



Washington, D.C. 20505

23 May 2002



Reference: F-2002-00594

Dear 

This acknowledges receipt, on 25 April 2002, of your 8 January 2002 letter requesting records under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Specifically, your request is for records pertaining to:

**Usama Bin Ladin**

For identification purposes we have assigned your request the number referenced above. Please refer to this number in future correspondence.

As you may know, the discovery of anthrax in a letter mailed to the United States Senate on 15 October 2001 led to a series of escalating safety concerns about opening, handling, and even being in the proximity of mail, especially in government offices in Washington, D.C. These concerns, in turn, led to disruptions in, and then total curtailments of, mail delivery service, to include Freedom of Information Act-related correspondence, at many federal agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency.

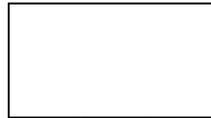
Under such extraordinary circumstances, the administration of the Freedom of Information Act has inevitably been delayed at all affected federal agencies. As a matter of both common sense and legal precedent, when mail delivery is delayed, so is the commencement of the process of FOIA administration, regardless of the time at which a FOIA request is placed into the mail by the requester or postmarked thereafter. Simply put, the FOIA process cannot begin until the personnel of an agency FOIA office are able to open any belatedly delivered item of mail.

Concerning your request, we have determined that the information you are asking for must be denied to you, since it is properly classified under the provisions of Executive Order 12958. The information also relates directly to intelligence sources and methods which, in accordance with Subsection 103(c)(6) of the National Security Act of 1947 and Section 6 of the CIA Act of 1949, the Director of Central Intelligence has the legal responsibility and authority to protect from unauthorized disclosure. Exemptions (b)(1), (b)(3) and (b)(7)(A) of the FOIA apply. An explanation of these exemptions is enclosed.

The CIA official responsible for this denial is Kathryn I. Dyer, Information and Privacy Coordinator. You may appeal this decision by addressing your appeal to the Agency Release Panel within 45 days from the date of this letter, in my care. Should you choose to do this, please explain the basis of your appeal.

We regret we are unable to assist you in this matter.

Sincerely,

A rectangular box with a black border, used to redact the signature of Kathryn I. Dyer.

Kathryn I. Dyer

Information and Privacy Coordinator

Enclosure