

IS THE GOVERNMENT HIDING CHASE'S COOPERATION IN THE SCARY IRAN PLOT?

As I noted in this post, earlier this month, the government unsealed the redacted first complaint in the Scary Iran Plot. I will do a post summarizing the differences between the original and amended complaint later (short version: in a number of ways seeing both complaints weakens their case slightly against Quds Force).

But in this post, I want to suggest—and this is speculation—that the secrecy about the complaint may serve, in part, to protect JP Morgan Chase.

The redactions in the original complaint are minimal, most of which hide the details by which Arbabsiar transferred money from what appears to be a European bank to the FBI account. These redactions are:

¶13a: An 8-character word modifying “country” describing the bank from which the first installment of money was sent. I believe the redacted word is “European.”

¶13b: An 8-character word modifying “country” describing the bank from which the first installment of money was sent. I believe the redacted word is “European.”

Footnote 5: A 14-character word modifying “country” that we know to be “Latin American” (a reference to the planned attacks in Argentina). A 14-character word modifying “country” that is probably “Middle-Eastern” (the reference to planned attacks on Israeli targets), followed by a longer redaction that may describe the location of the intended Israeli targets.

¶22c: A 5-character word modifying “bank” that—the amended complaint makes clear—is a US bank.

¶25: An 8-character word modifying “country” that is likely “European” and a 9-character word naming the bank in question.

¶27: An 8-character word naming a bank from which the second chunk of money was transferred. Since the Amended Complaint makes it clear the money came from two different foreign entities (and since the lengths of the redaction appear to be different), this must be a different bank.

In other words, the only things redacted from the original complaint are the other intended targets—which have already been made public—and the details surrounding the transfer of money from Arbabsiar (or his brother) to the FBI Account.

Now, generally, the redactions may just be an attempt to hide the fact that the FBI used SWIFT to track the money from Arbabsiar to the FBI or that one or more European partners helped them make build this case. But if the government’s allegations are correct and this plot was orchestrated by the Quds Force and Abdul Reza Shahlai specifically (both of whom were and are designated terrorists) then all of the banks involved in the transfer would presumably be party to the transfer of money that ultimately derived from sanctioned entities (though by laundering through Arbabsiar and his brother that may not have been apparent to them).

And I can’t help but note that one of the big international banks in Manhattan with a 5-character name is Chase. And I can’t help but note something I already pointed out: roughly two weeks after the transfers were completed but before Arbabsiar’s arrest, JP Morgan Chase agreed to pay \$88.3 million to settle charges it had violated sanctions against Sudan, Cuba, Liberia and ... Iran. Now, the sanction violations JPMC admitted to with respect to Iran were in 2009. It also admitted to failing to stop wire transfers from sanctioned entities in 2006-2008. But I do wonder whether the coincidence between these transfers—allegedly supporting the assassination of the Saudi Ambassador—and JPMC’s

sanction suggest either that the government got Chase to cooperate in this investigation as part of their settlement, or that Treasury forced JPMC to settle based on their role in accepting wired money for such an alleged crime.

In any case, the big thing that the government seems most intent on hiding are which European and American banks are still accepting wire transfers that ultimately (allegedly) tie back to the Quds Force. Because as we know, the government's job is to hide evidence of the banksters' crimes, not prosecute them.