

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

MFR04019349

Event: Interview of Peter Lance

Date: March 15, 2004

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Marco Cordero

Team Number: 1A

Location: Commission Office, New York City

Participants – Commission: Dieter Snell, Marco Cordero

Peter Lance was interviewed by Dieter Snell and Marco A. Cordero on March 15, 2004 in New York at the 9/11 Commission's office located on the 13th floor of 26 Federal Plaza. The interview began at approximately 10:30 am and lasted over two and half hours. After Snell and Cordero identified themselves and described their role within the 9/11 Commission, Lance provided the following information:

From the outset of the meeting, Lance wanted to know whether his contributions would be noted or included in the Commission's final report. Snell responded that all of the documents gathered and interviews performed by the Commission would be part of the Commission's record, and that the eventual report would be an effort to distill information from all sources into a single narrative. To begin the meeting, Lance handed Snell and Cordero one packet containing notes, questions and excerpts from his book "1000 Years For Revenge". The 72 page packet was titled "Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon The United States Testimony of Peter Lance 3/15/04. The packet contained 36 pages of notes (excerpts from his book, comments regarding his sources and questions regarding his findings; a two page letter from Joseph F. O'Brien addressed to Gov. Thomas Kean; a one page response letter to Peter Lance from Mr. Thomas Kean; a one page letter to Peter Lance from Mr. Philip Zelikow; and Lance's timeline from his book which is 32 pages long. This packet was provided to the Commission's staff to be uploaded.

Lance discussed the murder of Kahane and advised that he had been told by a "source" that the prosecutor for that trial had requested to speak to the 9/11 Commission but the prosecutor's request had been rejected. He asked Snell regarding this issue. Snell advised that he was unaware of this request and asked Lance to provide the Commission with the name of the prosecutor. Lance advised he would e-mail his name to Snell.

Lance discussed the \$20,000 that Usama Bin Laden had purportedly provided to Nosair for his legal defense in 1990-1991. This allegation is based on Lance's information that mujahidin Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was an intimate of the Blind Sheik and

that Fadl worked with Shalabi, the Sheik's predecessor at the Al Kifah Center before joining UBL in Afghanistan. Lance further advised that it was his belief that the two World Trade Center attacks were related. While acknowledging his own vested interest in this theory, Lance stated that the U. S. Government has worked hard to separate the two incidents, i.e. attributing the attacks to separate groups. Lance contends Al-Qaeda was behind them both. Lance's belief is that the U.S. Government wants to separate the attacks because the U.S. Government does not want the public to know that the attacks on the World Trade Center could have been prevented with Ramzi Yousef's arrest in 1992. Lance believes the FBI could have identified and arrested Yousef if the FBI had allowed Emad Salem, an FBI informant, to continue his role as an informant within the Blind Sheik's group.

Lance discussed FBI's shortcomings, recounting an interview between him and Jim Roth, the PLO (principal legal officer) in the New York office in the early 1990s. When Lance purportedly asked Roth why the FBI did not consider placing another informant to work with Salem to corroborate Salem's information, Roth advised that the FBI did not have anyone to either replace or work alongside Salem.

Lance discussed the information provided by Philippine National Police Col. Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza, the individual who allegedly provided the U.S. Government with information regarding Yousef's "third plot", i.e. the use of planes to attack the Pentagon, Sears Tower, World Trade Center and the Transamerica building in San Francisco, which Mendoza purportedly obtained from interviewing Murad. Lance also advised that Mendoza claims to have advised the U.S. Government that Murad had told him that there were 10 men receiving pilot training in the U.S. during the time of his detention. Lance advised that he video-taped Mendoza's interview, with the help of Maria Ressa, CNN's Manila bureau chief for CNN. Lance offered to provide his transcripts and video pertaining to this interview to the Commission. Lance advised that he had been told that the U.S. Government leaned on the Philippine government to downplay the information Mendoza was providing and as a result Mendoza was re-assigned to a remote area away from Manila. Lance further stated that Mendoza and other Philippine government officials, Sonny Razon and Bobby Tiglao, have become less vocal about the information pertaining to the "third plot" because of the repercussions they have already suffered.

Lance advised that Mendoza had not provided him with any report or interview transcript pertaining to the "third plot". Mendoza was only able to provide Lance with the interview report relating to the use of a plane to attack the CIA building. The only transcript Lance has of a Murad interrogation is of the 01/07/1995 session, which was introduced at trial.

Lance asked why the U.S. Government treated KSM differently, asking why his indictment was sealed. He also asked why evidence of KSM was never included in the trial against Yousef.

Lance discussed [redacted] a former Phoenix FBI informant who worked with/for FBI SA Kenneth Williams. Lance described [redacted] relationship with the FBI and with Williams and briefly described [redacted] separation from the FBI which he attributed to Williams' demand that [redacted] break up with his girlfriend, a Chinese national and case subject. Lance advised [redacted] had provided Williams with information pertaining to an Algerian pilot, possibly Lofti Raissi, training in Arizona in 1996. Williams purportedly told [redacted] to leave it alone. Lance advised that Ken Williams wrote the "Phoenix Memo" only because he knew [redacted] had been talking to the media and the media was going to report that Middle Eastern men had been receiving pilot training in the U.S. According to Lance, [redacted] provided that information to Williams as far back as 1996.

Lance briefly discussed issues regarding "China Gate", the Inspector General's (DOJ) investigation of an FBI operation which resulted in China illegally receiving restricted technology through the use of U.S. businesses. Lance asked Snell and Cordero to follow the developments regarding this investigation, stating that a story regarding that investigation was soon going to "break".

Lance also discussed Ahmed Refai, the NYFD accountant who allegedly obtained blueprints of the World Trade Center in 1992. Lance recounted the events leading to the discovery of Refai and played a short video depicting Refai in very close proximity to the Blind Sheikh in New York. Lance described his interview with Refai, describing Refai as less than honest. Cordero asked Lance whether he had heard from Refai or Refais' family; Lance advised that Refai had four sons, including one who died in a drowning accident in Italy. Lance advised that neither Refai nor his family had contacted him regarding Lance's book.

Toward the end of the interview, Lance asked a hypothetical question regarding the Oklahoma bombing. He wondered whether the Oklahoma bombing may have been an Al Qaeda undertaking, an attack designed to direct most if not all of the FBI's terrorism resources to Oklahoma while Al-Qaeda began and continued to build its infrastructure in the U.S. Lance floated a similar theory with respect to the explosion of TWA Flight 800.

Snell asked Lance about some of his sources regarding the following events: 1) That Murad was involved in Yousef's assassination attempt on Bhutto; 2) Lance's description of Yousef's check in and security clearance for flight 434 at the Manila airport; 3) Lance's claim that KSM fled Qatar in 1997 or 1996 to Czech Republic; 4) Lance's claim that while Yousef and Scarpa caper was ongoing, KSM was in the process of executing the 9/11 plot; and 5) that Atta had trained for 15 months in Afghanistan. Lance attributed the following sources to the aforementioned descriptions/claims: 1) a source within the Pakistani ISI; 2) a source in the Manila airport who was present the day Yousef boarded the flight; 3) Writer Bill Gertz; 4) Joint Inquiry and 5) the book "The Cell" and a segment titled "the Plot" on 60 Minutes II. Lance declined to provide any further identifying information for these sources.

Lance asked Snell to send him an e-mail request for all the documents, video and transcripts which Lance offered to provide during the interview.