

# 336-5

Date: 20021121

TO: ALEC

(b)(1)  
(b)(3) NatSecAct

FROM:

SUBJECT: EYES ONLY - DETAILS OF [ ] NOVEMBER 2002 FIRST INTERROGATION SESSION WITH 'ABD AL-RAHIM AL-NASHIRI [ ] (b)(1) [ ] (b)(3) NatSecAct

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TO: IMMEDIATE ALEC INFO (b)(1) [ ] DIRECTOR.

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FOR: [ ] (b)(3) CIAAct  
(b)(1) [ ] (b)(3) NatSecAct

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TEXT:

1. ACTION REQUIRED: DEFER TO HEADQUARTERS FOR DISSEMINATION OF ALL OR PART OF THE BELOW IN INTEL FORMAT. ALSO REQUEST THAT HEADQUARTERS PROVIDE US WITH A COPY OF POCKET LITTER FOUND ON SUBJECT, TO FACILITATE FUTURE DEBRIEFINGS.

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2. SUMMARY: ON [ ] NOVEMBER, DAY FIVE OF THE AGGRESSIVE INTERROGATION PHASE OF SENIOR AL-QA'IDA OPERATIVE 'ABD AL-RAHIM AL-((NASHIRI)) AKA MULLAH ((BILAL)) (SUBJECT), SUBJECT WAS DEBRIEFED THREE TIMES BY HVT INTERROGATORS [ ]

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ACCOMPANIED BY [REDACTED] THE FIRST SESSION RAN FROM 0950 HOURS TO 1054 HOURS, CONCENTRATING ON SUBJECT'S ACTIVITIES FROM FEBRUARY 2002 UNTIL THE TIME OF HIS ARREST IN UAE, TO INCLUDE DETAILS OF THE HORMUZ OPERATION, AND THE CONCEPTION OF THE DUBAI OPERATION.

3. THE FIRST SESSION OF THE DAY BEGAN WHEN SECURITY TEAM, INTERROGATORS AND LINGUIST ENTERED THE CELL AT 0950 HOURS, SUBJECT WAS REMOVED FROM THE LARGE BOX, AND WAS LED, HOODED, TO THE WALLING WALL. SUBJECT'S HOOD WAS SLOWLY REMOVED FROM HIS HEAD, THE ROLLED TOWEL/NECK SUPPORT PLACED AROUND HIS NECK, AND THE INTERROGATION SESSION BEGAN. INTERROGATORS REMINDED SUBJECT THAT THEY HAD LEFT OFF ON HIS STORY WHEN THE HORMUZ OPERATION HAD BEEN CANCELED, WHICH HE HAD SAID WAS IN APPROXIMATELY FEBRUARY 2002. SUBJECT WAS TO TELL THEM WHY THE OPERATION HAD BEEN CANCELED. SUBJECT REMAINED MUTE; INTERROGATORS MENACINGLY DIRECTED SUBJECT TO SPEAK UP. SUBJECT MUMBLED SOMETHING; TOLD TO REPEAT IT, HE STATED THAT HE HAD REMEMBERED SOMETHING FROM THE DAY BEFORE, AND ASKED IF INTERROGATORS WANTED HIM TO TELL IT. TOLD TO SPIT IT OUT, SUBJECT SAID [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] INTERROGATORS TOLD SUBJECT THAT THEY WERE PLEASED HE HAD RECALLED THIS INFORMATION, AND TOLD IT TO THEM. THEY THEN DIRECTED HIM TO RETURN TO THE SUBJECT AT HAND, THE HORMUZ OPERATION AND WHY IT WAS CANCELED.

4. SUBJECT STATED THAT THE MAIN REASON THE OPERATION WAS CANCELED WAS THAT ((BADR)) CONTACTED HIM VIA MOBILE PHONE TEXT MESSAGE AND NOTIFIED HIM THAT THE BROTHERS WERE UNABLE TO GET THE NECESSARY MATERIALS. THE OPERATION WAS CANCELED RATHER THAN DELAYED HE SAID, BECAUSE MOST OF THE BROTHERS [REDACTED] AND THREE OF THE YEMENI "LABORERS" INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION) BELIEVED THAT THE SECURITY SITUATION FOR THEM WAS BAD; AL-((DARBI)) WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS NOT CONVINCED THAT THE OPERATION SHOULD BE HALTED, AND WANTED TO CONTINUE. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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5. INTERROGATORS TOLD SUBJECT TO TELL THEM ABOUT HIS LACK OF MEANS FOR THIS OPERATION. SUBJECT SAID THAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS OPERATION HAD BEEN TO HAVE YEMENI "LABORERS" CARRY OUT THE OPERATION ITSELF. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] SUBJECT SAID UBL DIDN'T GIVE HIM A SET AMOUNT OF MONEY TO FINANCE THE OPERATION, STATING THAT WHEN HE NEEDED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MONEY FOR ON PORTION OF THE OPERATION, HE ASKED FOR IT AND IT WAS PROVIDED BY UBL. [REDACTED]

