

MFR 04016254

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of Gregory J. McAleer

Date: August 12, 2003

Prepared by: Quinn John Tamm, Jr.

Team Number: 1A

Location: Regan National Airport, Arlington, VA 9/11 Personal Privacy

Participants-Commission: Dietrich Snell, Quinn John Tamm, Jr.

Gregory J. McAleer is a flight attendant employed by United Airlines (UA), Elk Grove, Illinois. He is presently on a voluntary furlough that began on 02/01/2003. Mr. McAleer's home telephone number is [redacted] and his cell telephone number is [redacted]. Mr. McAleer provided information concerning UA Flight 514, to which he was assigned as a flight attendant on 08/30/2001. Mr. McAleer is sure of the date, because it was his first day back to work after the birth of his son. This flight was from Chicago O'Hare Airport to Boston Logan Airport. Mr. McAleer was assigned to the number two flight attendant position, which required him to greet passengers as they entered the aircraft. The aircraft was a Boeing 737-300 (737) that had a seating capacity of 126 passengers in coach and eight passengers in first class.

Mr. McAleer related that early in the boarding process a Middle Eastern male (unknown male) walked down the jet-way, or passageway to the aircraft and displayed to Mr. McAleer a "jump seat" pass. A jump seat pass is printed on regular ticket stock. This document, which is issued by a gate agent for UA, implies that the passenger is a licensed pilot of a United States domestic airline, and allows the holder to sit in the jump seat in the cockpit of the aircraft. The UA gate agent should have been shown valid identification from a domestic airline, along with a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) pilot's license, by the unknown male. The unknown male was not dressed in a pilot's uniform, but dressed in casual clothes. Mr. McAleer recalls that the unknown male was dressed in a plum colored shirt and a matching tie. The unknown male was carrying a large Samsonite brand suitcase, which he left out on the jet-way as he entered the aircraft.

The unknown male walked by Mr. McAleer and entered the cockpit of the 737, and was observed by Mr. McAleer talking to the captain (pilot) and the first officer (co-pilot). After a few moments, the unknown male stepped out of the cockpit and walked back out the door of the 737 and stood on the jet-way on the right side of the passenger door. The unknown male said nothing to Mr. McAleer, but picked up his suitcase and re-entered the 737 and took a seat in row 14 on the aisle of the coach cabin of the 737. Mr. McAleer then spoke to the number one flight attendant.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT
DATE 08/12/03

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This lady, whose name Mr. McAleer is unable to recall, was standing in the galley of the first class cabin. Mr. McAleer said to her, "is this guy a terrorist or something?" Mr. McAleer then went to the cockpit and asked the captain what was the status of the unknown male. The captain told Mr. McAleer that, "he's not 'jump seating,' he doesn't have the proper 'ID.' He told me that he has a companion pass. He will be flying as a regular customer in coach." Mr. McAleer then returned to the first class cabin and told the number one flight attendant what had been related to him by the captain. Mr. McAleer explained that a companion pass is a benefit for UA employees that allow them to purchase a ticket for 10% of the face value for a friend, or a "companion." The employee does not have to accompany the passenger on the flight.

Mr. McAleer's assigned position during the flight was the coach class galley in the rear of the 737. After a period of time the unknown male walked to the rear of the 737 to wait to use the lavatory. While waiting, he spoke with Mr. McAleer. Mr. McAleer asked the unknown male by which airline he was employed. The unknown male replied that he was employed by COMAIR, a regional airline that operates the Delta Airline express flights. The unknown male stated in clear, but accented English, that he, "had just quit today 'to start' a business charter airline in Boston." Mr. McAleer remarked that the unknown male should have known that he was not eligible to fly in the jump seat on a domestic airline, as a pilot, if he was not employed by an airline. Mr. McAleer then asked the unknown male how long he had been employed by COMAIR. The unknown male replied that he had been with COMAIR for two and one half years. Mr. McAleer stated to the unknown male that a friend of his, Mark Pajak, was a pilot for COMAIR, and asked if the unknown male knew Pajak. The unknown male stated that he did not know Pajak, stating that he flew a prop aircraft known as a "Beech Barron." Mr. McAleer found hard to believe that this individual did not know Pajak, because of the size of COMAIR. Mr. McAleer then asked the unknown male what type of aircraft he would be flying for the charter company. The unknown male stated that he would be flying a Gulfstream jet and a Falcon jet. Mr. McAleer noted that the unknown male did not seem to know enough about flight operations to have been a regularly employed pilot. Mr. McAleer has a private pilot's license. The unknown male then asked Mr. McAleer about the operation of the 737's intercom system. The unknown male then returned to his seat without using the lavatory. When the 737 landed in Boston, MA, Mr. McAleer attempted to talk to the captain and first officer about the unknown male, but they had already left the aircraft. Mr. McAleer does not know their names, and never flew with either pilot again.

