

MFR04019366

Memorandum for the Record

Event Meeting with Mabath Officials  
Location: Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
Date: 22 February 2004  
Access Restrictions: D.S.M.  
Commission participants: Dieter Snell  
Raj De  
Mike Jacobson  
Non-Commission participants: 9/11 Law Enforcement Privacy  
Prepared By: Raj De  
Reviewed By: Dieter Snell  
Mike Jacobson

Due to the informal nature of this meeting, and the desire not to alter the casual dynamic, no participants took contemporaneous notes. This write-up was therefore prepared based on the collective recollection of Commission staff. (U)

The meeting took place in a special Mabath off-site location close to the U.S. Embassy. Saudi participants included Major General Abdul Aziz al-Hawareiny, Brigadier General Khalid Humaydan, Major Khalid, and Captain Faris of the Mabath. Interpretation was performed by General Khalid. (S)

After introductions and pleasantries, the discussion turned to the six individuals whom the Commission had requested to interview: Saud al-Rashid, [REDACTED] Fahad al-Thumairy, Khalil al-Khalil, Yazeed al-Salmi, and Khalid Abdulrab al-Yafai. General Khalid said that the Mabath had been under the impression that the Commission staff was not going to arrive in Saudi Arabia until February 24, therefore the interviews were originally to be scheduled between February 24 and 26. He promised that the Mabath would work to expedite these interviews in view of our arrival and current schedule. (C)

General Khalid asked whether we had any priorities among the six individuals that we wished to interview. Snell noted that of the two requests that are still pending from the last visit, Saud al-Rashid is the priority. Snell also said it would be difficult to prioritize among the remaining witnesses as they are all important to the work of the Commission. Snell noted that, if possible, Commission staff would prefer to interview Khalil al-Khalil before interviewing Fahad al-Thumairy. General Khalid did not believe that this request presented a problem, as they both are located here in Riyadh. (C)

~~SECRET~~  
Commission Sensitive

General Khalid informed us that three of the individuals whom we requested to interview are located in Riyadh. In addition to al-Thumairy and al-Khalil, he said Saud al-Rashid is in Riyadh. Moreover, though [redacted] is originally from the eastern province, he is a member of the Saudi navy and is stationed close to Riyadh at the moment. The two other persons we wished to interview, Khalid Abdulrab al-Yafai and Yazeed al-Salmi, would have to be brought from Jeddah. General Khalid noted that it might be easier to change the schedule for the individuals located in Riyadh because they are closer, but all efforts would be made to accommodate our schedule. (S)

9/11 Personal Privacy

At this point, Detective Sassok noted that according to the information available to U.S. authorities, al-Rashid pledged bayat to UBL and had been selected to participate in the martyrdom operation that became the 9/11 attack. Thus, al-Rashid is no different from Mushabib al-Hamlan, who is currently in Saudi custody. [redacted] concurred and noted that al-Rashid's passport photo was recovered in a raid in Pakistan on a CD that also held pictures of three other 9/11 hijackers. Snell stressed the value of an al-Rashid interview for the Commission given his first-hand knowledge of the training received by al-Qaeda operatives. (S)

General Khalid stated that even if al-Rashid had been selected for a martyrdom operation while in Afghanistan, he decided against going through with it on his own accord once he returned to Saudi Arabia. In this sense, al-Rashid should be less of concern that someone like Mushabib al-Hamlan, who did not participate in the martyrdom operation that was to become the 9/11 plot only because of his family's intervention. General Khalid said that al-Hamlan's mother hid his passport, and al-Hamlan's brother threatened to harm him if he continued with his plan toward jihad. Unlike al-Hamlan, al-Rashid changed his mind on his own. (S)

At this point in the meeting, General Abdul Aziz received a call on his cell phone. After the phone call, we were informed that Khalid Abdulrab al-Yafai would be made available the following night for an interview. (S)

Turning to the other individuals whom we had requested to interview, General Khalid confirmed that Lafi al-Harbi is still an active member of the Saudi Navy. He said that it would not be difficult to produce him. General Khalid also expressed optimism that we would be able to interview Khalil al-Khalil, who is now a scholar and writer in Riyadh.

~~SECRET~~  
Commission Sensitive

~~SECRET~~

*Commission Sensitive*

General Khalid said that he has only read a small amount of al-Khalil's writings but that al-Khalil is a well-known opponent of Islamic extremism. (C)

Finally, as a side note, General Khalid then informed us that Omar al-Bayoumi had called him earlier that day to wish him a happy new year (Islamic new year). (C)

The meeting concluded with an understanding that the Mabathith would call the following afternoon with more information about who could be available to meet that evening. (C)

~~SECRET~~

*Commission Sensitive*