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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 10/31/2001

To: National Security

Kansas City

Newark
New York

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Attn: NS-2C, SSA [redacted]
IOS [redacted]
Squad 7/SPFD/JCRA
SA [redacted]
Squad C-9, SA [redacted]
Squad I-21, SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]
SA [redacted]

From: Philadelphia
Squad 13
Contact: SA [redacted]

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Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By: [redacted]:hml

Case ID #: (S) [redacted] (Pending)

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Title: (S) [redacted] PENTTBOMB

Synopsis (U) ~~(S)~~ To summarize interviews with 7 Israeli Nationals employed by various moving companies who were detained by INS for visa violations.

(U) ~~(S)~~

~~Derived From: G-3
Declassify On: X1~~

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(S) ~~(U)~~ [redacted]

Details (U) ~~(S)~~ FBI Philadelphia previously interviewed [redacted] and [redacted] at the York County Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Detention Center regarding their employment at Urban Moving Systems in Union City, New Jersey. FBI Newark and FBI New York also interviewed a total of 5 Israeli employees of the same moving company with regard to the terrorist events of September 11, 2001. Since these interviews were conducted, INS Philadelphia has notified FBI Philadelphia of 6 other Israeli nationals detained for violating their visas by working in the United States. Each of the individuals worked for

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a moving company, providing a similar account to that of previous interviews.

(U) ~~(S)~~ It was learned during these interviews that after their required military service, Israeli men, and some women, plan a vacation before returning to attend the university. Popular vacation spots are Bangkok, Thailand, popular for it's "mushrooms", various locations in Italy and Spain, New York City and Miami, Florida in the United States, and various cities in South America. While visiting the US, it seems there are four popular odd-jobs Israelis are involved with; cleaning carpets, moving furniture, selling art door-to-door and selling toy helicopters in the malls. An EC dated 03/30/2001 was disseminated by FBIHO, [redacted]

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(S)

[redacted] FBI Kansas City, Cleveland and Philadelphia have reported groups of Israelis in their respective areas that have been identified as selling Zoom-Copters in the mall.

(U) ~~(S)~~ Comments by the interviewees indicates that perhaps these are inter-related. A brief summary of each interview follows:

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(U) ~~(S)~~ On 10/12/2001, [redacted] date of birth [redacted] possessing Florida commercial driver's license [redacted] issued on 06/01/2000 indicating an address of [redacted] FL, was interviewed at INS Philadelphia. A concerned citizen notified the police that a moving van in the area had been abandoned. When police arrived, [redacted] and his partner, [redacted] were at the vehicle. Upon learning they were Israeli citizens, INS was contacted. The two individuals were detained after it was apparent they were in violation of their visa status by working on a tourist visa.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] arrived in the United States on 09/07/2001 and met [redacted] at an Israeli restaurant in Miami, FL shortly thereafter. They have been traveling together for about 3 weeks and were accompanied by a third companion, the girlfriend of [redacted] date of birth [redacted], place of birth Petah Tikvet, Israel. [redacted] presented a valid German passport and was not detained by INS. [redacted] was using [redacted] as her first name.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ Since departing the Miami area, the three visited the states of Georgia, Texas, Colorado, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. [redacted]

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indicated they are employed by [redacted], located at [redacted] FL. [redacted] claimed to be a helper to [redacted] advised he was compensated by tips from the customers.

(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] indicated he was a "regular soldier" in the Israeli Army, mainly responsible for border control along the Gaza Strip during his three years of service.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted], date of birth [redacted], Florida Driver's License [redacted] was also interviewed on 10/12/2001. [redacted] has been in the United States since 10/1998, having first visited the U.S. in 1992 for 4 months after finishing his military service. [redacted] began working for [redacted] in 12/1999 for a period of one year. A friend of his from [redacted] also an Israeli national, started his [redacted] worked for [redacted] for a month, and then began working for [redacted] in 01/2000. [redacted] could not provide any detailed information regarding any of the employees of any of these moving companies. He stated that personal information was never discussed.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] was in the Israeli Army for 3 years and [redacted] Ambassador of China to Israel for a period of time. [redacted] stated his performance in the military was such that he was offered a position with "JR", which he described as a security position with El Al Airlines. [redacted] married an American citizen, [redacted] Last Name Unknown, as [redacted] could not remember his wife's maiden name. [redacted] was traveling with his girlfriend, [redacted] as described above. [redacted] had several telephone numbers in his wallet that are in the process of being reviewed by Philadelphia.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted], date of birth [redacted] Israeli Passport # [redacted] was found working without authorization for [redacted] Florida. He was interviewed on 10/18/2001. [redacted] last entered the U.S. on 09/06/2001 and flew directly to Miami, FL. Last year, [redacted] visited relatives and a friend in Brooklyn and Manhattan, New York City, NY, and stayed for a duration of one month. [redacted] stated he did not work during his first visit to the U.S. [redacted] began working for [redacted] as a favor for his friend, [redacted], whom [redacted] met in an Israeli bar in Miami. Other employees at [redacted] that [redacted] could remember were [redacted] LNU and [redacted] LNU. [redacted] served in

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the Israeli Army only for 1 year, claiming he was confused by weapons training and released. [redacted] is originally from Tel Aviv, Israel and has studied Computer Graphic Design for 3 years. When asked why [redacted] was working for a moving company, he stated it was to earn some extra money. He stated he is paid approximately \$650 per week. b6 b7C

