

The Missing Links

U.S. officials believe these four individuals worked closely with the hijackers in preparing to carry out the 9-11 attacks. Three of the four remain at large, but the fourth may be in secret custody in an undisclosed country.



Khalid Shaikh Mohammed

Role in 9-11 Plot:

A top bin Laden lieutenant who repeatedly visited Hamburg, he may have been the principal architect of 9-11. With 1993 WTC bombing mastermind Ramzi Yousef, he also hatched a never-used plan to bomb 12 U.S. planes on the same day.

Whereabouts:

Last seen in Pakistan.



Ramzi Yousef

Role in 9-11 Plot:

Mohamed Atta's roommate in Hamburg. Apparently slated to be the 20th hijacker until he was denied a U.S. visa to attend flight school. He subsequently helped arrange money transfers to the hijackers and Zacarias Moussaoui.

Whereabouts:

Disappeared from Hamburg shortly before 9-11.

Mohamed Zamar

Role in 9-11 Plot:

Suspected recruiter. A Syrian-born Hamburg resident who advocated holy war against the West, he was close to members of the hijack cell and attended Bahaji's wedding.

Whereabouts:

Flew to Morocco after 9-11 and disappeared. There have been hints he is being detained by a U.S. ally.



Said Bahaji

Role in 9-11 Plot:

A German-born computer specialist, he acted as the Hamburg cell's bookkeeper and held the lease on Atta's apartment. The only married member of Atta's circle.

Whereabouts:

Unknown. Just before 9-11, he shaved his beard, told his wife he was off to Pakistan for a computer seminar and vanished.



questioning can involve beating and worse, says one well-informed Arab source.

Zubaydah himself may be in such a place. His whereabouts are a national-security secret kept almost as zealously as the Manhattan Project; even CIA officials who are briefed on his interrogation don't know where he is being held overseas. Some U.S. officials believe Zubaydah is playing them, perhaps tossing overboard amateurish small fry like Padilla to preserve "the crown jewels," as one CIA official calls whatever key plotters may be left. But U.S. authorities and their allies are playing with Al Qaeda as well. They have publicly attributed many recent threats to Abu Zubaydah, perhaps as a way of demoralizing Al Qaeda, getting his confederates to talk or signaling that every operation the terrorists have planned may be compromised. And his own people are talking, among them his deputy, Ibn Al-Shaykh al-

Libi, who was captured by Pakistani forces in late December or early January and quickly turned over to U.S. interrogators. By the end of January, al-Libi had disclosed enough to disrupt an alleged Qaeda plot to attack the U.S. Embassy in Yemen, a longtime Qaeda hotbed. U.S. officials acknowledge that information from al-Libi also played a part in the capture of Abu Zubaydah himself.

WHILE AL QAEDA LIES low, it seems that U.S. authorities have been stashing key suspects around the globe. Mohamed Haydar Zammar, a Syrian-born German believed to have been part of Mohamed Atta's 9-11 cell in Hamburg, is an example. Tailing him last fall, German investigators at first had trouble finding sufficient evidence to justify an arrest under their strict evidentiary requirements. So they issued him a temporary passport and let him travel to Morocco. There Zammar just disappeared, and his family

later filed a missing-persons report. An intelligence official confirms he is overseas, but would not say where. U.S. officials, supposedly stalwart U.S. Washington hasn't told them.

Similarly, the bush administration put Padilla into military detention. He concluded that the sources and methods to capture him were too sensitive to open court. But the decision also came before his court-appointed U.S. lawyer preparing to challenge his arrest. The courts had agreed to hear the case, but would have had to be granted regular access to a lawyer and some modicum of an illegal combatant in the custody of the military, however, he can be held incommunicado and interrogated, for the moment. He has to worry about lawyers' and judges' shoulders. U.S. officials want to avoid the soapbox nature of Moussaoui's trial in Washington, and give terrorists an opportunity to promote their views publicly.

What was Padilla's real plan, a

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