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(b)(1) [REDACTED] INTERROGATORS IMMEDIATELY  
(b)(3) NatSecAct ATTENTION GRAB WITH SUBJECT, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] WHILE APPLYING THE WALLING TECHNIQUE FOR EMPHASIS. INTERROGATOR MENACINGLY TOLD SUBJECT HE HAD BETTER ANSWER HIM NOW, AND SLAPPED THE WALLING WALL WITH HIS HAND.

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7. ASKED IF THE YEMENI "LABORERS" EVER LEARNED TO CREW THE BOAT, SUBJECT SAID NO, EXPLAINING THAT THE SHIP WAS IN DUBAI FOR TWO MONTHS WHILE THE LEGAL PAPERWORK WENT THROUGH, AND THAT DURING THIS TIME, THE SHIP NEVER SET SAIL. SUBJECT STATED THAT WHEN HE CANCELED THE OPERATION, HE SENT THE "LABORERS" BACK TO YEMEN; SUBJECT WAS TOLD TO EXPLAIN. HESITATING FOR A MOMENT, SUBJECT ASKED IF INTERROGATORS WANTED THE SHORT ANSWER OR THE DETAILED ONE; INTERROGATORS SAID THEY WANTED DETAILS. SUBJECT SAID THAT WHEN HE GOT NEWS THAT THEY WOULD BE UNABLE TO OBTAIN THE EXPLOSIVES, AND DECIDED TO END THE OPERATION, HE HELD A MEETING WITH THE YEMENI "LABORERS" AND TOLD THEM TO GO BACK TO YEMEN.

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SUBJECT CONTINUED, STATING THAT HE TOLD THE YEMENIS THAT THE OPERATION WAS CANCELED, AND THAT THEY WERE TO GO TO YEMEN AND "JOIN OTHER MEN THERE LIKE US". INTERROGATORS CHALLENGED SUBJECT ON THIS -- HE QUICKLY ADDED THAT HE MEANT THEY COULD JOIN ((ABU WALID)) OR OTHER GROUPS THERE IN YEMEN. ASKED IF HE KNEW OF OTHER SUCH INDIVIDUALS IN YEMEN, SUBJECT STATED THAT HE DID NOT. HE SAID HE SENT THE GROUP TO ABU WALID, BECAUSE ABU WALID WAS SENT TO YEMEN THROUGH SUBJECT BECAUSE ABU WALID HAD AN OPERATION THERE (IN YEMEN). SUBJECT WAS ASKED IF THIS WAS THE SAME AS "FACILITATING" ABU WALID'S TRIP, AND SUBJECT CLARIFIED THAT NO, THIS WAS NOT THE SAME AS "FACILITATING", BECAUSE ABU WALID HAD HIS OWN OPERATION, WHICH SUBJECT COULD NOT INTERFERE WITH. THAT SAID, ABU WALID WAS A FRIEND, SO WHEN HE CAME THROUGH, SUBJECT PUT ABU WALID UP AT BADR'S HOUSE, BOUGHT HIM A TICKET (TO YEMEN), THEN SENT HIM ON HIS WAY. ASKED IF HE KNEW WHAT ABU WALID'S PLANS WERE, SUBJECT STATED THAT HE KNEW ABU WALID WAS WORKING ON A PLOT SIMILAR TO HIS OWN. SUBJECT ELABORATED (AT INTERROGATOR SUGGESTION) THAT UBL HAD DELEGATED TO HIM THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OVERSEEING THE HORMUZ OPERATION. LATER ON (NFI), UBL TOLD SUBJECT THAT AL-QA'IDA HAD A GROUP THAT WOULD BE SENT TO YEMEN TO HIT AN OIL TANKER. SUBJECT ASKED UBL WHAT UBL WANTED HIM TO DO, AND UBL REPLIED THAT SUBJECT WAS JUST TO "FACILITATE," AS THE GROUP ALREADY HAD EVERYTHING ELSE. ASKED IF "FACILITATE" MEANT "FACILITATE TRAVEL", AS HE DID WITH ABU WALID, SUBJECT EXPLAINED THAT WHEN HIS GROUP WAS READY TO DO THE HORMUZ OPERATION, AND ABU WALID'S GROUP WAS READY TO DO THEIR OPERATION, HE AND ABU WALID WERE TO BE IN TOUCH SO THAT THE TWO OPERATIONS COULD BE EXECUTED SIMULTANEOUSLY.

