



# INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

## INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION COORDINATOR

### Deputy Commissioner's Briefing



January 2, 2009

#### Details:

- 30 DEC 08 Interview of Muaffaq Askar:

#### Key Points:

- On Tuesday 12/30/08, PTU (Dets Gallagher / Handler) traveled to Brooklyn in order to interview **Muaffaq Askar** regarding the ongoing military strikes by the Israeli armed forces against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.
- Subject Askar stated the following:
- Referred to Palestinians in Gaza as "his brothers" and "his people".
- Hamas is for the regular working people.
- Mayor of his hometown, **Al Bireh**, is a Hamas leader. When the mayor came into office the town had a deficit; now under his leadership the town has a surplus of 30 million shekels.
- Does not have any family in Gaza.
- Knew of a demonstration at the United Nations on Saturday January 3rd at 47th Street and First Avenue.
  - He will probably attend that demonstration.
- Was not aware of any demonstrations scheduled for the Bay Ridge area.
- Askar was asked if he was aware of anyone talking about hostile or retaliatory actions or comments and he replied that he was not aware of any such things.
  - Reiterated that the Palestinian people here are very frustrated and worried.

#### Overview:

- On Tuesday 12/30/08, PTU Dets Gallagher and Handler traveled to Brooklyn in order to interview **Muaffaq Askar** regarding the ongoing military strikes by the Israeli armed forces against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.
- Muaffaq Askar was interviewed at his place of business- **Papa's Pizza** -located at **4417 4th Avenue** in the confines of the 72 Precinct from 1210 to 1235 hours. Askar was seated at one of the customer seats.
  - **Husein Abed** was working behind the counter when the undersigned and Det. Handler entered the premises.
  - Upon meeting Askar, the undersigned explained that he and Det. Handler wished to speak with him about his opinion and the Palestinian community's feeling concerning the ongoing problems in the Gaza Strip.
  - Askar invited the Detectives to have a seat and engaged in a conversation with them. Askar stated that he and other Palestinians here in the



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neighborhood are very concerned over the attacks by Israel in the Gaza Strip.

- Askar referred to Palestinians in Gaza as "his brothers" and "his people". Askar stated that the Palestinians in Gaza need medicine, food, housing and medical care.
- He further stated that the Palestinians here are very frustrated and very worried because they can only watch Al Jazeera Television and try to donate money to help.
- Askar stated that Americans don't get to see the news coverage of the attacks on American news channels because the news is controlled by people like Rupert Murdoch.
- Askar stated that Al Jazeera shows the real footage of the attacks by Israel. Askar further stated that Palestinians here are afraid to answer their telephones because they might be receiving news of a death or injury of a family or friend in Gaza.
- Askar stated that the Palestinian Authority was not helping the people.
- He continued that Hamas is for the regular working people.
- Askar stated that the mayor of his hometown, **Al Bireh**, is a Hamas leader. When the mayor came into office the town had a deficit; now under his leadership the town has a surplus of 30 million shekels.
- Askar was asked if he has any family in Gaza and he replied that he does not.
  - Askar claimed that his family lives 15 minutes from Jerusalem near **Ramallah**.
- Askar was asked if he was aware of any local demonstrations regarding the attacks.
- He stated that he knew of a demonstration at the United Nations on Saturday January 3rd at 47th Street and First Avenue.
  - Askar claimed he would probably attend that demonstration.
- Askar stated that he was not aware of any demonstrations scheduled for the Bay Ridge area.
- Askar was asked if he was aware of anyone talking about hostile or retaliatory actions or comments and he replied that he was not aware of any such things.
  - But he did reiterate that the Palestinian people here are very frustrated and worried.
- Askar stated that he was followed by a car all day yesterday.
- He reported that he called his lawyer about it.
- The lawyer told Askar to write down the plate number of the car following him but Askar was not able to obtain it.
- Askar was asked by PTU if they could stop in at the pizzeria to talk to him in the future.



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- Askar replied that he understood why he was being questioned and thought it was a good idea.
- He added that , "If he was in our position, he would do the same thing."
- Askar stated that the present detectives were welcome back to talk anytime and that they could even come to his home.
- Askar further stated that he didn't call his lawyer during the conversation because he understood why he was being asked the questions about the problems in Gaza and their relationship to things here.