

MF204017479

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of FBI Special Agent Wade Ammerman

Type of event: Interview

Dates: October 16, 2003

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Michael Jacobson

Team Number: 1A

Location: FBI, Washington Field Office

Participants – Non-Commission: Assistant General Counsel Bob Sinton

Participants – Commission: John Tamm, Hyon Kim, Raj De, Michael Jacobson

Ammerman has been an FBI agent for 8 years, and has been assigned to WFO for his entire career. He has worked IT for that whole time, and is currently assigned to IT-3 (Don Demay's squad).

Ammerman is on the Emergency Response Team, and as a result on 9/11, he was assigned to the Pentagon to assist with recovering the bodies. By the time that he returned to WFO, the Aulaqi investigation had begun. The FBI initiated the investigation after learning from a San Diego source about Aulaqi's relationship with the hijackers. The exact nature of that relationship was not clear. It seemed to be like an imam-young Muslim type of relationship. Through [redacted] the FBI had also connected Aulaqi to Omar Al-Bayoumi. San Diego took an initial look at Aulaqi, until WFO took over the investigation.

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[redacted] WFO interviewed him 4 times after 9/11 in September, to try and flesh out the story (there should be 4 separate 302s). Aulaqi admitted to knowing al-Hazmi, but said that he did not know al-Mihdhar. Beyond that, the FBI has been unable to connect him to the hijackers.

Brad Deardorf is the agent who showed Aulaqi the photo spread, and we should talk to him if we want more details about that. Ammerman does not know what the agents involved in these interviews thought about Aulaqi's credibility and truthfulness in these interviews.

Aulaqi left San Diego in about September or October of 2000, and returned to Yemen. He returned from Aulaqi moved from San Diego to Falls Church in January

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2001. Aulaqi moved to Falls Church, according to Ammerman, because he received an offer at the Dar al-Hijra mosque, and it was a better offer than he had in San Diego. Ammerman thinks that Samir Aboissa is probably the one who made the offer to Aulaqi. Aulaqi left Washington for Yemen in March 2002. He returned to the U.S. in October 2002, before fleeing again to Yemen. Aulaqi went to a conference in England, but then went straight back to Yemen. He left his wife and family back in Washington to sell their house and to move back to Yemen. Ammerman thinks that Aulaqi got nervous after receiving a call from one of the managers of one of the escort services, saying that an FBI agent named "Wade" had been there asking questions about him. Ammerman thinks that Aulaqi may want to return to the U.S. He called SA Ikey Jenkins several weeks ago from Yemen (she was one of the agents who interviewed Aulaqi after 9/11) and left a message on her machine, saying that he wanted to speak to her. He left his email address on her machine. Aulaqi is on the Watch list now, but there is no warrant for him.

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The most significant thing that WFO discovered in the investigation was that Aulaqi had an interest in high priced prostitutes, and he would frequent them once a week.

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As far as how Aulaqi paid for the prostitutes, he drew a good salary from the mosque, and he also sold a lecture series on CD. He received about \$4,000 a month. The IRS has also taken a look at Aulaqi's finances. In addition, the State Department looked at his passport, and one of his social security cards and thought that there was some inaccurate information. They actually got an arrest warrant for him for passport fraud, but when he returned to the U.S. they decided not to pursue this.

The name al-Rababah rings a bell to Ammerman. There is nothing to support the contention that Aulaqi talked to him about helping the hijackers. They interviewed many people about this. The people they interviewed could have been protecting Aulaqi. But he agrees that the facts surrounding Aulaqi are very suspicious. He feels the same way that we do, but they couldn't prove it. He doesn't really know. Ammerman also said that there are many times that imams will talk to young guys. The Dar al-Hijra is a very busy mosque. It's not beyond comprehension that Aulaqi could have met people and not remember them.

The name Daoud Chehazeh does not ring a bell to Ammerman.

Ammerman said that the reporting about Aulaqi having closed door meetings with the two hijackers and Modhar Abdullah came from 1 source. Ammerman said that

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Hamas will sometimes try and spot radical young potential recruits, and invite them to closed door type meetings. But different groups do different things. It's also not uncommon for people to get together with imams after hours for extra study sessions. On face value, the closed door meetings are nothing to be alarmed about.

