

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 03/05/2010

On 06/18/2009, 07/15/2009, and 11/23/2009, SA Derick C. Smith interviewed Muhammad 'Abai Al-Dani of Atlanta, Georgia. After being advised of the identity of the interviewing agent and the nature of the investigation, Al-Dani provided the following information:

On 06/18/2009, SA Derick C. SMITH interviewed Muhammad 'Abai AL-DANI at his residence. Al-Dani was queried about his knowledge of Essam HAMAMA (subject of the captioned matter) and any affiliation Hamama may have had with the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS). Al-Dani was also shown a photograph of Hamama provided by the Detroit Division.

Al-Dani was familiar with Hamama's name and recognized the photograph as being him. Al-Dani recalled that it was very likely Hamama had some relationship with the IIS, although he could not say conclusively. *{NOTE: Information provided by Al-Dani closely mirrored his statements during an interview with the Chicago Division in 2005.}* Al-Dani remembered that Hamama resided in Detroit, and also was under the impression he may have resided in San Diego at some point.

Al-Dani asked the following questions that could perhaps aid in his recollection regarding Hamama:

- What is the date range of his alleged affiliation with the IIS and/or Ba'ath Party?
- Was his IIS affiliation with a specific section/department?
- Dates of known travel to Iraq?
- Length of residence in Detroit?
- In addition to his work with the U.S. Army/DoD, did he have additional employment while in Detroit?
- Did he previously reside in San Diego? If so, how long and what was his employment while there?

Investigation on 03/05/2010 at Atlanta, Georgia

File # 97A-DE-82426

Date dictated 03/05/2010

by SA Derick C. Smith



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On 07/15/2009, SA Derick C. SMITH interviewed Muhammad 'Abai AL-DANI at his residence. Al-Dani was again queried about his knowledge of Essam HAMAMA and any affiliation Hamama may have had with the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS).

Al-Dani reiterated that he was generally familiar with Hamama, but still recalled no specific information regarding him. As part of the interview, SA Smith provided Al-Dani with answers to some clarifying questions posed during the 06/18/09 interview. One of the questions focused on Hamama's time spent in San Diego. Al-Dani advised that he had an old friend who lived in the San Diego area (El Cajon). This individual, Josef SHAMAM, had been an IIS source since the 1970s and served as a "liaison officer" for the Iraqi immigrant community in San Diego. Al-Dani seemed to recall that Shamam may have mentioned Hamama to him in conversation, but was certain that Shamam would've been aware of Hamama. Al-Dani is not certain of Shamam's current whereabouts, as they have not spoken in almost 10 years. The last time Al-Dani saw Shamam in person was in 1997. He met Shamam in Jordan and they drove to Baghdad together. At the time, Al-Dani was assigned with IIS in India (September 1996-March 1999).

It was also while in San Diego, that Hamama wrote a letter to the Iraqi Government. The letter was very pro-Saddam in tone, and advocated alignment of the Assyrian Democratic Movement under Saddam. In the letter, Hamama identified himself as the owner of an Iraqi immigrant magazine, "Al-Ikhtiyar". Al-Dani was shown Arabic and English translation copies of this letter and Iraqi Intelligence memos referencing the letter and the approval of entry visas for Hamama and two (2) other individuals to travel to Iraq. Al-Dani stated that it would not be uncommon for an Iraqi immigrant who owned a newspaper, magazine, business, etc. to write such a letter to attract the attention of the Iraqi Government. In the majority of these instances, government funding was the eventual goal. By the date of the letter and visa issuance, Al-Dani finds it logical to believe Hamama's relationship with IIS began in the mid-1990s. When advised that Hamama first arrived in San Diego in the mid-80s, he stated it would've taken a few years for him, as an Iraqi immigrant, to "become famous" (i.e. be noticed by the IIS).

Al-Dani was also shown the two (2) Arabic documents from the IIS. The first regarded entry visa approval and was dated 11/27/1996. Al-Dani advised that this letter was signed by Radi Abid Alstar Al Nidawi (Director of D4 in M4) and Isam Khidthier aka

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Kithier (Director of Opposition Section in M4). Khidthier's signature is also on the second document dated 7/9/1997. The second document is a memo regarding opposition matters. Al-Dani stated that Al Nidawi was jailed in 1997 for comments deemed critical of Saddam Hussein. Al Nidawi was initially confronted over this matter by a nephew of Saddam (a son of Saddam's half-brother Watban). Al Nidawi was dismissed from the IIS during the 1998-99 timeframe. Al Nidawi was anti-Saddam, and Al-Dani assumes he may have a role in the current Iraqi Government.