Mr. McAleer was in London, United Kingdom on 09/11/2001 on a UA flight. He returned to the United States on 09/13/2001. When he arrived in Chicago, IL he heard from other flight attendants about a Middle Eastern male who attempted to enter a cockpit on another UA flight dressed in a pilot's uniform, with FAA identification. Mr. McAleer then realized that the unknown male on Flight 514 never went back to the gate agent to obtain a companion pass, but was most probably a stowaway and not a pilot.

Because of this realization, Mr. McAleer called the Flight Attendant service center of UA at Elk Grove, IL on 09/13/2001 or early 09/14/2001. He asked to speak to a manager and a related to a manager what had occurred on Flight 514 on 08/30/2001. She (the manager) was upset about what had occurred and told Mr. McAleer that someone would call him the next day to talk to him about the incident. Mr. McAleer was called on 09/15/2001, by an FBI agent from the Chicago Field Office. The FBI agent's name was [redacted] Mr. McAleer related to Special Agent (SA) [redacted] what had happened on Flight 514. SA [redacted] was unfamiliar with the "jump seat" procedure and it had to be explained to SA [redacted] by Mr. McAleer.

SA [redacted] asked Mr. McAleer to get the manifest for Flight 514, and was advised by Mr. McAleer that he was not in a position to obtain the manifest. Mr. McAleer also told SA [redacted] that the name of the unknown male would not be on the manifest, because pilots flying in the "jump seat" are not added to the manifest. Mr. McAleer stated that SA [redacted] was "too focused" on the flight manifest. Mr. McAleer did call SA [redacted] several days later and provided him with the flight number.

Mr. McAleer then referred to UA Flight 93 that crashed in Pennsylvania on 09/11/2001. He stated that the cockpit voice recorder had been recovered and that he "heard" that the hijackers gained entrance to the cockpit by claiming to be pilots. Several days later Mr. McAleer returned to O'Hare Airport for another assignment. He asked to speak with a flight attendant supervisor as he was attending a briefing on new security procedures. Mr. McAleer again related the incident on Flight 514 to the supervisor and asked that the information be provided to UA management. The supervisor, with whom he spoke, was a white female, in her mid-30s, with dark hair. She left the briefing and went to discuss the incident with a manager. She returned to the briefing and signaled for Mr. McAleer to step out in the hallway to speak with her. She stated to Mr. McAleer, "Do not talk to the FBI again. I went to Mitch Gross and he told me to tell you not to talk to the FBI again. If you have any concerns you can call the Crisis Center. The FBI agents are working on the case." Mr. McAleer then asked to use a telephone in the supervisor's office and placed a call to the Crisis Center. The call was taken by "some girl" who advised that she would pass the information to the FBI.

Mr. McAleer then went to see the UA assistant station manager, Mitch Gross. Mr. McAleer introduces himself to Mr. Gross by stating, "Listen, I'm Greg McAleer and I think that I might have had one of the hijackers on my plane." Mr. McAleer then related the story to Mr. Gross. Mr. Gross then walked with Mr. McAleer back to the gate from which McAleer's flight was departing. While walking through the terminal, Mr. McAleer heard someone call his name. It was the number one flight attendant from Flight 514. Mr. Gross kept McAleer moving towards the scheduled flight stating, "You are not to talk to anyone about this."

On 09/27/2001 Mr. McAleer was reading the front-page article of a Chicago, IL newspaper, the *Chicago Daily Herald*. The article had the photographs of the 19 hijackers. Mr. McAleer realized that Fayeze Banihammad was the individual who had boarded Flight 514 on 08/30/2001 with a jump seat pass.

Mr. McAleer called UA corporate security and left a voice mail message about this identification. Mr. McAleer did not hear from the security office.

Mr. McAleer then raised the issue with the flight attendants' union the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA). Eventually, the AFA introduced Mr. McAleer to a reporter for USA TODAY, who writes about labor issues. The reporter, Blake Morrison is assigned to the Washington, D.C. bureau of USA TODAY. Mr. Morrison prepared an article for the 06/12/2002 edition of USA TODAY.

Mr. McAleer stated that Mr. Morrison related to him that Morrison checked with the FBI about Mr. McAleer's story, and was told that, "they were still working on it." Later the FBI called Mr. Morrison's office in Washington, D.C. and asked him, "not to run the article." Consequently, the article only ran in the international edition of USA TODAY, on 06/12/2002. Mr. Morrison later related to the AFA and Mr. McAleer that he had a "source" in the FBI that said that the FBI reviewed the manifest and did not find Banihammad's name. Mr. McAleer was told that the FBI agent "looking into" this part of the larger 9-11 investigation was [REDACTED] with telephone number [REDACTED]

Mr. McAleer was asked to describe Banihammad. Mr. McAleer stated that Banihammad was approximately one inch shorter than him; Mr. McAleer is 5-10. Banihammad was also thinner, with a medium build.

Mr. McAleer provided no additional information at this time.

9/11 Law Enforcement Privacy