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Bojinka II: The Transatlantic Liquid Bomb Plot

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The Plotters: England and Pakistan

Following the August 2006 arrest of twenty-four British-born Muslims,¹ the Crown Prosecution Service charged twelve individuals for their role in a conspiracy targeting transatlantic flights. Those charged with conspiracy to murder for "their intention to smuggle the component parts of improvised explosive devices onto aircraft and assemble and detonate them on board" were Ahmed Abdullah Ali, Tanvir Hussain, Brian Young (a.k.a. Umar Islam), Arafat Waheed Khan, Assad Ali Sarwar, Adam Khatib, Ibrahim Savant, Waheed Zaman,² Nabeel Hussain, Mohammed Yasar Gulzar, Mohammed Shamin Uddin,³ and Donald Stewart-Whyte (a.k.a. Abdul Waheed).⁴ Further, Mohammed Usman Saddique will be tried separately for preparing acts of terrorism⁵ and possessing a "CD containing titles such as 'Bombs and More.'"⁶ And, Cossar Ali, who is Ahmed Abdullah Ali's wife,⁷ was charged with failing to disclose information that "might be of material assistance in preventing the commission of...an act of terrorism."⁸ The first trial began in April 2008.⁹

Concurrent with the British arrests, Pakistani authorities arrested seven individuals.¹⁰ Media reports have also asserted that "as many as 50 participants and accomplices were involved,"¹¹ comprising three cells that "may not have been aware of

¹ "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 6, 2007. Note: In an interview, Tariq Azim, an official at Pakistan's Information Ministry, said, "they were born and raised" in England. See: Carrick Mollenkamp, Chip Cummins, David Crawford, and Robert Block, "U.K. Terror Plot Points to New Threat," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 11, 2006.

² "CPS Authorises Charges in Alleged Aircraft Terror Plot," Crown Prosecution Service Press Release, August 21, 2006.

³ "Anti-Terrorism Operation Update," *Metropolitan Police Service Press Release*, August 30, 2006.

⁴ Sarah Lyall, "More Charges in Bombing Plot," *The New York Times*, September 7, 2006.

⁵ "Timeline: UK 'Terror Plot' Investigation," *BBC*, September 7, 2006.

⁶ "Accused Deny Airliner Bomb Plot," *BBC*, May 18, 2007.

⁷ Duncan Gardham, "Young Mother Denies Failing to Inform on Her Husband," *The Daily Telegraph*, August 23, 2006.

⁸ "CPS Authorises Charges in Alleged Aircraft Terror Plot," Crown Prosecution Service Press Release, August 21, 2006.

⁹ Duncan Gardham, "Terror Plot Jury Could Sit for Six Months," *The Daily Telegraph*, April 3, 2008. Note: Those first facing trial are: Ahmed Abdullah Ali, Tanvir Hussain, Brian Young, Arafat Waheed Khan, Assad Ali Sarwar, Ibrahim Savant, Waheed Zaman, and Mohammed Yasar Gulzar. See: Doug Sanders, "Plot Targeted Canadian Flights, U.K. Says," *The Globe and Mail*, April 3, 2008.

¹⁰ "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 6, 2007.

¹¹ Craig Whitlock and Dafna Linzer, "Tip Followed '05 Attacks on London Transit," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006. See also: Geoff Earle, "Evil Lust for Body Count to Top 9/11," *The New York Post*, August 11, 2006.

the others or the extent of their assignment."¹² As *The Wall Street Journal* explains, "members of the outer cell purchased supplies, rented apartments and transferred money needed by members of the inner cell...Members of the inner cell planned the attacks and at least some were preparing to participate in the missions. Both the inner and outer cells had been actively preparing the attack for more than six months but all the members may not have known each other."¹³

Operational Details of the Plot

The day of the U.K. arrests, DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff announced that the suspects allegedly "engaged in a plot to detonate liquid explosives on board multiple commercial aircraft departing from the United Kingdom and bound for the United States...The terrorists planned to carry the components of the bombs, including liquid explosive ingredients and detonating devices disguised as beverages, electronic devices, or other common objects."¹⁴ He added, "I would say...one of the concerns we had is the possibility of bringing on board a number of different components of a bomb, each one of which would be benign, but when mixed together would create a bomb."¹⁵ Chertoff further revealed that the suicide bombings were to occur "essentially at the same time."¹⁶

Since Chertoff made those initial statements, additional information has come to light about the plotters' intentions. Multiple press sources have reported that the conspirators planned to bring the liquid explosives onto planes in factory-sealed sports drink bottles modified with false bottoms;¹⁷ ABC News also reported that "the terrorists planned to dye the explosive mixture red to match the sports drink sealed in the top half of the container."¹⁸ In an August 2007 interview, Michael Chertoff supplemented this data by confirming prior reports¹⁹ that two conspirators²⁰ intended to bring their baby on board²¹ and hide explosives in the infant's bottle.²² And to initiate the explosions,

¹² Craig Whitlock and Dafna Linzer, "Tip Followed '05 Attacks on London Transit," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006.

¹³ Carrick Mollenkamp, Chip Cummins, David Crawford, and Robert Block, "U.K. Terror Plot Points to New Threat," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 11, 2006.

¹⁴ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

¹⁵ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

¹⁶ "The Situation Room," *CMV*, August 10, 2006.

¹⁷ "Details Emerge on Alleged Terror Plot," *NBC News*, August 10, 2006 and Richard Esposito, "Explosive Gel Was to Be Concealed in Sports Drink," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006 and Chitra Ragavan, "Terror Suspects Planned to Use Liquid Explosives to Blow Up Planes," *U.S. News and World Report*, August 10, 2006.

¹⁸ Richard Esposito, "Explosive Gel Was to Be Concealed in Sports Drink," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006.

¹⁹ Fiona Hudson, "Baby Bottle 'Used as Bomb,'" *The Daily Telegraph*, August 14, 2006.

²⁰ Note: Those plotters have been identified in open sources as Ahmed Abdullah Ali and his wife Cossar. See: Fiona Hudson, "Baby Bottle 'Used as Bomb,'" *The Daily Telegraph*, August 14, 2006.

²¹ Note: Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keely commented, "the phenomena of suicide bombings as a new way of taking part in terror attacks is in itself concerning, but to think or imagine that anybody would use an innocent child to join them is even more disconcerting." See: "Keely Shocked at Suicide-Baby Bomb Plot," *AAP and The Daily Telegraph*, August 14, 2006.

²² James Gordon Meek, "Michael Chertoff's Deepest Fears: Terrorists Entering U.S. from Canada," *The New York Daily News*, February 10, 2008.

open sources indicate the terrorists planned on using the flash from a disposable camera.²³

Evaluating the plot, Chertoff remarked:

"This was a very sophisticated plan and operation. This is not a circumstance where you had a handful of people sitting around coming up with dreamy ideas about terrorist plots. The conception, the large number of people involved, the sophisticated design of the devices that were being considered, and the sophisticated nature of the plan all suggests that this group that came together to conspire was very determined and very skilled and very capable...this was a plot that is certainly about as sophisticated as any we've seen in recent years..."²⁴

Chertoff has also stated, "there's no question that they had given a lot of thought to how they might smuggle containers with liquid explosives onto airplanes." He continued, "clearly, the effort to put explosives in sports bottles was a reaction to what we had done with respect to other kinds of explosives, and we're going to be back and forth with terrorists on this kind of cat-and-mouse process for years to come."²⁵

The Number of Flights, Carriers, and Routes Targeted

In the two years prior to the April 2008 trial of eight conspirators, authorities refused to publicly, officially identify the exact number of flights, carriers, and routes targeted by the conspirators.

On the day of the arrests, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Peter Clarke, head of the Metropolitan Police Service Anti-Terrorist Branch, acknowledged that "the number, destination and timing of the flights that might be attacked remain the subject of investigation."²⁶ Also in the immediate aftermath of the raids, Michael P. Jackson, DHS Deputy Secretary, commented, "it's fair to say they were aiming for multiple flights, and some of the exact data of who they would deploy, and how many might be in one deployment, are somewhat ambiguous." He added, "there were different data sets about their intentions...that evolved over the period of time that we were following this."²⁷

Reflecting the authorities' uncertainty about the exact intentions of the plotters, August 2006 media reporting, citing anonymous officials, was highly inconsistent, with estimates of the number of targeted flights ranging widely. For example, *The Wall Street Journal* claimed there were six such flights,²⁸ while *The Times Online* (London) put the

²³ Richard Esposito, "Explosive Gel Was to Be Concealed in Sports Drink," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006.

²⁴ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

²⁵ "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 6, 2007.

²⁶ "Anti-Terrorist Operation," *Metropolitan Police Press Release*, August 10, 2006.

²⁷ Craig Whitlock and Dafna Linzer, "Tip Followed '05 Attacks on London Transit," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006.

