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November 18, 2002 response: the al-Haramain Islamic Foundation (HIF) has close ties to the Saudi Government, and intelligence reporting suggests it is providing financial and logistical support to al-Qaeda. In 1999, HIF established its U.S.-based office in Ashland, Oregon, and that office has since received approximately $700,000 from the parent office in Saudi Arabia. The FBI has a pending investigation of HIF and the activities of the Portland HIF Office. As discussed above, the FBI has located correspondence between al-Haramain and the HIF. From the documents, it is clear that HIF was interested in upping the Imam of the mosque in Cajoal, California, that al-Bayoury managed.

The Treasury General Council testified about its agency's opinion about the foundation:

MR. ACPFRAUS: Second, and this is important point, it is not out of place to remind, to remind, to remind, to remind, to remind us that al-Haramain, the two branch offices that we took up and then referred against al-Haramain really represent a significant issue for the AGC and the terrorists financing and for the United States policy. It is, of course, the largest, I think the largest, Islamic charity in the world. Its name is synonymous with charity in the Islamic world. Its direct overseers are members of the Royal Family; significant contributors are members of the Royal Family. We don't have a great deal of intelligence on the headquarters; about whether they are knowingly assisting people in al-Qaeda and others; but the significant branch offices are designated and under external investigation; we have ample evidence that large sums of money are being channeled through those branch offices, that large wire transfers of money are being sent to those offices, and finally, that those offices have significant contacts with extremists, Islamic extremists.

CIA officials recently testified that they are making progress on their investigations of al-Haramain:

A year ago we had a lot of reporting suggesting branch offices were tied to al-Qaeda. Over the last year, we developed a lot of intelligence and law enforcement information and we prepared a paper about a month, six weeks ago which assembled all of that. That paper gives us the first clear indication that the head of the central office is complicit in supporting terrorism, and it also raised questions about Prince Saoud.

Finally, the subject of Phoenix and Portland FBI counterterrorism investigations, also has close ties to a member of the Saudi royal family. No longer resident in the United States, but is still the subject of an FBI investigation. The FBI opened an...
The FBI has developed information that [redacted] has close ties with one of the Saudi princes and accompanies him on many trips, including travel to the United States. According to the FBI, [redacted] was recently interrogated at the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. He informed the FBI that [redacted] got the job at Saudi Arabian Airlines through his contacts. He said that [redacted] did not earn much money in his job, but that he “had another source of income through a Saudi prince” named Khalid bin [redacted]. According to [redacted], performed miscellaneous tasks for the prince, such as handling real estate matters and assisting the prince’s grandmother. [redacted] traveled many places with the prince, including Europe, and often to the United Arab Emirates. [redacted] also made the enigmatic comment that nobody “knew everything about [redacted].” Although bin [redacted] was on the State Department’s watchlist, [redacted] was apparently able to obtain visas from the Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service because he was traveling with the Saudi prince. The FBI only learned of the trip after the fact. Agents in the FBI’s Portland Field Office expressed their concern that [redacted] and others were using their status at Saudi Arabian Airlines employees as a cover to enable them to transport weapons in and out of the United States.

Lack of Saudi Cooperation in Counterterrorism Investigations

In testimony and interviews, a number of FBI agents and CIA officers complained to the Joint Inquiry about a lack of Saudi cooperation in terrorist investigations both before and after the September 11 attacks. For example, aaise, New York FBI agent stated that, from his
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point of view, the Saudis have been useless and obstructionist for years. In this agent's opinion, the Saudis will only act when it is in their self-interest.

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When a high-level officer was asked how the September 11 attacks might have been prevented, he cited greater Saudi cooperation, pointing to an example from the summer of 2001, when the U.S. Government requested Saudi assistance, with no success. In May 2001, the U.S. Government became aware that an individual in Saudi Arabia was in contact with Abu Zubaida and was most likely aware of an upcoming al-Qaeda operation. The U.S. Government pressured the Saudi Government to locate him. The Saudis informed the U.S. Government that they required additional information to do so. The U.S. Government agency that had originally learned of this individual's knowledge refused to provide the Saudis with additional information because it would reveal sources and methods. The National Security Council also tried to pressure the Saudis, but the Saudis would not cooperate without the additional information.

