

[REDACTED]

27 September 2000

SUBJECT: Millennium Plots Reveal Refinements to Bin Ladin's Methods

1. [REDACTED]

Bin Ladin's al-Qa'ida organization has reacted to political pressure and security crackdowns by reaching out to other Sunni extremists and simplifying preoperational planning. [REDACTED] the al-Qa'ida leadership approved the broad outlines of the terrorist plotting in Jordan and allowed local cell members to choose the targets and timing of the attacks.

- In contrast, [REDACTED] before the East Africa bombings in 1998 suggested a more direct leadership role in terrorist planning, and [REDACTED] Bin Ladin and his lieutenants oversaw target selection.
- The [REDACTED] cell's plans to attack US and Israeli tourists suggest a shift to attacking soft civilian targets, possibly because of heightened US attention to embassy security and military force protection. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] *during the past two years indicate that al-Qa'ida operatives are increasingly aware of operational security.* [REDACTED]

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2. Bin Ladin is utilizing sympathizers outside al-Qa'ida to respond to the Taliban's insistence that he act more discreetly and to bolster his claim that he only provides ideological justification for anti-US attacks and has no role in their execution. Al-Qa'ida members led the cells in [REDACTED] but most of their subordinates did not have formal ties to the group and had not previously targeted US interests.

- [REDACTED] instructors at al-Qa'ida camps in Afghanistan point to Bin Ladin as a model Islamic fighter, but they no longer ask new *mujahidin* to join al-Qa'ida. [REDACTED]

For further information, contact the Chief, DCI Counterterrorist Center Assessments Group, at [REDACTED]

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