²⁸ Carrick Mollenkamp, Chip Cummins, David Crawford, and Robert Block, "U.K. Terror Plot Points to New Threat," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 11, 2006.

number at twelve.²⁹ An extraordinarily detailed August 28, 2006 *New York Times* article, which was based on interviews with "five senior British officials" and which was banned from publication in the U.K. to avoid prejudicing potential jurors,³⁰ asserted that British investigators felt the "estimate of 10 planes" was "speculative and exaggerated."³¹

DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff provided additional insight into this question in an August 2007 interview, when he discussed the consequences of the would-be bombers "bringing liquid explosives on seven or eight aircraft."³²

The list of carriers to be attacked has also not been made public, though DHS official Michael P. Jackson noted that the plotters' focus "centered upon carriers that had direct, nonstop flights between the U.K. and U.S."³³ And Michael Chertoff stated that the group "focused on...U.S.-flagged carriers," though he provided no further information.³⁴ Despite the ambiguity in official circles, media reporting has been far more consistent on this issue, as Continental Airlines, United Airlines, and American Airlines were repeatedly cited by press sources such as *The Wall Street Journal*,³⁵ *Time*,³⁶ ABC News,³⁷ and NBC News.³⁸ Moreover, British Airways was mentioned in a number of open source reports.³⁹

Between August 2006 and April 2008, press reporting served as the sole source for information on the routes identified by the operatives. Some of the final destinations mentioned included New York,⁴⁰ Washington D.C.,⁴¹ Boston,⁴² Miami,⁴³ Los Angeles,⁴⁴

²⁹ Stewart Tendler, Jenny Booth, and Adam Fresco, "Foiled Transatlantic Bomb Plot 'Was Ready to Go in Days,'" *Times Online (London)*, August 10, 2006.

³⁰ Tom Zeller Jr., "Times Withholds Web Article in Britain," *The New York Times*, August 29, 2006.

³¹ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "In Tapes, Receipts, and a Diary, Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

³² "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 2007.

³³ Craig Whitlock and Dafna Linzer, "Tip Followed '05 Attacks on London Transit," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006.

³⁴ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

³⁵ Carrick Mollenkamp, Chip Cummins, David Crawford, and Robert Block, "U.K. Terror Plot Points to New Threat," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 11, 2006.

³⁶ Brian Bennett and Douglas Waller, "Thwarting the Airline Plot: Inside the Investigation," *Time*, August 10, 2006.

³⁷ Brian Ross and Richard Esposito, "British Penetrate Terror Cell," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006.

³⁸ "Details Emerge on Alleged Terror Plot," *NBC News*, August 10, 2006.

³⁹ Brian Bennett and Douglas Waller, "Thwarting the Airline Plot: Inside the Investigation," *Time*, August 10, 2006 and Sandra Laville, Richard Norton-Taylor, and Vikram Dodd, "A Plot to Commit 'Murder on an Unimaginable Scale,'" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2006.

⁴⁰ Brian Ross and Richard Esposito, "British Penetrate Terror Cell," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006 and "Details Emerge on Alleged Terror Plot," *NBC News*, August 10, 2006 and Sandra Laville, Richard Norton-Taylor, and Vikram Dodd, "A Plot to Commit 'Murder on an Unimaginable Scale,'" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2006.

⁴¹ Brian Ross and Richard Esposito, "British Penetrate Terror Cell," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006 and "Details Emerge on Alleged Terror Plot," *NBC News*, August 10, 2006 and Sandra Laville, Richard Norton-Taylor, and Vikram Dodd, "A Plot to Commit 'Murder on an Unimaginable Scale,'" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2006.

⁴² Sandra Laville, Richard Norton-Taylor, and Vikram Dodd, "A Plot to Commit 'Murder on an Unimaginable Scale,'" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2006.

⁴³ Brian Ross and Richard Esposito, "British Penetrate Terror Cell," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006.

⁴⁴ Brian Ross and Richard Esposito, "British Penetrate Terror Cell," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006.

and San Francisco.⁴⁵ Then, in a surprise revelation at the start of the conspirators' trial in April 2008, a British judge and prosecutors revealed that the bombers also planned to target Air Canada flights bound for Toronto and Montreal.⁴⁶

Planned Detonation Location – Over U.S. Cities?

In the immediate aftermath of the plot's disruption, DHS Chief Intelligence Officer Charlie Allen declared, "we have no evidence there was targeting of cities...This was an effort to destroy multiple aircraft in flight – not against any territory of the United States."⁴⁷ DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff added, "I am not aware of any indication that the intent was to make the plane into a weapon."⁴⁸

However, in October 2006, Mark Mershon, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's New York Field Office, told a security conference, "the plan was [to] bring them down over U.S. cities, not over the ocean." Mershon cited a recent briefing that MI5 delivered to the FBI as his source for the new information; Mershon noted that "it would make your hair stand up to be in the room to hear that presentation."⁴⁹

Planned Timing of the Attacks

When the arrests were made on August 10, 2006, some analysts pondered whether the attacks were slated to take place on the fifth anniversary of 9/11. However, government officials have downplayed that speculation.

DHS Chief Intelligence Officer Charlie Allen stated, "I am a long-standing believer that terrorist plotters or planners execute when they have all of the plot together...We have no evidence this was timed to any particular holiday or special event."⁵⁰ DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff concurred, saying, "I can tell you our general experience, certainly when you deal with al Qaeda...is that they're not necessarily motivated by anniversaries the way sometimes people project."⁵¹

Providing additional information on the likely timing of the attacks, Chertoff assessed, "I would say that this plot was well advanced. In other words, they had accumulated and assembled the capabilities that they needed, and they were in the final stages of planning before execution...this is not a case where this was just in the initial thought stage. There were very concrete steps underway to execute all elements of this plan."⁵² Interviewed in August 2007, Chertoff supplemented this analysis by revealing, "I got a call telling me that it looked as if the focus had turned...[to] an attack on the United

⁴⁵ Sandra Laville, Richard Norton-Taylor, and Vikram Dodd, "A Plot to Commit 'Murder on an Unimaginable Scale,'" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2006.

⁴⁶ Doug Sanders, "Plot Targeted Canadian Flights, U.K. Says," *The Globe and Mail*, April 2, 2008.

⁴⁷ Brian Bennett and Douglas Waller, "Thwarting the Airline Plot: Inside the Investigation," *Time*, August 10, 2006.

⁴⁸ "The Situation Room," *CNN*, August 10, 2006.

⁴⁹ Dan Eggen, "Air Plot Said to Target Cities," *The Washington Post*, November 2, 2006.

⁵⁰ Brian Bennett and Douglas Waller, "Thwarting the Airline Plot: Inside the Investigation," *Time*, August 10, 2006.

⁵¹ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

⁵² Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

States...It also became evident, within 24 hours, that the time frame within which the attack was going to take place, would not be a matter of months but a matter of weeks or even days."⁵³

At the time of their arrests, the conspirators had already researched flight schedules on the Internet; as Kip Hawley, head of the Transportation Security Administration, commented, "they were clicking online all over the place."⁵⁴ The plotters were also allegedly planning to imminently carry out a dry run to ensure they could successfully smuggle bomb components on board.⁵⁵ Additionally, following Pakistan's arrest of alleged cell member Rashid Rauf – which reportedly took place without British authorities being notified – a co-conspirator communicated an urgent message to the U.K.-based network; Franco Frattini, the European Union's security commissioner, told the media that the British plotters "received a very short message to 'Go now.'"⁵⁶ (According to *The New York Times*, "a senior British official said the message from Pakistan was not that explicit."⁵⁷)

However, there is no open source evidence that plane tickets had been bought.⁵⁸ And, *The New York Times'* lengthy account asserted that two of the individuals lacked passports, though they had requested expedited approval.⁵⁹ *The Times* further reported that British authorities would have continued to monitor the conspiracy, but felt compelled to act when the plotters learned of Rauf's arrest. The Brits were supposedly concerned that the operatives would destroy evidence, flee, or that an unknown cell would spring into action.⁶⁰

The Projected Impact of the Attacks

If the planned attacks were successfully carried out, the results would have been devastating, as a number of U.S. and British officials have pointed out.

⁵³ "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 6, 2007.

⁵⁴ Carrick Mollenkamp, Chip Cummins, David Crawford, and Robert Block, "U.K. Terror Plot Points to New Threat," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 11, 2006.

⁵⁵ Lara Jakes Jordan, "U.S. Says Terrorists Planned Dry Run," *Associated Press*, August 10, 2006 and Craig Whitlock and Dafna Linzer, "Tip Followed '05 Attacks on London Transit," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006.

⁵⁶ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006. Note: For additional reporting on the "go now" claim, see Sandra Laville, Richard Norton-Taylor, and Vikram Dodd, "A Plot to Commit 'Murder on an Unimaginable Scale,'" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2006 and "Brits Look to Pakistan for Qaeda Link," *CBS News*, August 12, 2006 and Scheherezade Faramarzi, "British Suspects Described as Ordinary," *Associated Press*, August 14, 2006.