According to some FBI personnel, this type of response is typical from the Saudis. For example, one FBI agent described an investigation after September 11 in which he provided the Saudi Government with copies of the subjects' Saudi passports. The Saudi Government maintained that they had no record of the subjects.

According to the former Chief of Alec Station, the unit in the FBI's Counterterrorist Center established in 1996 to focus specifically on Usama Bin Ladin, it was clear from about 1996 that the Saudi Government would not cooperate with the United States on matters relating to Usama Bin Ladin. There is a May 1996 memo from the FBI's Counterterrorist Center stating that the Saudis had stopped providing background information or other assistance on Bin Ladin because Bin Ladin had "too much information about official Saudi dealings with Islamic extremists in the 1980s for Riyadh to deliver him into U.S. hands." In a June 1997 memo to the DCL, Alec Station emphasized the lack of Saudi cooperation and stated that there was little prospect of future cooperation regarding Bin Ladin. The former Chief of Alec Station thought that the U.S. Government's hope of eventually obtaining Saudi cooperation was unrealistic because Saudi assistance to the U.S. Government on this matter was contrary to Saudi national interests.

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On the issue of al-Qaeda and Saudi intelligence, that goes back to our efforts to intercept with the Saudis to get them to help us on investigating al-Qaeda...for the most part it was a very troubled relationship where the Saudis were not providing us quickly or very vigorously with response to it. Sometimes they did, many times they didn’t. It was just very slow in coming.

Both FBI and CIA personnel cited an individual named Madani al-Tayyib as a specific case in which the Saudis were uncooperative. The CIA and the FBI had been pressuring the Saudis for years for permission to talk to al-Tayyib. According to the former head of ALEC Station, al-Tayyib managed all of Bin Laden’s finances when Bin Laden was in Sudan, and any expense over $1,000 had to be approved by al-Tayyib. Al-Tayyib moved to London in 1996 to work with Khalid al-Fawwaz, another important al-Qaeda figure who has since been arrested. In the summer of 1996, al-Tayyib returned to Saudi Arabia. The Saudis continuously refused the FBI’s and the CIA’s requests to talk to al-Tayyib, stating, in the words of an FBI agent, that al-Tayyib was “just a poor man who lost his leg. He doesn’t know anything.”

The former chief of ALEC Station also cited the example of Mohammed Jamal Khalifa. Khalifa is Bin Laden’s brother-in-law and an important figure in al-Qaeda. The U.S. Government arrested Khalifa in the United States in 1994. Khalifa had been sentenced to death in absentia by the Jordanian Government for his role in a bombing in Jordan. As a result, the U.S. agreed to extradite him to Jordan. The Jordanians then returned him to Saudi Arabia. In the opinion of the CIA officer, the Saudis “bought off” the Jordanians for the return of Khalifa. According to the CIA officer, when Khalifa subsequently arrived in Saudi Arabia, he was met by at least one important government official. Khalifa now works for a Riyadh-based NGO and travels and operates freely.

The General Counsel of the U.S. Treasury Department testified at the July 23, 2002 hearing about the lack of Saudi cooperation with the U.S.
There is an almost intuitive sense, however, that things are not being volunteered. So I
went to fully inform you about it, that we have to ask and we have to seek, and we have to
arrive. I will give you one-and-a-half examples. The first is, after some period, the Saudis
have agreed to the designation of a man named Fulya, who is obviously involved in
all of this, and his designation will be public within the next 30 days. They came forward
to us 2 weeks ago and said, okay, we think we should go forward with the designation,
and a freeze order against Mr. Fulya. We asked, what do you have on him? Because
they certainly know what we have on him, because we shared it as we tried to convince
them that they ought to join us. The answer back was, nothing new.

MR. HERZLITER: Do you believe that?

MR. AUGHAUSER: No, I think that taxes confidentiality, or there is another motive we are not
being told.