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HE SAID HE CONTACTED HAZIM, WHO ALONG WITH AL-DARBI CAME TO THE HOTEL TO MEET HIM. SUBJECT SAID A FRIENDSHIP DEVELOPED AMONG THE THREE, AND THEY DECIDED TO CHECK INTO ACQUIRING A SMALL BOAT; THIS WAS SOMETIME DURING MARCH 2002. SUBJECT ELABORATED THAT BY THE TIME HE ARRIVED IN DUBAI, THE LARGE SHIP WHICH WAS TO HAVE BEEN USED FOR THE HORMUZ OP HAD ALREADY BEEN PURCHASED; THERE WERE TWO PAKISTANIS (WHO WERE TO GUARD THE BOAT) AND THREE YEMENIS (THE "LABORERS" WHO ULTIMATELY WERE TO HAVE DRIVEN THE TWO SMALLER BOATS INTO THE U.S. OIL TANKERS) ALREADY ON BOARD. SUBJECT WAS THEN TOLD ABOUT THE THEN-DELAY IN ACQUIRING THE EXPLOSIVES, AND WENT TO BEGIN SEARCHING FOR THE FIRST OF THE TWO SMALL FIBERGLASS BOATS WHICH WERE TO SERVE AS THE DELIVERY VEHICLES FOR THE EXPLOSIVES. SUBJECT SAID THEY (MEANING HE, AL-DARBI AND HAZIM) WENT TO THE FACTORY WHERE SUCH BOATS WERE MADE, AND ACQUIRED

THE REQUISITE SPECIFICATIONS/INFORMATION ON THE CRAFTS THEY WERE LOOKING TO PURCHASE. THE GROUP ALSO CONTACTED A MECHANICAL ENGINEER, WHO THEY WERE HOPING COULD PROVIDE WITH COSTING INFORMATION ON A USED/REFURBISHED MOTOR, AS NEW ENGINES WERE VERY EXPENSIVE. DURING THIS TIME, IN THEIR HUNT FOR A SMALL BOAT, THE TRIO CAME ACROSS A SMALL BOAT ALREADY NAMED "BILAL"; DISCUSSING THE CRAFT WITH THE OWNER, THEY WERE ADVISED THAT FOR 30,000 EMIRATI DIRHAMS THEY COULD PURCHASE IT. AFTER LEAVING THAT MAN, SUBJECT ADVISED THE OTHER TWO THAT THEY REALLY DID NEED TO PURCHASE A BOAT, ANY BOAT, AND SOON, NOTING THAT EVEN THE "BILAL" WOULD SUIT THEIR PURPOSES. AL-DARBI THEREFORE BOUGHT THE "BILAL" FOR THEIR USE IN THE HORMUZ OP.