⁵⁷ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006. Note: Pakistani Interior Minister Aftab Khan Sherpao and Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam dismissed these claims entirely. See: John Crewdson, Kim Barker and Stephen J. Hedges, "Suspected terror cell chief ID'd," *The Chicago Tribune*, August 20, 2006.

⁵⁸ Craig Whitlock and Dafna Linzer, "Tip Followed '05 Attacks on London Transit," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006 and Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁵⁹ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁶⁰ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

When announcing the plot's disruption, Paul Stephenson, deputy chief of the Metropolitan Police, commented, "this was a plan by terrorists to cause untold death and destruction and commit mass murder."⁶¹ And British Home Secretary John Reid stated, "had this plot been carried out, the loss of life to innocent civilians would have been on an unprecedented scale."⁶²

Across the Atlantic Ocean, U.S. authorities echoed these stark assessments. DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff remarked, "I think that the plot, in terms of its intent, was looking at devastation on a scale that would have rivaled 9/11...there could have been thousands of lives lost and an enormous economic impact with devastating consequences for international air travel."⁶³ N.Y. Congressman Peter King, Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, agreed that "we're talking about thousands of people being killed."⁶⁴

Bomb-Making Efforts

In its extensive article on the plot, *The New York Times* reported that in June 2005, with \$260,000 in cash, one of the suspects purchased an apartment on London's Forest Road that served as a bomb factory for the conspirators. Anonymous British officials told *The Times* that a number of experiments were conducted and there were likely two bomb-makers.⁶⁵ And when MI5 agents carried out a covert search, they purportedly "discovered that the inside of batteries had been scooped out, and...it appeared several suspects were doing chemical experiments with a sports drink named Lucozade and syringes..."⁶⁶

Then, again, according to *The Times*, when authorities raided the Forest Road apartment on August 10, 2006, "they found a plastic bin filled with liquid, batteries, nearly a dozen empty drink bottles,⁶⁷ rubber gloves, digital scales and a disposable camera that was leaking liquid..."⁶⁸ What's more, Commissioner Peter Clarke, head of the Metropolitan Police Service Anti-Terrorist Branch, revealed that "since 10 August we have found bomb making equipment. There are chemicals, including hydrogen

⁶¹ "Anti-Terrorist Operation," *Metropolitan Police Press Release*, August 10, 2006.

⁶² Stewart Tandler, Jenny Booth, and Adam Fresco, "Foiled Transatlantic Bomb Plot 'Was Ready to Go in Days,'" *Times Online (London)*, August 10, 2006.

⁶³ "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 2007. Note: Chertoff also commented, "very sophisticated, the idea of multiple terrorist attacks at the same time...When you put those pieces together it is certainly the scope and scale that is comparable to the worst that al-Qaida has done." See: Katherine Shrader, "Al-Qaida-U.K. Plot Link Evidence Grows," *Associated Press*, August 13, 2006.

⁶⁴ Geoff Earle, "Evil Lust for Body Count to Top 9/11," *The New York Post*, August 11, 2006.

⁶⁵ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁶⁶ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁶⁷ Note: A British paper reported that "police in England have reportedly recovered bottles containing peroxide, including some with false bottoms, from a recycling centre close to the homes of some of the arrested suspects." See: Fiona Hudson, "Baby Bottle 'Used as Bomb,'" *The Daily Telegraph*, August 14, 2006.

⁶⁸ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

peroxide,⁶⁹ electrical components, documents and other items."⁷⁰ Open sources, including BBC and NBC News, asserted that some of that "bomb making equipment" was discovered in a suitcase buried in the woods of High Wycombe, a town outside of London.⁷¹

Some press reports have questioned whether the operatives possessed the necessary technical skills to succeed in their mission.⁷² However, tests conducted at Sandia National Laboratory confirmed that the explosives formula the suspects were utilizing was viable and capable of causing a "large explosion."⁷³ Additionally, NBC News has reported that conspirators tested the mixture in Pakistan.⁷⁴

Recording Martyrdom Videos

Shortly after the arrest of the conspirators, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Peter Clarke, head of the Metropolitan Police Service Anti-Terrorist Branch, announced: "We have...found a number of video recordings - these are sometimes referred to as martyrdom videos."⁷⁵ According to the *New York Times*, six suspects recorded seven videos.⁷⁶

On August 9, 2006, one of the leaders of the plot and another conspirator reportedly came together to film a martyrdom video in an East London apartment. While under covert audio and video surveillance by the British security services, one of the men declared before the camera, "as you bomb, you will be bombed; as you kill, you will be killed."⁷⁷

In explaining his actions, the plotter revealed that he intended to revenge American foreign policy, and "their accomplices, the U.K. and the Jews." *The New York Times* further wrote, "the man said he wanted to show that the enemies of Islam would never win this 'war.' Beseeching other Muslims to join jihad, he justified the killing of innocent civilians in America and other Western countries because they supported the war against Muslims through their tax dollars. They were too busy enjoying their

⁶⁹ Note: The plotters were allegedly intending to create Hexamethylene triperoxide diamine (HMTD). See: Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁷⁰ Crown Prosecution Service Press Release, August 21, 2006.

⁷¹ "Terror Detectives 'Find Bomb Kit,'" *BBC*, August 17, 2006 and Carol Grisanti and Robert Windrem, "U.K. Terror Plot Suspect Forced to Talk," *NBC News*, August 17, 2006 and Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁷² "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 6, 2007.

⁷³ "Plot Would Have Killed Thousands," *ABC News*, August 6, 2007.

⁷⁴ Aram Roston and Lisa Myers, "Disagreement over Timing of Arrests," *NBC News*, August 14, 2006.

⁷⁵ Crown Prosecution Service Press Release, August 21, 2006.

⁷⁶ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁷⁷ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

Western lifestyles to protest the policies, he added."⁷⁸ Finally, the plotter noted his wish that Allah would be "pleased with us and accepts our deed."⁷⁹

Authoring a Last Will

The New York Times asserted that one of the cell members penned a last will and testament, which was located at his brother's home. The will, authored September 24, 2004, states, "what should I worry when I die a Muslim, in the manner in which I am to die, I go to my death for the sake of my maker." He also wrote that Allah has the ability to "bless limbs torn away!!"⁸⁰ The *Times*' claim is supported by the fact that Nabeel Hussain has been charged with "having a will contemplating a violent death,"⁸¹ and a minor has been charged with possessing "some suicide notes and wills with the identities of persons prepared to commit acts of terrorism..."⁸²

Additional Material Seized by Investigators

In a press release issued eleven days after the first arrests in England, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Peter Clarke, head of the Metropolitan Police Service Anti-Terrorist Branch, said:

"There have been 69 searches. These have been in houses, flats and business premises, vehicles and open spaces...we have found more than 400 computers, 200 mobile telephones and 8,000 items of removable storage media such as memory sticks, CDs and DVDs. So far, from the computers alone, we have removed some 6,000 gigabytes of data."⁸³

Additionally, *The New York Times* reported that one suspect possessed a "diary that included a list that the police interpreted as a step-by-step plan for an attack. The items included batteries and Lucozade bottles. It also included a reminder to select a date."⁸⁴

When searching some of the suspects' residences, authorities also discovered an array of jihadist material, including literature and DVDs. Some of those DVDs depicted the purported "genocide" in Palestine and Iraq. Abdullah Azzam's "Defense of the Muslim Lands" was also reportedly seized at one location in Walthamstow.⁸⁵

The Plot's Links to Al-Qaida

Shortly after the plot's disruption, U.S. officials made guarded statements about the conspiracy's links to Al-Qaida's central leadership. DHS Chief Intelligence Officer

⁷⁸ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁷⁹ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁸⁰ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "In Tapes, Receipts, and a Diary, Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁸¹ "Accused Deny Airliner Bomb Plot," *BBC*, May 18, 2007.

⁸² "CPS Authorises Charges in Alleged Aircraft Terror Plot," Crown Prosecution Service Press Release, August 21, 2006.

⁸³ Crown Prosecution Service Press Release, August 21, 2006.