Status of the U.S. Intelligence Community's Investigations into Connections Between
Terrorism and Saudi Government Officials

Both the FBI and the CIA have informed the Committees that they are treating the Saudi
issue seriously. According to the November 18, 2002 FBI response, the FBI and CIA have
established a working group to look into the Saudi issue. The FBI formed a squad at the
Washington Field Office...
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However, both the FBI and the CIA still have only a limited understanding of the Saudi Government's terror funding. In the October 9, 2002, closed hearing, Director Mueller noted:

"I don't have one preliminary note of caution, it is that at this point there are more questions than answers, and I would caution against jumping to conclusions before we know a lot more." A document located by the Joint Inquiry Staff confirms that the FBI's Washington Field Office is still in the early stages of focusing on these investigations. In August 2002, communication, a field office agent stated that [redacted] in that same document, the Washington Field Office asked [redacted] acknowledged in his testimony that the understanding of this issue is limited as well.

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With regard to the specific question of have we seen the Saudi intelligence services supporting terrorist groups? I think the record is not clear enough on that.

Both the FBI and CIA recognized the possibility that individuals connected to the Saudi Government may be providing support to terrorists.

[redacted] satisfied:

So there is certainly a good, good chance that there are sympathizers or extremists, sympathizers possibly for al-Qaeda within the security services.

[redacted] also noted that:

Abu Zubaydah said he's confident that al-Qaeda must have contact certainty with Saudi in the United States and that al-Qaeda and Usama bin Laden are particularly [redacted].

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Invest significant energy in cultivating what Abu Zubaydah referred to as good relationships with Saudi officials. He said that Ladin is very pleased when Saudis in the military, those successful in business, and those close to the royal family to lend support to his cause. He said his goal actively seeks out such relationships.

Other CIA and FBI officials echoed these sentiments in recent Congressional testimony:

\[\text{Withheld under statutory authority of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50 U.S.C., section 3507)}\]

What we found troubling about the cases that we learned about from FBI, both the Los Angeles cases and some of the cases that the Washington Field Office has looked at, in which you're seeing Saudi money going to people is that it's sort of a pattern that we've seen in terms of direct payments from the Saudis, the Saudi Government's longstanding support for very fundamentalist Wahhabi and Salafi ideologies and movements around the world, which in a sense you see the money going to fundamentalists and you would be very surprised if someone didn't link it to the terrorist support. We've had a lot of suspicions before September 11. Which we documented in a number of different papers, and again it's a lot of smoke and the money that comes out are who knows about the payments, on whose behalf are the payments being made, are they being made on behalf of the Saudi government or are they being made by local officials or a person. Do the people who are making the payments know what's happening to the money? If they do know what's happening, why are they making the payments? Is it a form of blackmail? Do they recognize the terrorist support? There's the issue of are they regulating themselves as well as are they doing the due diligence that they ought to?

FBI Executive Assistant Director lngale D'Amato testified at that same hearing:

To date I can't sit here and tell you that these ties go back, that we can prove that the Saudi royal family is sponsoring terrorism. But they've always said that we have conducting several investigations to try to determine what other information is out there.

What is clear is that the FBI did not treat the Saudis as a counterterrorism threat prior to September 11, 2001.
Michael Rolince, the former head of the International Terrorism Operations Section at the FBI, testified:

"Yes, to your question is pre-9/11, there were no significant preliminary inquiries or full investigations, with relatively few exceptions, conducted by the FBI looking at al Qaeda or support to terrorism. I'm not going to stand here, Mr. Hill, and tell you any way, shape, or form..."

The former Assistant Special Agent in Charge in San Diego confirmed this in his testimony:

"Basic fact was that the [redacted] were not a country identified by the State Department as a state sponsor of terrorism. And the theme of the common media open-ended this was, was in San Diego, was that of their week, [redacted], there, their primary objective was in mission defense in the interest of protecting the royal family. So they were not viewed as an imminent threat to national security."

In the October 9, 2009, House hearing, Director Mueller acknowledged that he became aware of some of the facts regarding the Saudi issue only as a result of the investigative work of the Joint Inquiry Staff:

"I'm saying that the sequence of events here, as I think the staff viewed and as a result of the probing, some facts came to light here and so no, frankly, had not come to light here, and perhaps would not have come to light had the JFCI not probed. That's what I'm telling you. So I'm agreed with you that the staff probing brought out facts that may not have come to this Committee."

Senator Dewine: But what you're also saying, though, is that that probing then brought facts to your attention?

Director Mueller: Yes,"