

COVER PAGE

LARRY A. MEAD, SERGEANT

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT

APRIL 5, 2007

**US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
INFORMATION SHARING
AND TERRORISM RISK ASSESSMENT**

“HOMEGROWN TERRORISM”

**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
INFORMATION SHARING
AND
TERRORISM RISK ASSESSMENT
“HOMEGROWN TERRORISM”**

**TESTIMONY OF
LARRY A MEAD, SERGEANT**

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Madam Chairman, ranking member and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on the issue of "Prison Radicalization."

The subject of "Prison Radicalization" reaches far beyond the walls of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), county jails and juvenile facilities throughout the State of California. It has local, national and international implications. The effort to impact "homegrown" terrorism in prisons, jails and society is a monumental task which requires the cooperation of local, state and federal agencies and the community at large. My testimony will focus on the local gang culture and its effects on the Los Angeles County Jail regarding radicalization and our Department's cooperation with federal, state and local agencies to share information thereby preventing, disrupting or mitigating a terrorist attack.

Within our custody operations division, our gang intelligence unit, Operation Safe Jails (OSJ), which originated in 1985, analyzes gang

trends, conduct gang interviews, classifies and maintains gang files in an ongoing effort to prevent attacks on both staff and our inmate population. Over the years OSJ has evolved into an extremely critical asset for unit commanders and executives throughout the Department. OSJ's primary responsibility is gang intelligence. In addition, the unit assists local, state and federal agencies with ongoing investigations. In an effort to improve communications, a sergeant attends briefings and meetings with the Los Angeles area Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), Terrorism Early Warning group (TEW), the Joint Regional Information Center (JRIC), the California Department of Corrections Gang Task Force and other regional gang meetings. These relationships have resulted in high quality products that are provided to decision makers covering a variety of terror-related subjects.

With an average daily population of 19,000 plus inmates, the Los Angeles County jail system is seen as a possible location where prison radicalization can sew its roots. Since late 1995, several OSJ gang intelligence deputies were designated Terrorism Liaison Officers (TLO's) who report on radical activities to the Department's Terrorism Early Warning group. This has expanded to other local state and federal

agencies. Their activities were heightened by the July, 2005, discovery of the radical prison group, Jam'iyyat Ul-Islam Is-Sheeh (JIS) or the "Authentic Assembly of Islam," at Folsom State Prison, near Sacramento, California. Since then, analysis shows that radicalization and recruitment in U.S. prisons is still an ongoing concern. Prison radicalization primarily occurs through anti-U.S. sermons provided by contract, volunteer's, staff imams, radicalized inmates who gain religious influence, or extremist media. Ideologies that radicalized inmates appear most often to embrace, include or are influenced by the Salafi form of Sunni Islam (including revisionist versions commonly known as "prison Islam") and an extremist view of Shia Islam similar to that of the government of Iran and Lebanese Hizballah.

JAIL RADICALIZATION INITIATIVES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

- Two deputies working full time on the radicalization issue within the Los Angeles County Jail System
- LASD participates on the Jail Radicalization Working group with FBI, LAPD, CDC
- Ongoing integration effort with Jail Investigations Unit, Operation Safe Jails, Classification Unit and the Joint Regional Intelligence Center
- Ongoing interaction with religious leaders (more than 100) who conduct services at all Los Angeles County jail facilities
- Continued outreach for better communication between local, state and federal custodial facilities regarding the transfer and travel of "problem inmates"

- Participation with George Washington University on the study of issues related to radicalization

Religious Leader Verification Process

Application

Copy of Ordination

Support Letter from sponsoring church

Background by Inmate Services Unit

Orientation program

Random monitoring by Inmate Services Unit

Random monitoring by Chapel Deputies

Sheriff Baca's Statement:

The effort to impact radicalization and “homegrown” terrorism in mainstream society is an inherently difficult task, especially without the cooperation and partnership of the local Muslim community. Muslim-American organizations have been working on various ways of supporting and participating in the security needs of America, as well as people of all nations. Sheriff Leroy D. Baca, of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, has taken the lead to formalize this endeavor by forming a national organization known as the Muslim-American Homeland Security Congress (MAHSC). This is a non-political, non-governmental, non-religious, and non-profit organization. Through partnerships, cooperation and assistance with national and local elected officials, law enforcement, civic and inter-faith groups, the Muslim-American Homeland Security

Congress will educate, reach out to the disenfranchised, and communicate to all Americans the goals and purpose of the organization.

MISSION

The Muslim-American Homeland Security Congress shall foster education & understanding, organization & empowerment, along with Communication & Cooperation with the American public to protect and defend the United States of America and all people through the prevention of terrorism and any acts of prejudice.

Operation Safe Jails gang intelligence deputies are continuously monitoring our inmate population for radical activity. The Imams who conduct religious service go through a thorough background check and their teachings are not associated with the radicalized form of Islam. Inmates who attempt to spread radical Islam are monitored and reported to the appropriate agencies. We have identified several inmates who had radical correspondence, drawings of airplanes flying into the World Trade Center, e-mail addresses to radical websites, and in one disturbing instance, we interviewed a foreign national who provided information regarding a safe house radical mosque where large sums of U.S. Currency is counted and forwarded to a Middle Eastern country for dissemination. There is no doubt that "Prison Radicalization," is an ongoing problem. We all need to continue our focus on this growing phenomena and add additional resources to combat this growing trend or run the risk of another similar situation such as the JIS incident which occurred at Folsom State Prison in July, 2005.

SUPPLEMENT

SERGEANT LARRY A. MEAD
JIU / GANG INTELLIGENCE

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