(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] date of birth [redacted], Israeli Passport # [redacted] was found working without authorization for [redacted] as well and was interviewed on 10/18/2001. [redacted] entered the U.S. on 07/23/2001 and is visiting his step-brother who lives in Plantation, FL. [redacted] is originally from a small town near Haifa, Israel. [redacted] wanted to see the United States, and thought the best way would be to work for a moving company, making money and sight-seeing at the same time. [redacted] found the position with [redacted] through a note posted in an Israeli restaurant in Miami. [redacted] stated that many Israeli's work for moving companies in Miami and New York. When asked what other work Israeli's do while visiting the US, he mentioned carpet cleaning, selling art door-to-door and selling toy helicopters in malls. He said one can find these positions by reading the "YEHODIOT AMERICA" (ph) in New York City or the "JEWISH MAGAZINE" in Florida, which are Israeli publications in these areas. [redacted] has traveled throughout most of the continental U.S. b6 b7C b6 b7C

(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] indicated he served 3 years in the Israeli Air Force as an F-16 mechanic. He stated that he owns two businesses in Israel, a plumbing business and a landscaping business. When asked how he was running his businesses while he was moving furniture in the U.S., he stated he had several brothers in Israel that were helping him. [redacted] stated that he wanted to work for El Al Airlines, but they have an overall requirement to score a "97" on some type of test, but he only scored "82", due to his poor vision. He described this test as an evaluation of physical strength as well as intelligence. b6 b7C

(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] date of birth [redacted] was in the U.S. on a visa which expired 09/08/2001. [redacted] had not been given any extensions and therefore was detained by INS and interviewed by FBI Philadelphia on 10/18/2001. [redacted] entered the U.S. for the first time on 03/09/2001 and was planning on staying for 6 months, then continuing on to South America. [redacted] has been working for the last 16 years helping his father with a family hotel and restaurant business in Romania. [redacted] spent the summers there, but was born and b6 b7C

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is currently living in a small town near Nazareth, Israel. He also worked in Israel in plastics, possibly as an extrusion and compression machine operator for 3 years.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] did not serve in the Israeli military. He stated that it was "not for him". He expressed to the Israeli authorities that he would spend the entire term in the army in jail, so they told him he did not need to serve. (AGENT'S NOTE: It is possible [REDACTED] had a substance abuse issue which prevented him from serving in the military. [REDACTED] kept referring to troubles he had when he was younger.) [REDACTED] also worked for [REDACTED], claiming he was only a helper and had only been there for 1 month. He stated [REDACTED] [REDACTED] LNU was the owner of [REDACTED]

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] date of birth [REDACTED] Israeli Passport # [REDACTED] was charged with criminal mischief after driving his moving vehicle into a gate at a local Storage USA facility. Upon learning he was working without authorization, he was detained by INS and interviewed by FBI Philadelphia on 10/19/2001. [REDACTED] was employed by [REDACTED] [REDACTED], PA. [REDACTED] entered the U.S. via New York City with a valid visa on 07/17/2001. He stated he spent some time in NY, and then came to visit Philadelphia. He stated he was a Philadelphia Sixers fan and wanted to get away from the crowded city of New York, even though Philadelphia does not have the large Israeli community as that of New York City or Miami. [REDACTED] was befriended by [REDACTED] who offered [REDACTED] a position with [REDACTED] provided [REDACTED] a place to live, [REDACTED], PA, which [REDACTED] rented for [REDACTED] and another employee [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are also both Israeli, but [REDACTED] did not know any other details about them.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [REDACTED] stated he was an officer in the Israeli Army, working in the field signals communication unit. He was very enthusiastic about his work in the military, but stated that he wanted more freedom in his life and decided to leave. When asked why an Israeli military officer was moving furniture in the U.S., he stated he needed some extra money. He only worked local moving jobs for [REDACTED] so he wasn't doing it to see more of the country. When confronted with how odd it seemed, he stated that he could have also chosen to clean carpets, sell art door-to-door or sell toy helicopters in the local malls. He stated he had a friend who had come to Canada to sell art door-to-door, but [REDACTED] didn't want to do this. He didn't want to bother people

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at their homes. It is widely known among the young Israeli's that these 4 types of jobs are available in the U.S., specifically in the New York City and Miami areas.

(U) ~~(S)~~ On 10/24/2001, [redacted] date of birth [redacted], Israeli Passport # [redacted] was interviewed at York County INS Detention Center. [redacted] entered the U.S. on 01/21/2001 flying from Tel Aviv, Israel to New York City, NY. While in New York, he resided at [redacted] NY until 08/17/2001, when he traveled to Montreal, Canada by train. According to the INS report, "In Canada he stayed in hotels and with locals until 08/25/2001, when he began walking on small country roads and through fields until such time he was apprehended by Border Patrol Agents. [redacted] admitted to INS that he was crossing the border at a location not designated by the Attorney General as a port of entry", but when interviewed by the FBI, he denied crossing the border. He explained that he was still in Canada when he was arrested.

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(U) ~~(S)~~ [redacted] told INS agents that he had been working in New York City as a furniture mover since June, 2001, but would not supply the name of the company he was working for or the name of any co-workers. When asked by the FBI, [redacted] denied even working for the moving company. The only information he would provide is that he has a computer engineering degree and has plans to open his own business when he returned to Israel. He does not want to return, as he has more travel to complete before returning. He stated that being sent back to Israel would cause problems for him at home (it was unclear what type of problems) and that it would not be in his best interest. [redacted] would not elaborate on his responses or provide any specific information.

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To: National Security From: Philadelphia
Re: (S) [REDACTED] 10/31/2001

LEAD(s) :

Set Lead 1:

ALL RECEIVING OFFICES

(U) For information. Read and clear.

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