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_____] [The President ordered the U.S. Navy on August 20, 1998 to launch cruise missiles against targets in Afghanistan and Sudan. This is the only instance the Joint Inquiry has been able to identify in which the CIA or U.S. military carried out an operation directly against Bin Ladin before September 11].

According to the President's public statements at the time, the cruise missile strikes were launched in self-defense against groups that had played key roles in the embassy bombings, had executed earlier attacks against Americans, were planning to launch additional attacks, and were attempting to obtain chemical weapons. All personnel interviewed on this matter by the Joint Inquiry concur that one objective of the strikes in Afghanistan was to kill Bin Ladin.

[_____]

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