⁸⁴ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

⁸⁵ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

Charlie Allen commented, "we're not convinced this particular operation is connected to the Al-Qaida chain of command."⁸⁶ DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff concurred, asserting that although "this operation is, in some respects, suggestive of an Al-Qaida plot...we cannot yet form a definitive conclusion."⁸⁷ The next day, Chertoff added, "certainly in terms of the complexity, the sophistication, the international dimension and the number of people involved, this plot has the hallmarks of an al-Qaida-type plot."⁸⁸ These DHS analyses were echoed by FBI Director Robert Mueller, who pointed out that the conspiracy "had the earmarks of an Al-Qaida plot"⁸⁹ and was "suggestive of Al-Qaida direction and planning."⁹⁰ (Congressman Peter King, Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, issued the most definitive take, saying, "it clearly is an Al-Qaida-type operation with links to Al-Qaida."⁹¹)

In contrast to the general reticence of U.S. authorities to firmly tie the plan to Al-Qaida, Pakistani officials went on the record with a different perspective. For instance, Mahmud Ali Durrani, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, declared, "clear evidence leads to an Al-Qaida connection in Afghanistan."⁹² In August 2006, some anonymous Pakistani security sources identified now-detained Al-Qaida official Abu Faraj al-Libbi as the mastermind of the plot.⁹³

However, in 2007 and 2008 reporting, a different Al-Qaida mastermind was identified. In September 2007, *The Washington Post* wrote that Abu Ubaidah al Masri, an Egyptian serving as Al-Qaida's "external operations chief," was the terror network's "conduit to the British-Pakistani cells that carried out the July 7, 2005, public transit bombings in London as well as the failed transatlantic airliner plot in Britain in 2006."⁹⁴ An extensive April 2008 *Los Angeles Times* article echoed this analysis, quoting an anonymous Western intelligence official who said, "the airline plot is his thing." The article added that investigators believe al Masri received instructions from his superiors; a senior British official stated, "we have patchy intelligence on the relationship and structure between external operations figures and Zawahiri and Bin Laden. In the really big plots, we think they played a role."⁹⁵

While additional unclassified information remains limited on this topic, a substantial amount of data has come to light on key plotter Rashid Rauf and his alleged ties to Al-Qaida. (For more on Rauf, see below.)

⁸⁶ Brian Bennett and Douglas Waller, "Thwarting the Airline Plot: Inside the Investigation," *Time*, August 10, 2006.

⁸⁷ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

⁸⁸ Katherine Shrader, "Al-Qaida-U.K. Plot Link Evidence Grows," *Associated Press*, August 13, 2006.

⁸⁹ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

⁹⁰ Scott Shane, "Scale and Detail of Plane Scheme Recall Al Qaeda," *The New York Times*, August 11, 2006.

⁹¹ Brian Ross, "Inside the U.K. Terror Plot," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006.

⁹² "UK Plotters Linked to Al Qaeda in Afghanistan," *Dawn*, August 12, 2006.

⁹³ Duncan Campbell, "Pakistan Says Al-Qaida Link to Plot Found," *The Guardian*, August 17, 2006.

⁹⁴ Craig Whitlock and Munir Ladaa, "Al-Qaeda's New Leadership," *The Washington Post*, September 8, 2007.

⁹⁵ Sebastian Rotella, "A Look Inside Al Qaeda," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 2008.

Rashid Rauf's Alleged Links to Al-Qaida and Pakistani Extremist Groups

After Rashid Rauf's arrest, Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao, the Pakistani Interior Minister, labeled Rauf a "key Al Qaeda operative."⁹⁶ Open source reporting has linked Rauf to a number of high-ranking terrorists.⁹⁷

For example, NBC News reported that Rauf had contacts with Amjad Hussein Farooqi,⁹⁸ whom Sherpao called "the chief Al-Qaida contact in Pakistan"; Farooqi, who belonged to Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and hijacked an Indian Airlines plane in December 1999, was reportedly involved in two assassination attempts on Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf, as well as the murder of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl.⁹⁹ NBC further claimed that after accompanying Farooqi to Afghanistan in mid-2002, Rauf "became a regular visitor...traveling to various parts of the country to meet Al-Qaida figures." In the wake of Farooqi's death, Rauf allegedly "established...direct and regular contact with Abu Faraj al-Libi..."¹⁰⁰ whom the U.S. government believes "was responsible for Al-Qaida activities and logistics throughout Pakistan."¹⁰¹ Additionally, *The Washington Post* has claimed that Rauf "reported to" Abu Ubaidah al Masri, an Egyptian serving as Al-Qaida's "external operations chief."¹⁰²



Rashid Rauf, AP/Anjum Naveed

Rauf was also allegedly involved with Jaish-e-Mohammed [JeM], though there is no public evidence tying that organization to the conspiracy.¹⁰³ Rauf reportedly became acquainted with JeM's leadership at the Darul Uloom Madina, a hard-line madrassa¹⁰⁴

⁹⁶ Alan Cowell, Dexter Filkins and Mark Mazzetti, "Suspect Held in Pakistan Is Said to Have Ties to Qaeda," *The New York Times*, August 12, 2006.

⁹⁷ Note: It is worth noting that, according to the Sunday Times (London), "diplomats and former senior officials were skeptical of the claims" that "Rauf was in contact with Al-Qaida." Further, "they said that Pakistan's fear of being branded a terrorist haven may have led it to overstate the role of Afghanistan when the evidence is sketchy." See: "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006.

⁹⁸ Carol Grisanti and Robert Windrem, "U.K. Terror Plot Suspect Forced to Talk," *NBC News*, August 17, 2006.

⁹⁹ Kamran Khan, "Pakistani Forces Kill Top Fugitive," *The Washington Post*, September 27, 2004.

¹⁰⁰ Carol Grisanti and Robert Windrem, "U.K. Terror Plot Suspect Forced to Talk," *NBC News*, August 17, 2006.

¹⁰¹ Summary of Evidence for Combatant Status Review Tribunal – Abu Faraj Al Libi, Department of Defense, Office for the Administrative Review of the Detention of Enemy Combatants at U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, February 8, 2007.

¹⁰² Craig Whitlock and Munir Ladaa, "Al-Qaeda's New Leadership," *The Washington Post*, September 8, 2007.

¹⁰³ Munir Ahmad, "Pakistan: al-Qaida Approved Bomb Plot," *Associated Press*, August 17, 2006.

Note: NBC News reports that Rauf was first involved with Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, but abandoned the group due to the ineffective leadership of Matiur Rehman. See: Carol Grisanti and Robert Windrem, "U.K. Terror Plot Suspect Forced to Talk," *NBC News*, August 17, 2006.

¹⁰⁴ Jessica Carsen, "Exclusive: A Kashmiri Tie to the Terror Plot," *Time*, August 16, 2006.

founded by his father-in-law.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, Rauf's wife's sister married Tahir Masood, the younger brother of the founder of Jaish-e-Mohammed.¹⁰⁶

The National Counterterrorism Center provides the following background information on JeM:

"Jaish-e-Mohammed—also known as the Army of Mohammed, Khudamul Islam, and Tehrik ul-Furqaan among other names—is an extremist group based in Pakistan; it was founded by Masood Azhar upon his release from prison in India in early 2000. The group's aim is to unite Kashmir with Pakistan, and it has openly declared war against the United States. Pakistan outlawed JEM in 2002. By 2003, JEM had splintered into Khuddam ul-Islam (KUI), headed by Azhar, and Jamaat ul-Furqan (JUF), led by Abdul Jabbar....JEM continues to operate openly in parts of Pakistan despite the 2002 ban on its activities....JEM has at least several hundred armed supporters located in Pakistan, India's southern Kashmir and Doda regions, and in the Kashmir Valley. Supporters are mostly Pakistanis and Kashmiris, but also include Afghans and Arab veterans of the Afghan war against the Soviets."¹⁰⁷

Financial Support for the Plot Via Crescent Relief?

Founded in England in October 2000, Crescent Relief was incorporated by Rashid Rauf's father, Abdul, and uncle,¹⁰⁸ Mohammad Mumtaz.¹⁰⁹ According to the charity's incorporation documents, Crescent Relief sought to advance education, "help refugees, epidemic and natural disaster victims and provide health care," among other goals.¹¹⁰ Open sources assert that a number of alleged conspirators were involved with the organization.¹¹¹



On August 24, 2006, the U.K. Charity Commission announced that it had frozen Crescent Relief's bank accounts and launched an inquiry following "recent allegations of links between Crescent Relief and terrorist abuse of charitable funds."¹¹² While the Charity Commission did not provide additional information illuminating the nature of that "terrorist abuse," press sources claimed that funds innocently donated to aid

¹⁰⁵ "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006.

¹⁰⁶ Carlotta Gall and Arif Jamal, "Man at Heart of British Terrorist Plot Laid Roots in a Land Rife With Sunni Extremism," *The New York Times*, August 21, 2006.

¹⁰⁷ "Jaish-e-Mohammed," National Counterterrorism Center.

¹⁰⁸ Brian Ross and Vic Walter, "Islamic Charity's Assets Frozen for Alleged Connection to Terrorism," *ABC News*, August 24, 2006

¹⁰⁹ Certification of Incorporation of a Private Limited Company, Crescent Relief Ltd., Company No. 4084325, October 5, 2000.

¹¹⁰ Certification of Incorporation of a Private Limited Company, Crescent Relief Ltd., Company No. 4084325, October 5, 2000.

¹¹¹ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

¹¹² "Charity Accounts Frozen as Regulator Investigates Terrorist Allegations," *Government News Network*, August 24, 2006.

