

August 1, 2003

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC

Dear President Bush:

We write to respectfully request that the Bush Administration declassify a key 28-page section of the *Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 2001*. While we respect the reasons to keep information classified – be it the protection of sources and methods or the maintenance of the integrity of ongoing investigations – such purposes can be accomplished through responsible selective redaction, rather than effacing the section’s contents totally.

According to the Joint Inquiry report, the contents of the redacted pages detail “specific sources of foreign support for some of the September 11th hijackers while they were in the United States.” Unfortunately, because all but two pages of the entire section have been deemed too secret for public disclosure, the American people remain in the dark about other countries that may have facilitated the terrorist attacks.

It has been widely reported in the press that the foreign sources referred to in this portion of the Joint Inquiry analysis reside primarily in Saudi Arabia. As a result, the decision to classify this information sends the wrong message to the American people about our nation’s anti-terror effort and makes it seem as if there will be no penalty for foreign abettors of the hijackers.

As you are aware, Saudi Arabia’s banks and charities have been used to funnel money to Al-Qaeda; its madrassah schools spew hateful anti-American rhetoric to would-be suicide bombers across the Middle East; and fifteen of the nineteen hijackers were Saudis. Given these facts, protecting the Saudi regime by eliminating any public penalty for the support given to terrorists from within its borders would be a mistake.

If we are to protect our national security, we must convince the Saudi regime to get tough on terror. Keeping private its involvement – or that of any other nation – in the September 11th attacks is no the way to accomplish this goal. We respectfully urge you to declassify the 28-page section that deals with foreign sources of support for the 9-11 hijackers.

Sincerely,

Charles Schumer
US Senator