, and apparently forthcoming. He identified Mohdar Abdullah and 7200 Saranac and provided information regarding Yazeed Al-Salmi, Osama Awadallah, and the Texaco station. However, Bakarbashat [REDACTED]

Bakarbashat helped Nawaf Al-Hazmi and Khalid Al-Mihdhar find some information on the Internet, but did not really provide them with material support, in [REDACTED] view.

Mohdar Abdullah

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[redacted] team met with Mohdar Abdullah on numerous occasions. Abdullah declined to take a polygraph but provided lots of information. Based on Abdullah's proffer session in the summer of 2002, [redacted] considers his credibility to be low, although he doesn't think Abdullah (whom he termed "a goof ball") was a sleeper or witting facilitator for the hijackers. To [redacted] the Texaco station crew did not consist of the sort of people someone would rely on to conduct an operation, especially an operation with as much security consciousness as the 9/11 operation.

[redacted] did note that Abdullah appeared to act strangely in the weeks leading up to 9/11. In particular, in late August, Abdullah stopped using the international telephone calling plan to which he subscribed. During the proffer session, Abdullah was asked by [redacted] about receiving a call from Nawaf Al-Hazmi in August as a shot in the dark.

[redacted] does believe it's possible Al-Hazmi called Abdullah in August 2001. The two of them appear to have established a fairly close friendship, especially after Al-Mihdhar's June 2000 departure. According to Abdullah, Al-Hazmi did come to say good-bye before leaving San Diego with Hani Hanjour (whom Abdullah tentatively identified) and later called from Arizona. Although the Bureau knew the Texaco station workers used the pay phone outside the station, [redacted]

Abdullah also impressed [redacted] as "very opportunistic" and likely to have considered Omar Al-Bayoumi as someone who could have done something for him. Nothing came from the investigation of Abdullah's brother in Italy. Nor did [redacted] ever hear anything about any relationship between Abdullah and Anwar Aulaqi.

After returning to 7200 Saranac, Abdullah was kicked out by Osama Awadallah and Yazeed Al-Salmi because they feared he would bring them too much attention.

[redacted] thinks that if anyone in San Diego had prior knowledge of the 9/11 attacks, it would be Abdullah. Although he doesn't place much credence in the August 2001 "phone call" from Al-Hazmi, [redacted] notes that Al-Hazmi told Abdullah that the Cole bombing was committed by the Islamic Army of Aden.

[redacted] may have asked Abdullah about Benomrane during the proffer session, but [redacted] isn't sure. Also at the proffer, Abdullah stated that, during their trip to New York on the material witness warrants, Yazeed Al-Salmi admitted knowing Hani Hanjour from school. This, however, was never corroborated.

Abdullah knew that both Al-Mihdhar and Al-Hazmi were interested in learning to fly. One time, Abdullah called a flight school in Florida for Al-Hazmi, using the payphone at the Texaco station. Abdullah had been about to use the phone inside the station to make the call, but Al-Hazmi asked him to call from outside.

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Osama Awadallah

Awadallah's phone number was found in the car abandoned at Dulles Airport. The team went to 7200 Saranac intending to do an interview and a consent search, to which Al-Salmi agreed. During the search, Awadallah showed up and acknowledged knowing Al-Mihdhar and Al-Hazmi, noting that the two of them were always together.

Awadallah backed out of his original decision to take a polygraph, then changed his mind again [redacted]. At this point, a material witness warrant was issued for him and he was transported to New York. There, he ultimately was indicted on false statement charges for denying knowing Al-Mihdhar despite having written in a course notebook (at Grossmont College) that "two of the nicest people I've ever met are named Nawaf and Khalid." [redacted] doesn't know why Awadallah would have admitted knowing Al-Hazmi but not Al-Mihdhar.

Yazeed Al-Salmi

Al-Salmi was involved in a false marriage. As a resident of 7200 Saranac and associate of the hijackers, he also was picked up on a material witness warrant but was released after testifying in New York. Al-Salmi is now back in Saudi Arabia.

[redacted]

[redacted] took over the [redacted] case from [redacted] in April or May of 2003, by which time the case was fairly well advanced, based on documented phone contacts between [redacted] and Al-Bayoumi and the fact that [redacted]

[redacted] believes [redacted] is still in L.A. but that he returns to San Diego occasionally. [redacted]

[redacted] doesn't recall [redacted] admitting to knowing the hijackers. In addition to his ties to Al-Bayoumi, [redacted] also had ties to Osama Basnan.

[redacted]

During the early stages of the 9/11 investigation, [redacted] heard about a Caucasian male who lived at 7200 Saranac before the attacks and who knew the hijackers. A lead was sent out to [redacted] following Mohdar Abdullah's proffer session in New York. [redacted] eventually was sent to [redacted] interview [redacted]. During the interview, [redacted] agreed to take a polygraph but then admitted having provided information about Navy vessels to Abdullah. [redacted] was looking at [redacted] strictly as a subject [redacted]

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