Pakistani earthquake victims may have instead been funneled to conspirators, including Rashid Rauf.¹¹³ Prior to his arrest, Rauf purportedly wired money to England that was to be used to purchase plane tickets.¹¹⁴ (The Pakistani government has firmly denied all allegations involving diverted earthquake relief funds, calling them "absurd stories."¹¹⁵ Moreover, a Pakistani government spokesperson said, "Rashid Rauf had nothing to do with any charity involved in the earthquake relief work or with any relief work as such."¹¹⁶)

Prior to the disruption of the transatlantic bomb plot, the charity already had been subject to scrutiny, as Barclays Bank reportedly placed the organization's account "under review" in March 2006. That action had been spurred by an attempt to transfer \$50,000 to Saudi Pak Bank by an individual lacking proper identification.¹¹⁷ Additionally, neighbors of the charity called Britain's anti-terrorism hotline to report what they considered to be suspicious activity. A co-worker of one of those callers told *The New York Times* that Crescent Relief was "so secretive about what was going in and out."¹¹⁸

There is also evidence of a connection between Crescent Relief and the Islamic Relief Agency (a.k.a. ISRA, Islamic African Relief Agency), which the U.S. Treasury Department named a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in October 2004. Treasury's press release asserts that ISRA financially supported Usama Bin Laden, Al-Qaida, the Taliban, Hamas, and Al-Ittihad al-Islamiya.¹¹⁹ At the same time that Treasury designated ISRA, it also designated five senior ISRA officials, including Khalid Ahmad Jumah Al-Sudani, IARA's Middle East Regional Director. In a June 2003 photo of an ISRA-sponsored orphanage in Baghdad, Al-Sudani is pictured with three other men, including Mumtaz Qazi of Crescent Relief.¹²⁰ (see below) Another photo on Crescent Relief's website depicts tents sent to Pakistan for earthquake relief; those tents were distributed in a joint effort with ISRA-UK and both organizations' logos are visible on the tent.¹²¹



(Left to right) Khalid Ahmed al-Sudani (ISRA), "Ibrahim" from Muslim Aid in London, Mumtaz Qazi of "Crescent Relief," and Habib Mohammed from ISRA in the UK.

¹¹³ Brian Ross and Vic Walter, "Islamic Charity's Assets Frozen for Alleged Connection to Terrorism," *ABC News*, August 24, 2006.

¹¹⁴ Brian Ross and Vic Walter, "Islamic Charity's Assets Frozen for Alleged Connection to Terrorism," *ABC News*, August 24, 2006.

¹¹⁵ Ismail Khan and Carlotta Gall, "Pakistani Official Says a Qaeda Leader Was Plot's Mastermind," *The New York Times*, August 16, 2006.

¹¹⁶ Jessica Carsen, "Exclusive: A Kashmiri Tie to the Terror Plot," *Time*, August 16, 2006.

¹¹⁷ Ian Fischer and Serge Kovaleski, "In British Inquiry, a Family Caught in Two Worlds," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2006.

¹¹⁸ Ian Fischer and Serge Kovaleski, "In British Inquiry, a Family Caught in Two Worlds," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2006.

¹¹⁹ "Treasury Designates Global Network, Senior Officials of IARA for Supporting bin Laden, Others," U.S. Treasury Department Press Release, October 13, 2004.

¹²⁰ <http://www.isra.cix.co.uk/newsite/iraq/>.

¹²¹ <http://www.crescentrelief.org>, p11.jpg.

The Pakistan Connection

A *Washington Post* report, citing interviews with U.S. and European officials, identified Pakistan as the "hub" of the conspiracy, which "drew financial and logistical support from sponsors operating in Karachi and Lahore." Moreover, several alleged planners supposedly traveled to Pakistan in the months before their arrest "to seek instructions and confer with unknown conspirators..." While there are claims some of the individuals attended training camps in Pakistan,¹²² with an April 2008 *Los Angeles Times* article placing the number of attendees at six,¹²³ this allegation has not been confirmed by official, on-the-record sources.

Additional Information – Probing the Plotters' Links to the U.S.

Before the disruption of the conspiracy, hundreds of FBI agents across the U.S. hunted for links between the plotters and individuals operating on American soil; concerns of such a connection intensified when investigators determined that a handful of British suspects had phoned individuals in the U.S. According to open source reporting, the push led to a significant spike in the number of warrants issued by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.¹²⁴

At the time of the arrests, DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff reported, "we do not have evidence that there was, as part of this plot, any plan to initiate activity inside the United States or that the plotting was done in the United States."¹²⁵

Then, in a February 2008 speech, FBI Counterterrorism chief Joseph Billy Jr. revealed that although the probe did not bear fruit, he could not rule out the existence of a relationship: "We were very hungry for information that could link them (the alleged airline plotters) to support networks in the U.S...We did not see it...Does that mean they don't exist? I'm not so sure of that."¹²⁶

Additional Information - The Investigation's Origins

Press sources report that the investigation began in July 2005 when concerned citizens in East London warned the police about a number of young extremists in the community.¹²⁷ Initially, authorities had no indication airplane bombings were being

¹²² Brian Ross, "Inside the U.K. Terror Plot," *ABC News*, August 10, 2006 and Danfa Linzer, "Airliner Plot Had Support In Pakistan, Officials Say," *The Washington Post*, August 12, 2006 and Fiona Hudson, "Baby Bottle 'Used as Bomb,'" *The Daily Telegraph*, August 14, 2006.

¹²³ Sebastian Rotella, "A Look Inside Al Qaeda," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 2008. Note: This article, quoting a "U.S. anti-terrorism official," asserts that Al-Qaida's external operations chief Abu Ubaida al Masri was responsible for "overseeing the lesson plan..." and that "only one or two trainees had contact with Masri." Further, "trainees had autonomy to instruct and supervise a dozen fellow militants back in Britain..."

¹²⁴ Danfa Linzer, "Airliner Plot Had Support In Pakistan, Officials Say," *The Washington Post*, August 12, 2006.

¹²⁵ Danfa Linzer, "Airliner Plot Had Support In Pakistan, Officials Say," *The Washington Post*, August 12, 2006.

¹²⁶ Paisley Dodds, "FBI Says Airline Plotters Had No US Link," *Associated Press*, February 27, 2008.

¹²⁷ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006. Note: *The Washington Post* reported that "in the aftermath of the July 7, 2005, suicide bombings...British authorities received a call from a worried member of the Muslim community, reporting general suspicions about an acquaintance." See: Craig Whitlock and Dafna Linzer, "Tip Followed '05 Attacks on London Transit," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006.

plotted; instead, they sought to identify any connections between the 7/7 bombers and the group of roughly twelve men.¹²⁸ Authorities' understanding of the plan was reportedly greatly enhanced by the placement of an undercover British agent into the cell.¹²⁹

Additional Information - Rashid Rauf's Background and Capture/Escape

In the 1960s, Rashid Rauf's father, Abdul, moved to Birmingham, England,¹³⁰ where he opened a bakery called Classic Confectionery Supplies.¹³¹ After fathering four sons and a daughter, Abdul Rauf – described as "steadfast in his [Islamic] beliefs" – opened a Muslim study center at his house, which attracted 12-20 students, 3-4 times per week; Abdul Rauf's wife assisted by teaching the Koran to the females.¹³²

While living in England, Rashid Rauf worked as a deliveryman for his father's bakery. Interviewed about Rauf, a family friend stated, "he was not particularly religious, though he was a regular at the mosque. He was more into going to the gym or playing football...He was quite a bright kid but he never spoke about politics or 9/11 and Islam or anything."¹³³

After the April 2002 stabbing death of Mohammad Saeed, Rashid Rauf's uncle, British police subjected the Rauf family to intense scrutiny and raided their home.¹³⁴ Press reports indicate the murder, which occurred in front of Saeed's wife and children, may have been an "honor killing" spurred by "sexual misbehavior."¹³⁵

Following the murder, Rashid Rauf – then twenty-one years of age¹³⁶ – fled to Pakistan; authorities have not publicly released any information indicating that Rauf re-entered England following his 2002 departure.¹³⁷

In Pakistan, Rauf married a woman whose family has deep extremist ties (see more above); he eventually bought a home in a middle-class neighborhood in

¹²⁸ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006. Note: NBC claims that "some suspects were known to the security services even before the [7/7] London subway bombings." And *U.S. News and World Report* asserts that "at least some of the suspects had ties" to the 7/7 bombers." See: Aram Roston and Lisa Myers, "Disagreement over Timing of Arrests," *NBC News*, August 14, 2006 and Chitra Ragavan, "Terror Suspects Planned to Use Liquid Explosives to Blow Up Planes," *U.S. News and World Report*, August 10, 2006.

¹²⁹ "Agent Infiltrated Terror Cell, U.S. Says," *CNN*, August 11, 2006.

¹³⁰ Zulfiqar Ali, "My Grandson is No Terrorist," *BBC News*, August 24, 2006.

¹³¹ "Who are the Bomb Suspects?," *Times Online (London)*, August 11, 2006.