Aulaqi sells his CDs through Al-Bashir publishing out of the Denver area. There [redacted] 9/11 Law Enforcement Sensitive [redacted] Aulaqi was in contact with the Yemeni Embassy. He was at GW in a PhD program. He was on a scholarship from the Yemeni government. He was a real student, and actually went to classes.

Aulaqi had an indirect link to Ramzi Yousef. There was an individual in Herndon, who was connected to the SAFA Group, and was the subject of a Greenquest investigation, with whom both Aulaqi and Yousef were in contact.

The Ayah Islamic Prayer Center rings a bell. Ammerman doesn't know a lot about the Maryland mosques though. Regarding Motaz al-Hallak, there has been some contact between him and Aulaqi but not enough to indicate that they are close. It is common for imams to talk. Aulaqi is in contact with Tamimi, the imam of the Dar al-Arqam mosque. When Aulaqi came back to the U.S. in October 2002, he went to Timimi's home. Aulaqi has also spoken at this mosque. Ammerman noted that the Virginia jihad case was out of the Dar al-Arqam mosque, and that he served as the case agent for this investigation.

The Dar al-Hijra moque is not as Salafi as the others. Most of Aulaqi's lectures are pretty mainstream.

[redacted] 9/11 Classified Information [redacted] They weren't able to establish any other ties between the two. They were never able to fully establish that Aulaqi was actually a member of the Muslim Hackers Club. There was a reference to him being associated with the Club, but this never really went anywhere. The Muslim Hackers Club case was turned over to NIPC at HQ, and he doesn't know the results of their investigation.

Aulaqi has not engaged in Paintball in the DC area. He thinks that Aulaqi is more of a recreational player than someone training for jihad.

He doesn't know about the number for Dar al-Hijra being found in the residence of a member of the Hamburg cell. He would definitely want to look into this, but he wouldn't lose any sleep over this. The mosque is such a focal point. It doesn't say anything on its own.

The Dar al-Hijra mosque has been the object of FBI investigation for a long time. Marzook and other Hamas activists were gathering there. But the FBI realized that there is a lot more going on there than just radical activity. He would be hesitant to characterize the Dar al-Hijra as an extremist mosque. People do go there to talk in small

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groups, confident that the FBI will not be able to listen in. This is a real challenge for the FBI.

They haven't taken a look at the funding of the Dar al-Hijra mosque for First Amendment reasons. They do have many subjects there. He doesn't know whether or not any Saudi diplomats attend services there. He recalls hearing about North American Islamic Trust, and thinks that there may be a relationship between NAIT and the mosque. He thinks he might have seen this in Choicepoint. He doesn't know though who holds the title to the mosque. He does not know whether al-Haramain has any ties to the mosque. His cases have focused more on the individual subjects and not on the mosque itself.

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[REDACTED] As far as Samir Salah, there are two guy associated with the mosque with similar names. One is the subject of an investigation and one is not. He thinks that Abdulrahman al-Amoudi probably attended the mosque, but he doesn't know of any connections between him and Aulaqi.

Ammerman was asked about the speculation that the hijackers may have lived with Aulaqi for several weeks. He said that he's taken a look at the records. There is certainly circumstantial evidence that they were in the same places at the same time. The hijackers went to many of the areas (Mt. of Olives, the Butcher shop) frequented by Aulaqi. They have ATM transactions for the hijackers there but none for Aulaqi. It's certainly very suspicious. If they were not living with Aulaqi, he's not sure where they might have been living. We should ask Chris Mamula about that. It appears that the hijackers just drifted from place to place.

He has not heard of Lincoln Higgee, the individual referenced in the *Newsweek* article.

Ammerman does not think that the fact that Aulaqi was flying on 9/11 is suspicious.

He's not familiar with [REDACTED] or about San Diego's suspicions about his 9/11 Personal Privacy
1/1/2000 visit to Aulaqi and [REDACTED] 9/11 Personal Privacy

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Ammerman is not familiar with the reporting about Aulaqi fighting in Bosnia/Chechna or about him training in Afghanistan.

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Ammerman did not really have much interaction with the San Diego investigations working this case. The primary people with whom he dealt were Steve Butler and [redacted] 9/11 Law Enforcement Privacy

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