9. RESPONDING TO INTERROGATOR QUESTIONING, SUBJECT STATED THAT THE LARGE WOODEN BOAT ALREADY CAME WITH SEA AND WATERWAY CHARTS; THESE WERE OLD, HOWEVER, AND HE ADVISED THE YEMENIS TO PURCHASE NEW ONES. HE SUGGESTED THAT THEY BUY ONES OF THE WATERWAYS BETWEEN THE EMIRATES AND PAKISTAN. SUBJECT CONTINUE WITH HIS TALE (AT THE END OF MARCH BY NOW), STATING THAT ONCE AL-DARBI PURCHASED THE "BILAL", THEY BEGAN TO WORK WITH THE SHIP, TAKING IT ON TRIAL RUNS AND WORKING ON THE ENGINE, WHICH SOMETIMES GAVE OUT COMPLETELY. ON ONE SUCH TRIAL RUN, WHILE IN THE DUBAI HARBOR, AL-DARBI SPOTTED A BRITISH WARSHIP, AND COMMENTED THAT HE HAD NOTED OTHER SUCH MILITARY SHIPS DOCKING IN THE DUBAI HARBOR (PORT RASHID). SUBJECT CLAIMED HE TOLD AL-DARBI THAT THIS SHIP WAS NOT THEIR CONCERN AT THIS TIME, AND THAT THEY SHOULD FOCUS ON THE SUBJECT AT HAND (HORMUZ) AND TALK ABOUT WARSHIPS LATER. INTERROGATORS ASKED WHETHER ABU WALID'S OP PLANNING WAS ALSO ONGOING AT THIS TIME; SUBJECT SAID ABU WALID'S OPERATIONAL PLANNING HAD BEGUN LONG BEFORE, NOTING THAT ABU WALID HAD ALREADY GONE TO YEMEN TO BEGIN THAT OPERATION BEFORE 11 SEPTEMBER 2001. SUBJECT AGAIN PICKED UP THE THREAD OF HIS STORY, STATING THAT THE DAY AFTER SPOTTING THE WARSHIP IN THE HARBOR, AL-DARBI WENT TO FINALIZE THE PAPERWORK FOR THE "BILAL". ADDITIONALLY, AL-DARBI WAS TRYING TO BUY A HOIST TO MOUNT ON THE LARGE WOODEN SHIP. INTERROGATORS INTERRUPTED, ANGRILY STATING THAT SUBJECT HAD DISCUSSED THIS ALL WITH THEM PREVIOUSLY; THEY TOLD SUBJECT THEY TOLD HIM TO BEGIN HIS TALE IN FEBRUARY, NOT LATE MARCH, AS HE HAD ORIGINALLY TOLD THEM THAT HE DECIDED TO CANCEL THE HORMUZ OPERATION IN FEBRUARY. WITH INTERROGATORS GLARING AT HIM, SUBJECT BLEATED THAT HE REALLY DIDN'T REMEMBER EXACTLY WHEN HE ULTIMATELY DECIDED TO CANCEL THE HORMUZ OPERATION, SAYING THAT HE THOUGHT HE DID SO AT THE END OF MARCH; HE WAS ABLE TO REMEMBER THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE, BUT NOT THE EXACT DATES OF WHEN THINGS OCCURRED.

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SUBJECT SAID THAT ONCE THE HORMUZ OP WAS CANCELED, THE YEMENIS HAD RETURNED TO YEMEN, AL-DARBI HAD TAKEN THE WOODEN SHIP AND HEADED TO SOMALIA, AND HE HIMSELF WENT TO SAUDI ARABIA, SUBJECT BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT OTHER OPERATIONS HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO. ASKED IF AL-DARBI TOOK THE SHIP TO SELL, SUBJECT SAID THAT AL-DARBI HAD TAKEN THE SHIP TO SOMALIA WITH GOODS (LUMBER),

AND PLANNED TO USE THE SHIP COMMERCIALY, AS AL-DARBI HAD HEARD THERE WAS A LUCRATIVE TRADE IN TRANSPORTING SHEEP FROM SOMALIA TO YEMEN. SUBJECT ELABORATED THAT HE AND AL-DARBI HAD ACTUALLY FOUGHT ABOUT THIS, AS SUBJECT TO SELL THE SHIP IN THE EMIRATES AND BE DONE WITH IT. SUBJECT SAID THAT ONCE AL-DARBI LEFT FOR SOMALIA, HE HAD NOT BEEN IN CONTACT WITH HIM AT ALL, AND DID NOT KNOW WHETHER AL-DARBI CONTINUED TO WORK IN THE SHEEP TRANSPORT BUSINESS, OR WHETHER AL-DARBI STILL HAD THE LARGE WOODED BOAT. INTERROGATORS TOLD SUBJECT THAT HE WAS TO NOW SIT, AND THINK ABOUT ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF HIS HARBOR PLAN, AS THEY WOULD BE BACK. SUBJECT WAS GIVEN THE CHOICE OF SITTING ON THE FLOOR, HOODED, OR BEING RETURNED TO THE LARGE BOX; SUBJECT SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO "THINK" IN THE LARGE BOX. SUBJECT WAS HOODED, THEN LED TO THE LARGE BOX BY SECURITY TEAM MEMBERS. SUBJECT WAS LOCKED IN THE LARGE BOX AT 1054 HOURS, AND INTERROGATORS/INTERPRETER LEFT THE ROOM.

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