¹³² Ian Fischer and Serge Kovaleski, "In British Inquiry, a Family Caught in Two Worlds," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2006.

¹³³ Cahal Milmo, Ian Herbet, Jason Bennetto, and Justin Huggler, "From Birmingham Bakery to Pakistani Prison, the Mystery of Rashid Raud," *The Independent*, August 19, 2006.

¹³⁴ Note: The Rauf home was also searched in 2005, after race riots in Birmingham left a man dead; other individuals were eventually arrested for that crime. See: Ian Fischer and Serge Kovaleski, "In British Inquiry, a Family Caught in Two Worlds," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2006.

¹³⁵ Ian Fischer and Serge Kovaleski, "In British Inquiry, a Family Caught in Two Worlds," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2006.

¹³⁶ "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006.

¹³⁷ Ian Fischer and Serge Kovaleski, "In British Inquiry, a Family Caught in Two Worlds," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2006.

Bahawalpur (southern Punjab).¹³⁸ Interviewed about Rauf and his family, a Bahawalpur resident stated, "they were very exceptionally rich...They had a lot of money and everyone was wondering how they had the money."¹³⁹

In the media, there were varying reports on the timing of Rashid Rauf's arrest in Pakistan, with different sources fixing the date as August 7,¹⁴⁰ August 9,¹⁴¹ or August 10, 2006.¹⁴² And after press reports cited five different locations for his arrest,¹⁴³ Pakistani officials confirmed he was seized in Rawalpindi.¹⁴⁴ Shortly thereafter, Rauf's brother, Tayib was arrested in England, though he was later released without charge.¹⁴⁵ (Media reports initially claimed that Abdul Rauf was held in Islamabad;¹⁴⁶ however, in February 2007, a British newspaper issued a retraction, stating, "we accept that Mr Rauf has never been questioned, let alone detained or arrested, in connection with any such matters..."¹⁴⁷)

After Rashid Rauf's arrest, Pakistani officials purportedly had him identify the locations of Al-Qaida training camps on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and near the Pakistan-Iran border.¹⁴⁸

In August 2006, Britain requested Rashid Rauf be extradited for his involvement in the murder of his uncle;¹⁴⁹ this request was complicated by the lack of an extradition treaty between Pakistan and England.¹⁵⁰ Although open sources reported that Pakistan sought the extradition of six Baloch insurgents from England in exchange for Rauf,¹⁵¹ the Pakistani government asserted that "there is no truth in these claims."¹⁵²

¹³⁸ "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006 and Carlotta Gall and Arif Jamal, "Man at Heart of British Terrorist Plot Laid Roots in a Land Rife With Sunni Extremism," *The New York Times*, August 21, 2006.

¹³⁹ Ian Fischer and Serge Kovalski, "In British Inquiry, a Family Caught in Two Worlds," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2006.

¹⁴⁰ Cahal Milmo, Ian Herbet, Jason Bennetto, and Justin Huggler, "From Birmingham Bakery to Pakistani Prison, the Mystery of Rashid Rauf," *The Independent*, August 19, 2006.

¹⁴¹ Note: Rauf's attorney claimed he was arrested on August 9th. See: Salman Masood, Stephen Grey, and Alan Cowell, "Judge in Pakistan Dismisses Charges in Reported Plane-Bomb Plot," *The New York Times*, December 14, 2006.

¹⁴² Note: Pakistani police said Rauf was arrested August 10th. See: Salman Masood, Stephen Grey, and Alan Cowell, "Judge in Pakistan Dismisses Charges in Reported Plane-Bomb Plot," *The New York Times*, December 14, 2006.

¹⁴³ Cahal Milmo, Ian Herbet, Jason Bennetto, and Justin Huggler, "From Birmingham Bakery to Pakistani Prison, the Mystery of Rashid Raud," *The Independent*, August 19, 2006.

¹⁴⁴ Question and Answer Session, Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 28, 2006.

¹⁴⁵ Salman Masood, Stephen Grey, and Alan Cowell, "Judge in Pakistan Dismisses Charges in Reported Plane-Bomb Plot," *The New York Times*, December 14, 2006.

¹⁴⁶ "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006.

¹⁴⁷ "Corrections and Clarifications," *The Guardian*, February 27, 2007. See also: "Abdul Rauf – An Apology," *The Mirror*, August 24, 2007.

¹⁴⁸ Carol Grisanti and Robert Windrem, "U.K. Terror Plot Suspect Forced to Talk," *NBC News*, August 17, 2006.

¹⁴⁹ "UK 'Plot' Terror Charge Dropped," *BBC*, December 13, 2006.

¹⁵⁰ Question and Answer Session, Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 19, 2007.

¹⁵¹ Ian Evans, "Prisoner-Swap Talks Over Bomb Suspect," *The Times of London*, March 28, 2007.

¹⁵² Question and Answer Session, Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 9, 2007.

In December 2006, a Pakistani judge dismissed terrorism charges against Rauf.¹⁵³ Rauf's lawyer Hashmat Habib then reported that "Rauf was booked under six charges, such as impersonation, cheating, forging documents, presenting those forged documents as real and keeping explosives."¹⁵⁴ Those charges were also eventually withdrawn in November 2007, and Rauf was held pending resolution of the British extradition request.¹⁵⁵

However, following a December 2007 extradition hearing, Rauf escaped from police custody and remains on the loose. Two of his guards were arrested, though it remains unclear if he had inside help.¹⁵⁶

Additional Information – U.K. Suspects' Backgrounds and Connections

As noted previously, a number of the alleged plotters were involved with Crescent Relief.¹⁵⁷ Open sources also tie some of the individuals together through Tablighi Jamaat (TJ),¹⁵⁸ a Pakistan-based missionary organization.¹⁵⁹ For instance, Waheed Zaman "attended Tablighi Jamaat events across the country," according to his friend Kamran Siddique.¹⁶⁰ And Assad Ali Sarwar's brother Amjad reported that Assad frequently attended TJ study groups.¹⁶¹ The Masjid-E-Umer Mosque -served as another point of contact for the British suspects,¹⁶² as did the Muslim Education Center.¹⁶³

Of the individuals facing trial, two are converts to Islam: Brian Young¹⁶⁴ and Donald Stewart-Whyte.¹⁶⁵ (Interestingly, Stewart-Whyte is the half-brother of a former supermodel who was married to professional tennis player Yannick Noah,¹⁶⁶ while his father was a local political official.¹⁶⁷) Those who knew Stewart-Whyte revealed that he

¹⁵³ Salman Masood, Stephen Grey, and Alan Cowell, "Judge in Pakistan Dismisses Charges in Reported Plane-Bomb Plot," *The New York Times*, December 14, 2006.

¹⁵⁴ Salman Masood, Stephen Grey, and Alan Cowell, "Judge in Pakistan Dismisses Charges in Reported Plane-Bomb Plot," *The New York Times*, December 14, 2006.

¹⁵⁵ Carlotta Gall, "Suspect in Bomb Plot Escapes in Pakistan," *The New York Times*, December 17, 2007.

¹⁵⁶ Carlotta Gall, "Suspect in Bomb Plot Escapes in Pakistan," *The New York Times*, December 17, 2007.

¹⁵⁷ Don Van Natta Jr., Elaine Sciolino, and Stephen Grey, "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," *The New York Times*, August 28, 2006.

¹⁵⁸ "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006.

¹⁵⁹ The Department of Defense has asserted that TJ "is being used as a cover to mask travel and activities of terrorists including members of al Qaida." See: Fayad Yahhya Ahmed, Summarized Transcript, Combatant Status Review Tribunal, Department of Defense.

¹⁶⁰ Kamran Siddique, "My Friend: The Football Fan Who Dreamed of Being a Doctor," *The Guardian*, August 15, 2006.

¹⁶¹ "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006.

¹⁶² "The Radical with a Perfect Cover," *The Sunday Times* (London), August 20, 2006.

¹⁶³ Dominic Kennedy and Hannah Devlin, "Disbelief and Shame in a Community of Divided Faith," *The Times* (London), August 19, 2006.

¹⁶⁴ Adam Fresco, Elsa McLaren, Lewis Smith, Lucy Bannerman and Nicola Woolcock, "Who Are the 'Bomb Plot' Suspects?," *Times Online* (London), August 11, 2006.

¹⁶⁵ "2 More Suspects Appear in Court After Being Charged in Alleged Plot to Bomb U.S.-Bound Airliners," *Associated Press*, September 7, 2006.

¹⁶⁶ Phil Hazlewood, "Ordinary Suspects in Extraordinary Alleged Bomb Plot," *Agence France Presse*, August 12, 2006.

¹⁶⁷ Serge Kovaleski, "To Their Neighbors and Families, Plot Suspects Seemed to Lead Ordinary Lives," *The New York Times*, August 14, 2006.