According to Al-Dani, Isam Khidthier was a ruthless killer, who was also feared "within" the IIS. According to Al-Dani, during the 1991 "Intifada" (Shi'ia uprising in southern Iraq at the end of Operation Desert Storm), Khidthier was working alongside Haji Abd Majid, the brother of Ali Hassan Al-Majid (aka Chemical Ali). 200-300 Shi'ia detainees were brought to the area where Haji and Khidthier were located. Haji was lamenting over how long it would take to question all of them. Khidthier told him to go drink tea and relax, and he would handle the situation. Haji came back later and asked for the status of the detainees. Khidthier advised they had been taken care of and were no longer a concern (i.e. executed).

Al-Dani also provided the following names of individuals who would likely know or perhaps have information about Hamama:

Dr. Salah Abid Al-Rahman Al-Hadithi: Director of the U.S. Desk in M4 (1996-97). More recently a law professor at Baghdad University. More information regarding Al-Hadithi could possibly be obtained from **FBI-Chicago**. Al-Dani could not recall the names of the FBI SAs in Chicago, but believed one to be an SA ROBERTS.

Jabar Abid Hamzah: Director of the New York Station in 1996. Referenced in one of the letters provided by FBI-Detroit. Al-Dani is not certain, but considers it possible that Hamzah could also be working for the current Iraqi Government.

Hamid Mahmoud Hamid: Chief of the Washington Station in 1997. Was also known by the nickname "Red".

Al-Dani is amenable for recontact and is willing to assist the FBI in this matter if possible. He reiterated that there should be an IIS administrative file detailing Hamama's recruitment and handlers. Al-Dani advised that although he does

مهاز المخابرات
م. م. ح. وشيخي
العدد ٢٥٤٥

التاريخ ٩٦/١١/٢٧

اعلام

١/٢٥/٩٤

الى السيد م. م. المترم و
العدد ٢٥٤٥
١١/٢٧/٩٦

طيباً صامتاً السيد م. م. المترم
بشأن رسالة مدير محطة ليونجورك
ومرفقه رسالة مصدرنا عماد
حماة والمنقحة رسالة موجهة
الى السيد وزير الخارجية من الجدة
نوبيل هومز - سكرتير عام هوز بيت لنهرين
الذي يقرأه

للتنقل بالاطلاع واتخاذ ما يلزم من تدبيرات
مع التقدير
الملاقات

رسالة مدير محطة
رسالة المصدر
رسالة مكرمة في طما لتتكملي
١١/٢٧/٩٦
١١/٢٧/٩٦
١١/٢٧/٩٦

Signature

Radi ABid Alstar AL Nidawi
Director of D4 in M4.

ISAM KHIDHIER

عصام خدير / مدير المراقبة

File #:

Document #: 4

This is a two page document. The first page is a memo to the directors of the divisions for the opposing activities. [TN: Iraqi Intelligence] It attaches a copy of a presidential order dated on 7/11/1997 regarding how to deal with opposition organizations and it's leaders that uses extreme nationalism as a cover for it's hostile work and it's leaders.

The other letter on this document say that an approval of an entry visa has been attained for each of No' al Hirmitz from Chicago. And Issam Hamamah from California. And Yusif Su Yusif from Australia. Both subjects of interest of New York letter number 214 dated on 6/17/1997.

Hamid

سليم / ولد 1968

Hamid Mahmoud Hamid

Chief of Washington

Station in 1997

Called ~~Hamid~~

"Red" Hamid

سید علی احمدی 2140 : 3 (D)

Dr. Salah ABid AL-Rahman

AL- Hadithi

Director of US Desk

IN M4- 1996-1997

May know ISSam Hamana

- Law Professor in Baghdad now
(B. Univ)

Hamman

دكتور عبد الحليم / مدير محطة

عام 1997

JarBar A Bid Hamza

Director of P N-X

Station In 1996

Reference in

letter. Assumes poss he
is working for service
now

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not have direct information regarding Hamama, he could possibly be of use in authenticating IIS documents and/or signatures of IIS officials.

