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Interview Title: Bassem Youssef
Date: November 10, 2014
Briefer: Bassem Youssef
Commissioner Attendees: Hoffman, Roemer
Staff/FBI Attendees: Grewe

MFR: Grewe

Bassem Youssef Interview:

Bassem Youssef, a retired FBI agent came to the Commission's offices to discuss allegations that he had a source in the early 1990's who was in direct contact with Usama bin Laden (UBL).

When asked about the *Washington Times* article containing the allegations Youssef said the story was for the most part, 99% accurate. In 1992-93 Youssef was working in Los Angeles Field Office on international terrorism matters (it was international terrorism not counterterrorism back then). He received some leads from the []

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Began interest in Abdel-Rahman (the Blind Sheik). Youssef heard about Abdel-Rahman's fiery sermons encouraging people to get weapons training. When Abdel-Rahman came to the U.S. with a visa from Egypt he was spewing anti-Egypt stuff at the mosque but not against the U.S.

Youssef discovered the individual who became his source because []

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Youssef said he learned of an alleged plot against a Masonic lodge from the ex-wife and two other individuals. The Lodge was allegedly targeted because it was "frequented by Jews." But the plot never materialized.

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If the LA cell wanted to conduct an operation, it would make a proposal to Abdel-Rahman and he would say, "Yes, I approve this operation." When the cell wanted to conduct an operation overseas, Abdel-Rahman told them they should "talk to Osama." At the time Abdel-Rahman was UBL's spiritual advisor.

At time Youssef was running the source - 1993-94 - we did not know the significance of UBL. The source did not have direct contact with UBL. The source was in direct contact with Abdel-Rachman. The source was killed by an RPG in Chechnya in 1995.

Youssef described UBL at that time as being known as a charismatic figure, a man of money, wanted to build an Islamic army but not against the US in particular, his focus was on Afghanistan. He drafted a teletype back then saying "UBL is building an Islamic army, he has a lot of money, is charismatic." Youssef said the FBI could not have done anything regarding UBL then - the focus was on Abdel-Rahman.