"was quite a troubled teenager" who was "expelled for bad behavior" and who "was never able to hold down a job for very long." He reportedly converted to Islam "because it all made sense and had just clicked with him."¹⁶⁸ Young is identified as a "former Rastafarian"¹⁶⁹ of West Indian descent.¹⁷⁰



Brian Young; *The Sun*



Donald Stewart-Whyte; *The Mirror*

Of those who were born Muslim, many of their families hailed from Kashmir's Mirpur region, according to *The Chicago Tribune*.¹⁷¹ They are described by friends as ranging from moderate to extreme. For instance, Waheed Zaman's friend claimed that Zaman "was a spiritual man who preached about the basics of Islam: help people, be charitable, do community work...His [sic] was elected head of the Islamic society [at London Metropolitan University] last year because of his moderate ways."¹⁷² A mosque elder agreed that Zaman "had no tolerance for...extremist groups." On the other hand, Nabeel Hussain's acquaintance told the media, "the last time I saw him was about six months ago, and he said both countries [England and America] would get paid back by God and others for carrying out the war."¹⁷³

The suspects also pursued a variety of career paths. For example, Mohammad Usman Siddique worked at a pizza restaurant,¹⁷⁴ while Brian Young was employed as a bus ticket inspector.¹⁷⁵ More academically inclined, Waheed Zaman studied biomedical science and hoped to become a doctor;¹⁷⁶ Muhammad Usman Saddique held a job as an IT consultant for investment banks.¹⁷⁷

¹⁶⁸ Jaime Pyatt and Thomas Whitaker, "Brit was Born a Christian," *The Sun*, August 11, 2006.

¹⁶⁹ Dominic Kennedy and Hannah Devlin, "Disbelief and Shame in a Community of Divided Faith," *The Times* (London), August 19, 2006.

¹⁷⁰ Serge Kovalski, "Journeys to Realm of Militancy Began in Places Most Ordinary," *The New York Times*, August 16, 2006.

¹⁷¹ John Crewdson, Kim Barker and Stephen J. Hedges, "Suspected terror cell chief ID'd," *The Chicago Tribune*, August 20, 2006.

¹⁷² Kamran Siddique, "My Friend: The Football Fan Who Dreamed of Being a Doctor," *The Guardian*, August 15, 2006.

¹⁷³ Serge Kovalski, "Plot Suspects Are Remembered As Both Harmless and Sinister," *The New York Times*, August 15, 2006.

¹⁷⁴ Adam Fresco, Elsa McLaren, Lewis Smith, Lucy Bannerman and Nicola Woolcock, "Who Are the 'Bomb Plot' Suspects?," *Times Online* (London), August 11, 2006.

¹⁷⁵ Dominic Kennedy and Hannah Devlin, "Disbelief and Shame in a Community of Divided Faith," *The Times* (London), August 19, 2006.

¹⁷⁶ Kamran Siddique, "My Friend: The Football Fan Who Dreamed of Being a Doctor," *The Guardian*, August 15, 2006.

¹⁷⁷ Alison Hardie and Kevin Schofield, "Ordinary Men Suspected of Extraordinary Terrorist Plot," *The Scotsman*, August 12, 2006.

Additional Information – The Threat from “Insiders”

One of the individuals arrested in the initial raids, Amin Asmin Tariq, worked at Heathrow Airport as a security guard.¹⁷⁸ Following his arrest, his employer – Jet Airways – issued a statement announcing that Tariq had been suspended.¹⁷⁹ According to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), “Tariq helped Islamic extremists pose as airport employees so they could conduct surveillance of security procedures at Heathrow. Tariq allegedly provided information about airport security procedures to the would-be bombers.”¹⁸⁰

Other individuals have similarly used their “inside” access at airports to facilitate terrorist planning.

In November 2007, Samina Malik was found guilty in England of possessing documents likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing acts of terrorism.¹⁸¹ Malik, who worked as a Heathrow Airport shop assistant, was in Internet communication with Sohail Qureshi, who has admitted to preparing to commit an act of terrorism overseas. According to the Metropolitan Police, Malik “provided Qureshi with the latest security measures in place” at the airport. In one exchange, Qureshi asked Malik, “Sis, I hope u get this email before anyone else does. What is the system like at work? Is the checking still very harsh? or have things calmed down a bit?...Delete after read!”¹⁸²

And Russell Defreitas, charged in June 2007 with plotting to attack JFK airport in New York, worked at JFK and claimed he “had conducted multiple tests of the security” there.¹⁸³ Further, convicted terrorist Gregory Patterson, whose cell considered attacking the El Al terminal at Los Angeles International Airport,¹⁸⁴ spent several months working at a duty-free shop in the airport.¹⁸⁵ Plot mastermind Kevin James’ plea agreement states that “in March 2005, defendant wrote a letter to [co-conspirator Levar] Washington telling him that Patterson should keep his job at Los Angeles International Airport...”¹⁸⁶

Additionally, TSA notes, “Turkish citizen Adem Yilmaz, reportedly a member of the Islamic Jihad Union cell targeting Germany, was arrested in September 2007. Yilmaz was employed in the security division of rail operator Deutsche Bahn from 1997 until 2002. During that time he worked in the railway station of Frankfurt airport. The airport was one of several targets his cell...allegedly considered.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁷⁸ Richard Alleyne, “London Heathrow Security Guard and Pregnant Daughter of Former Imam are Held,” *The Daily Telegraph*, August 12, 2006.

¹⁷⁹ “Jet Airways Suspends Amin Asmin,” *India Times*, August 12, 2006.

¹⁸⁰ (Unclassified//For Official Use Only) “Mass Transit System Threat Assessment,” Transportation Security Administration, Office of Intelligence, February 29, 2008.

¹⁸¹ “Lyrical Terrorist Convicted,” *Metropolitan Police Service Press Release*, November 8, 2007.

¹⁸² “Al Qaeda-Trained Terrorist Jailed,” *Metropolitan Police Service Press Release*, January 9, 2008.

¹⁸³ U.S. v. Defreitas, (E.D. N.Y.), Complaint, Filed June 1, 2007.

¹⁸⁴ U.S. v. James, (C.D. CA.), No. 05-CR-214, Indictment, Filed August 31, 2005.

¹⁸⁵ Amy Argetsinger and Dan Eggen, “L.A. Holdups Linked to Islamic Group, Possible Terrorist Plot,” *The Washington Post*, August 17, 2005.

¹⁸⁶ U.S. v. James, (C.D. CA.), No. 05-CR-214, Plea Agreement for Defendant Kevin James - Attachment A, Filed December 14, 2007.

¹⁸⁷ (Unclassified//For Official Use Only) “Mass Transit System Threat Assessment,” Transportation Security Administration, Office of Intelligence, February 29, 2008.

There are other examples of individuals using their access to target military bases. For instance, convicted terrorist Hassan Abujihad had been stationed at the San Diego military base he considered attacking with one-time roommate Derrick Shareef. Abujihad was aware that his intelligence on the target might be outdated: "whatever I can give you that's beneficial, I'll give it to you. But whatever's cold turkey...if it's cold turkey, I can't give it to you...I can't give you the fresh meal I ain't been there in X amount of years. You see what I'm saying?"¹⁸⁸ Moreover, in May 2007, authorities indicted six men who were allegedly plotting to attack the Fort Dix Army base in New Jersey. The men considered Fort Dix an appealing target because one of the suspects, Serdar Tatar, had delivered pizzas there and thus knew "it like the palm of his hand."¹⁸⁹

Finally, an August 2004, joint DHS-FBI Information Bulletin documents Al-Qaida's interest in using "insiders" to attack U.S. water treatment facilities:

"Information recently brought to the attention of DHS and FBI indicates that prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks; terrorists discussed possible attacks against U.S. facilities and systems to disrupt drinking water supplies serving major urban areas, which include large-capacity water reservoirs and water treatment facilities... they focused on the possibility of poisoning the water during the water treatment process. Terrorists mentioned inserting a poison (not further identified) into the chlorination section of the water treatment facility. To accomplish this objective, they discussed recruiting insiders to work with them."¹⁹⁰

Additional Information – The Bojinka Plot

Current and former national security officials have highlighted the similarities between the August 2006 plot and the Bojinka plot, which would have involved the mid-flight bombing of 12 U.S. commercial airliners over the Pacific.¹⁹¹ For instance, DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff said that the British conspiracy was "reminiscent" of Bojinka,¹⁹² while former National Security Council official Michael Sheehan stated, "this is a repeat. This is clearly Bojinka inspired...This is almost an identical plot. The only difference is the Atlantic Ocean, not the Pacific."¹⁹³



CNN

¹⁸⁸ U.S. v. Abujihad, (D.C. CT.), No. 3:07-CR-57, Motion in Limine and Memorandum in Support of the Admission of Evidence Pursuant to Federal Rules of Evidence 801(d)(2)(E) and 801(d)(2)(A), Filed October 19, 2007.

¹⁸⁹ U.S. v. Duka, (D. N.J.), No. 1:07-CR-00459-RBK, Complaint, Filed May 7, 2007.

