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PDB MEMO

DATE: 09/01/98
SUBJECT: Bin Ladin's Infrastructure in North America
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1 September
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SUBJECT: Bin Ladin's Infrastructure in North America

1. [REDACTED] several members of Bin Ladin's organization live in the US but appear to be loosely connected rather than organized as a cell. These members include Wadi' al-Hajj--a US citizen--who was the Bin Ladin cell leader in Nairobi before his arrest in Kenya in 1997. He now lives in Dallas where FBI officials monitor his activities. His current role in Bin Ladin's organization is unclear, but his high-level position in Kenya and previous mujahidin experience could give him a role in terrorist-related operations here.

--- Another Bin Ladin associate in Sacramento has extensive paramilitary experience, served with the mujahidin in Afghanistan, and claims to have trained Bin Ladin's bodyguards in Sudan. He has had contact with al-Hajj and Egyptian al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya members in the US.

--- A Bin Ladin associate in Tampa procures hi-tech communications and surveillance equipment for Bin Ladin and may provide technical support to

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the organization. He has ties to HAMAS and the US branch of a [REDACTED] NGO [REDACTED]

--- FBI officials are pursuing another Bin Ladin associate, who was last seen in the US a year ago and may be Bin Ladin's chief weapons procurement official, explosives expert, and a member of his Shura council. [REDACTED]

2. Bin Ladin uses NGOs to fund his organization and provide cover for its activities worldwide and has longstanding links to several Islamic NGOs with US branches. Mercy International Relief Agency (MIRA) maintains offices in Michigan and California. [REDACTED] MIRA offices abroad have provided cover and logistic support to Bin Ladin associates.

--- [REDACTED] According to a pamphlet published by MIRA, the organization has an affiliated group in Canada called Mercy for International Relief Agency.

--- [REDACTED] Bin Ladin helped found the Pakistani-based NGO Maktab al-Khidamat (MAK), which has offices in New York and Boston. The office in New York, the al-Khifah Center, was linked to the World Trade Center bombing.

[REDACTED] MAK officials and Bin Ladin in January discussed expanding narcotics exports to the US and Europe. [REDACTED]

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3. Bin Ladin has ties to Egyptian extremist groups with a longstanding presence in the US and Canada, which could collaborate in terrorist operations. Gama'at leader Mustapha Hamza [REDACTED] that the group "will not stay quiet after the US attacks" in Sudan and Afghanistan.

--- Gama'at members are scattered throughout the US--including New York, California, and Florida--and have a presence in Vancouver and Toronto, Canada, according to FBI information.
[REDACTED]

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