

For Immediate Release

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Judicial Watch Releases New FBI Documents: Osama bin Laden May Have Chartered Saudi Flight Out of U.S. after 9/11

(Washington, DC) -- Judicial Watch, the public interest group that investigates and prosecutes government corruption, today released new documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") related to the "expeditious departure" of Saudi nationals, including members of the bin Laden family, from the United States following the 9/11 attacks. According to one of the formerly confidential documents, dated 9/21/2001, terrorist Osama bin Laden may have chartered one of the Saudi flights.

The document states: "ON 9/19/01, A 727 PLANE LEFT LAX, RYAN FLT #441 TO ORLANDO, FL W/ETA (estimated time of arrival) OF 4-5PM. THE PLANE WAS CHARTERED EITHER BY THE SAUDI ARABIAN ROYAL FAMILY OR OSAMA BIN LADEN...THE LA FBI SEARCHED THE PLANE [REDACTED] LUGGAGE, OF WHICH NOTHING UNUSUAL WAS FOUND." The plane was allowed to depart the United States after making four stops to pick up passengers, ultimately landing in Paris where all passengers disembarked on 9/20/01, according to the document.

Overall, the FBI's most recent document production includes details of the six flights between 9/14 and 9/24 that evacuated Saudi royals and bin Laden family members. The documents also contain brief interview summaries and occasional notes from intelligence analysts concerning the cursory screening performed prior to the departures. According to the FBI documents, incredibly not a single Saudi national nor any of the bin Laden family members possessed any information of investigative value.

Moreover, the documents contain numerous errors and inconsistencies which call to question the thoroughness of the FBI's investigation of the Saudi flights. For example, on one document, the FBI claims to have interviewed 20 of 23 passengers on the Ryan International Airlines flight (commonly referred to as the "Bin Laden Family Flight"). On another document, the FBI claims to have interviewed 15 of 22 passengers on the same flight.

"Eight days after the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history, Osama bin Laden possibly charters a flight to whisk his family out of the country, and it's not worth more than a luggage search and a few brief interviews?" asked Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. "Clearly these documents prove the FBI conducted a slapdash investigation of these Saudi flights. We'll never know how many investigative leads were lost due to the FBI's lack of diligence."

U.S. District Court Judge Richard W. Roberts ordered the FBI to resubmit "proper disclosures" to the Court and Judicial Watch, having previously criticized the adequacy of redaction descriptions, the validity of exemption claims, and other errors in the FBI's disclosures. Incredibly, the FBI had previously redacted Osama bin Laden's name from the records in order "to protect privacy interests."

The latest version of the FBI documents, obtained under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and through ongoing litigation (Judicial Watch v. Department of Homeland Security & Federal Bureau of Investigation, No. 04-1643 (RWR)) is available below.

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Click [here](#) to view the latest version of the FBI Saudi Flight Documents