

Testimony of Moussaoui in civil suit implicates Saudi monarchy as principal sponsor of Al Qaeda

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Zacarias Moussaoui provided testimony last October implicating high-ranking members of the Saudi monarchy in funding and supporting al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan in the years before the attacks on the World Trade Centers and Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

This remarkable testimony was submitted this week in a brief filed against a motion to dismiss a longstanding civil lawsuit against the Saudi government for its involvement in the attacks. The brief was submitted on the behalf of relatives of individuals killed in the attacks. The testimony was featured in a lead *New York Times* article on Wednesday, with much of the material posted on the *Times* web site.

Moussaoui gave his testimony to lawyers representing the plaintiffs at the Florence, Colorado federal supermax prison. He sent a letter last year to Judge George B. Daniels of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, who is hearing the case, indicating that he wished to testify about what he knew about Saudi connections to Al Qaeda.

He is serving a life sentence after pleading guilty to being a coconspirator in the September 11 attacks. Moussaoui was detained by the FBI in Minnesota approximately one month before the attacks on charges of an immigration violation after flight instructors and the flight school he was attending raised suspicions about his intentions.

Moussaoui told the lawyers that he had been responsible for creating an electronic database of Al Qaeda's financial records for the years 1998 to 1999. He remarked that many of the financial transactions during this time were "between Saudi bank, okay, and a

Pakistani bank."

He told the lawyers that his main task in compiling the financial records was to "create a database of donation to see how much money was being given to Al Qaeda."

Asked by the lawyers if he remembered any of the individuals donors identified in the database, Moussaoui listed a number of leading members of the Saudi monarchy who were "known within the circle of mujahedeen." He stated further that "it was all the—the people of importance used to—donate money to bin Laden, that's my understanding."

Among the donors Moussaoui recalled were Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal, a billionaire investment magnate who is one of the wealthiest men in the world; Prince Turki Al Faisal Al Saud, who resigned his position as the director of Saudi Arabia's intelligence agency ten days before the 9/11 attacks; Prince Mohammed bin Faisal Al Saud, a leading Saudi banker with banks in Bahrain, Niger, Egypt and Pakistan; and Princess Haifa Al Faisal Al Saud, wife of Prince Bandar bin Sultan, Saudi Ambassador to the US from 1983 to 2005 and director of Saudi Arabia's intelligence agency from 2012 to 2014.

All of these figures have close ties to sections of the American state and intelligence apparatus.

Moussaoui reported that the money coming from the Saudi royals was vital to maintain the organization. "I mean, without the money of the – of the Saudi you will have nothing," he told the lawyers later in his testimony.

He also recounted an instance in which he traveled to the Saudi embassy in Islamabad and was flown by private jet to Riyadh. There he says he personally

delivered letters from bin Laden to Prince Adbullah, later the king of Saudi Arabia; Prince Bandar; Prince Salman, the current Saudi king; and Al-Waleed bin Talal. Returning to Pakistan on a private jet he delivered two letters from Prince Turki to bin Laden.

Moussaoui recalled another instance in Pakistan in which he met with an individual from the Saudi Arabian embassy in Washington, DC's Islamic Affairs Department named Abu Omar Muawiya. He claims that they discussed a plot to shoot down Air Force One with a stinger missile that would be smuggled into the country through the Saudi embassy. He told the lawyers that the plan was never put into action because Moussaoui was arrested before he could travel to Washington.

In his testimony, Moussaoui also implicated members of Saudi Arabia's highest religious body, the Senior Council of Ulema, as donors to Al Qaeda. Bin Laden was operating Al Qaeda, according to Moussaoui, "with the express advice and consent and directive of the Ulema."

Moussaoui's account broadly conforms to what is already known about the open secret of the 9/11 attacks: that they were largely financed by one of the US's chief allies in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, headed by a monarchical family that has had close ties to the state apparatus, and in particular the Bush administration.

Almost all of the alleged hijackers on 9/11 were Saudi citizens. The official 9/11 Commission Report, which largely whitewashes the many unanswered questions about the circumstances that led up to the attacks, documents some of the ties. Two of the hijackers in the plane that crashed into the Pentagon were allowed to freely travel into the US, where they met with an individual with ties to Saudi intelligence and a supply of money from Saudi Arabia.

The Bush administration also organized a flight out of the US for high-ranking members of the Saudi ruling class, including members of the bin Laden family, in the days after the September 11 attacks.

Affidavits were also submitted on Monday in support of continuing the civil suit by former Senators Bob Kerrey and Bob Graham as well as former Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, calling for further investigations into Saudi ties to Al Qaeda and the September 11 attacks. Kerrey and Lehman served on

the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, which produced the 9/11 Commission Report.

Graham was the co-chairman of the Joint Congressional Inquiry into the activities of the intelligence community leading up to the attack. He has demanded the publication of 28 still classified pages from the report published by the Inquiry in 2002 that implicate Saudi Arabia as a chief financier of the attacks.

Both the Bush and the Obama administrations have obstructed the release of the classified 28 pages.



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