¹⁹⁰ (Unclassified//For Official Use Only) "Potential Vulnerabilities of U.S. Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities to Insider Terrorism," Department of Homeland Security and Federal Bureau of Investigation Information Bulletin, August 11, 2004. Note: This document has already been leaked.

¹⁹¹ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 147.

¹⁹² Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006.

¹⁹³ Scott Shane, "Scale and Detail of Plane Scheme Recall Al Qaeda," *The New York Times*, August 11, 2006.

9/11 planner Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM) and 1993 World Trade Center bomber Ramzi Yousef served as the chief architects of Bojinka, which was planned in the Philippines in 1994¹⁹⁴ and detected in January 1995 when a fire brought authorities to a Manila apartment where chemicals were being mixed.¹⁹⁵ As a captured plotter explained during interrogation in February 1995, the conspirators envisioned "eluding detection on [an] airport's x-ray machine...[by] smuggling...liquid chemical bombs."¹⁹⁶ And federal prosecutor Michael Garcia asserted during the New York trial of three Bojinka conspirators, "had things gone as planned, these defendants would have walked through airport after airport, planting bomb after bomb."¹⁹⁷ The bombs were to be left on planes during stopovers, and, according to *The 9/11 Commission Report*, KSM "cased target flights to Hong Kong and Seoul that would have onward legs to the United States."¹⁹⁸ Ramzi Yousef even planted a small bomb on a Philippine Airlines flight, killing a Japanese passenger.¹⁹⁹ Yousef and two others were convicted in a New York court in September 1996 for their role in the conspiracy.²⁰⁰

(Further reflecting Al-Qaida operatives' creativity in obscuring explosive components, *The 9/11 Commission Report* notes that "KSM and Yousef also developed plans to...bomb U.S.-bound cargo carriers by smuggling jackets containing nitrocellulose on board."²⁰¹ The same report reveals that convicted Los Angeles International Airport bomb plotter Ahmed Ressam "left Afghanistan in early 1999 carrying precursor chemicals for explosives disguised in toiletry bottles."²⁰² And an Unclassified//For Official Use Only report by the Department of Homeland Security, which has become public, states that, in the summer of 2003, Al-Qaida "planned to use camera flash attachments as stun guns. They also intended to use cameras to disguise bomb components in order to hijack commercial airliners and crash them into targets in Western countries, including along the U.S. East Coast and in Australia, Britain, and Italy."²⁰³)

Additional Information – The Economic Impact of the Thwarted Plot

Despite the fact that the plot was thwarted by authorities, the extra security measures placed a heavy financial burden on certain airlines. For example, British Airways declared that those security measures cost their company £100m,²⁰⁴ while EasyJet placed its losses at £4m.²⁰⁵ Further, Ryanair announced its intentions to sue the British government for £3.3m in losses. Responding to tight British restrictions on carry-

¹⁹⁴ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 147.

¹⁹⁵ "Plane Terror Suspects Convicted on All Counts," *CNN*, September 5, 1996.

¹⁹⁶ Republic of the Philippines, Department of the Interior and Local Government, National Police Commission, National Headquarters, Intelligence Command, Special Investigation Group, Camp Crame, Quezon City, February 13, 1995.

¹⁹⁷ Christopher Wren, "Plot Terror in the Skies is Outlined by a Prosecutor," *The New York Times*, May 30, 1996.

¹⁹⁸ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 147.

¹⁹⁹ Republic of the Philippines, Department of the Interior and Local Government, National Police Commission, National Headquarters, Intelligence Command, Special Investigation Group, Camp Crame, Quezon City, February 13, 1995.

²⁰⁰ "Plane Terror Suspects Convicted on All Counts," *CNN*, September 5, 1996.

²⁰¹ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 147.

²⁰² *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 177.

²⁰³ (Unclassified//For Official Use Only) "Strategic Sector Assessment: U.S. Aviation," Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Infrastructure Threat and Risk Analysis, May 18, 2006.

²⁰⁴ "BA's Terror Alert Bill Hits £100m," *BBC*, November 11, 2006.

²⁰⁵ "Security Alert Cost Easyjet £4m," *BBC*, September 7, 2006.

on luggage,²⁰⁶ Ryanair head Michael O'Leary commented, "it is a shambles and a cock-up and we are giving terrorists and extremists a victory."²⁰⁷

Al-Qaida is acutely aware of the economic impact of its actions. In fact, in its targeting strategy, Al-Qaida has continually sought to strike targets of economic significance, in large part due to Usama Bin Laden's belief that his efforts in Afghanistan in the 1980s bankrupted the Soviet Union and led to the collapse of the Russian Empire. In remarks broadcast in November 2004, Bin Laden said, "we, alongside the mujahedeen, bled Russia for 10 years until it went bankrupt and was forced to withdraw in defeat."²⁰⁸

In publicly released statements, Bin Laden has also stressed his "policy" of "bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy."²⁰⁹ And an excerpt from the Al-Qaida publication *Sawt al-Jihad* states:

"If the enemy has used his economy to rule the world and hire collaborators, then we need to strike this economy with harsh attacks to bring it down on the heads of its owners. If the enemy has built his economy on the basis of open markets and free trade by getting the monies of investors, then we have to prove to these investors that the enemy's land is not safe for them, that his economy is not capable of guarding their monies, so they would abandon him to suffer alone the fall of his economy."²¹⁰

It was New York's role as the heart of the U.S. economy that captivated KSM when planning 9/11. *The 9/11 Commission Report* declares, "KSM reasoned he could best influence U.S. policy by targeting the country's economy. KSM and [Ramzi] Yousef reportedly brainstormed together about what drove the U.S. economy. New York, which KSM considered the economic capital of the United States, therefore became the primary target."²¹¹

Following the 9/11 attacks, Bin Laden remarked that the hijackers had "struck...the U.S. economy in the heart" and "inflicted...more than a trillion dollars in losses" on U.S. markets. In the same speech, he added, "if their economy is destroyed, they will be busy with their own affairs rather than enslaving the weak peoples. It is very important to concentrate on hitting the U.S. economy through all possible means."²¹²

Additional Information - International Cooperation in the Transatlantic Liquid Bomb Plot Investigation

Following the arrests in England, the U.S. lavished praise on its British partners, noting the deep cooperation the operation required. At a press conference, DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff stated, "I...have to give special thanks to our partners, the

²⁰⁶ Only one small carry-on item was allowed at the time.

²⁰⁷ "Ryanair to Sue Government for £3m," *BBC*, August 25, 2006.

²⁰⁸ Transcript of Usama Bin Laden Tape, November 2, 2004.

²⁰⁹ Transcript of Usama Bin Laden Tape, November 2, 2004.

²¹⁰ Akhu Man Ta`a Allah, "What Else is There to Say About September 11," *Sawt al-Jihad*, Volume 26.

²¹¹ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 153.

²¹² "'Full Text' of Usama bin Ladin Recorded Statement Aired by Al-Jazirah TV 27 Dec," FBIS, Document ID: GMP20011227000257/

British government. They have been terrific, in terms of close information sharing and close coordination, recognizing that both countries, which are bound together with great common feelings of culture, are also, unfortunately, bound together by being targeted through terror."²¹³ And emphasizing Pakistan's contributions to the investigation, Pakistani government spokesperson Tasnim Aslam commented, "the arrests took place following very close co-operation between the three countries. In fact Pakistan played a very important role."²¹⁴

Although these quotes seemingly indicate deep cohesion, media sources claimed that, in addition to the conflict between British and Pakistani officials over Rashid Rauf's surprise arrest (described above), there was also heated disagreement between American and British authorities over when to disrupt the plot. According to NBC News, British authorities wanted to continue their surveillance efforts "for at least another week to try to obtain more evidence." The U.S. also purportedly threatened to "render" Rashid Rauf if he were not immediately arrested in Pakistan; the British, on the other hand, were purportedly more interested in ensuring he be arrested "in circumstances where there was due process."²¹⁵

Challenging these reports, Frances Townsend, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, stated, "there was unprecedented cooperation and coordination between the U.S., the U.K. and Pakistani officials throughout the case and we worked together to protect our citizens from harm while ensuring that we gathered as much info as possible to bring the plotters to justice. There was no disagreement between U.S. and U.K. officials."²¹⁶

²¹³ Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Assistant Secretary for TSA Kip Hawley, August 10, 2006. Note: The U.S. reportedly played a vital role by intercepting communications. See: Brian Bennett and Douglas Waller, "Thwarting the Airline Plot: Inside the Investigation," *Time*, August 10, 2006.

²¹⁴ "Brits Look to Pakistan for Qaeda Link," *CBS News*, August 12, 2006.

²¹⁵ Aram Roston and Lisa Myers, "Disagreement over Timing of Arrests," *NBC News*, August 14, 2006.

²¹⁶ Aram Roston and Lisa Myers, "Disagreement over Timing of Arrests," *NBC News*, August 14, 2006.