On 11/23/2009, SA Derick C. SMITH interviewed Muhammad 'Abai AL-DANI at his residence. Al-Dani was asked to review approximately 80 photocopies of declassified Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) documents. The documents were provided by FBI-Detroit, who in turn received them from volunteers of the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM). Al-Dani provided the following assessment of the documents:

Many of the documents contained references to the captioned subject, Issam HAMAMA, and others expressing interest in either visiting or cooperating with the Iraqi government. Some of the references about Hamama were in regard to a letter he wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) introducing an individual named Noel HIERMIZ and recommending he be invited to visit Iraq. Hiermiz was the General Secretary of the BAIN NAHREAN ("The Democratic Party Between the Two Rivers"). The insinuation of the letter was that he was an individual who could possibly cooperate with the Iraqi Government. (See document set #1)

Other documents further referenced Hiermiz and provided biographical information, as well as identifying additional individuals who wished to travel to Iraq. Hiermiz joined the Bain Nahrean in 1988 and became General Secretary by 1996. In a letter written by Hiermiz to the MFA, he advised that the new leadership of the Bain Nahrean was more friendly to the Iraqi Government. According to Al-Dani's reading of the documents, Hiermiz came to the U.S. in the 1970s and later became an American citizen, and owned a company that sold spare auto parts. Some of the aforementioned documents were internal IIS documents commenting on the desire of several individuals wishing to travel to Iraq. Some of these were signed by the Director of the IIS Office, Mana'd Abid AL RASHID. Dates of travel ranged from mid-March 1997 to August 1997. In a memo, the New York Station informed IIS Headquarters of this prospective travel. It indicated that three (3) individuals wished to travel. This group would include leadership of Bain Nahrean, and they would be accompanied by "the source" Hamama. {NOTE: There were references to "source 6129", but Al-Dani could not confirm that this was a reference to Hamama.} This New York Station document referred to a letter written by Hiermiz to the Iraqi United Nations Mission in which he expressed his willingness to cooperate. The prospective travelers listed were Shamon KHAMO,

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Noel Hiermiz, Yousif SOBOYOF, and Issam Hamama. Hiermiz applied for a visa, and separately, Shamon Khamo wrote a letter to the U.N. Mission asking for visas for the group. In Khamo's letter, it refers to Yousif Soboyof as Yousif So Yosif from Australia. IIS sent instructions to Washington Station to issue the visas and for border authorities to be prepared for their entry. In reviewing one of last documents of this batch, there was a document indicating the cancellation of the visit. This document was dated 24 May 1998. Al-Dani could not determine a stated reason for the cancellation. (See document set #2)

Another set of documents referred to the meeting of opposition groups, to include a conference held in California. Among these documents was a letter addressed to Abu KHALID, from "your brother abroad". The letter addressed a conference held in Los Angeles, California on 15 May 1998. It contained a list of attendees and a summary of the conference. (See document set #3)

Other documents included references to additional opposition group gatherings. An MFA memo to IIS talked about the "meeting of the traitors in New York" and came with an attached list of opposition members. Another was a letter regarding the ADM. (See document set #4)

A separate one (1) page document referenced another source named William SHAWD, and discussed an individual named John NAMROUD. (See document #5)

Al-Dani also provided insight on how the IIS was instructed to handle opposition groups and the potential recruitment of group members. Final instructions on how to deal with the groups came from Saddam HUSSEIN, and were delivered to the IIS via M4 General Director "HIJAZI". Although both D-4 (Office of U.S./Europe/South Asia) and D-5 (Office for Opposition Groups) had dealings with opposition groups, it was generally decided that overall responsibility should fall to D-5. Al-Dani stated that IIS wrote letters asking how they should best deal with the groups, and what to do on the occasions they received information that group members wanted to talk to the Iraqi Government. This document was signed by Rafia Daham MIGWAL. (See document #6) Instructions from Saddam's office advised that all relationships between the groups and Iraqi government officials should be "intelligence-based", in order to use the groups to the benefit of the government. (See document #7) This meant they should be focused on gathering intelligence and not be political in nature. One tactic employed

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was to offer invitations to opposition group members to visit Iraq. This could be pursuant to an expressed interest by the individual, or they could have been targeted by the IIS as being susceptible to an approach. If the individual was Iraqi-born, the invitation would likely be an overt IIS contact. If a foreigner, the invitation might come from another government agency (i.e. MFA, Trade, Oil, etc.). The rationale was that an Iraqi-born individual would automatically assume that inviting party would be at a minimum "affiliated" with the IIS. It was also specified that anyone traveling to Iraq after being invited, should travel under their own name and not list any affiliation with an opposition group. The IIS would be responsible for handling any arrangements once inside Iraq. The general goals of any interaction would be to co-opt the individual through the use of sources, or penetrate the group. In any event, the IIS hoped to neutralize the effectiveness of the group.

Al-Dani was also asked about IIS source identification or "coding". Al-Dani advised that from roughly 1968-1985 there was no precise system for source identification control. After 1985, source recruiting/vetting became much more tightly controlled. Most of these system changes were based on Soviet training and/or instruction from Soviet Bloc intelligence officers. The choice of codenames or source numbers was dependent upon whether or not the person was a formal source, a cooperator, or a friend. A "friend" was a source of information, but could even be another official within the government.