



# FORWARD-LEANING Global Security Report



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PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS-IN-CONFIDENCE

## SPECIAL REPORT

### NY: FBI FOILS PLOT TO BOMB SYNAGOGUE, STRIKE AIRCRAFT WITH SAMs

Possible inspiration courtesy of Pakistan's JAISH-E-MOHAMMED

Last night, the FBI announced the arrest of four men, three of whom police described as “recent radicalized converts to Islam,” for plotting to blow up two synagogues in the Bronx with C-4 car bombs and acquire Stinger surface-to-air missiles to take down U.S. military aircraft from nearby Stewart International Airport, Newburgh, NY. They will be arraigned in federal court today in White Plains, NY.

The criminal complaint filed last night indicated that ringleader James Cromitie told the informant he was involved with JAISH-E-MOHAMMED (JEM) (“Army of God”), a Pakistani-based terrorist organization *banned* in Pakistan. JEM was birthed by HARKAT-UL-ANSAR, one of the groups nurtured by Pakistan’s notorious INTER-SERVICE INTELLIGENCE (ISI).



JAISH-E-MOHAMMED was likely *not* involved in the Newburgh plot (they would not have used first-timers), but the question is: *how does a murdering terrorist like Maulana Masood Azhar, leader of JEM, find an ardent fan in New York's Hudson Valley?* (Azhar is the man seated and blabbering.) “Maulana” is an Arabic title meaning “Our Lord,” reserved for respected Muslim religious leaders of great influence. Speaking of influence, Azhar’s adherent, Sheikh Ahmed Saeed Omar, kidnapped and murdered WALL STREET JOURNAL reporter Daniel Pearl in 2002. (Un-marked photo from a counter-terrorism blog.)

The four acquired weapons and explosives (all fake) through an FBI informant. Said NYC Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly:

The bombs had been made by FBI technicians. They were totally inert. No one was ever at risk or in danger of being injured.

All the terrorists were residents of Newburgh, NY. Ringleader: James Cromitie a.k.a. Abdul Rahman. Onta Williams a.k.a. Hamza. David Williams a.k.a. Daoud. Laguerre Payen a.k.a. Amin.

**Stewart is home to the Stewart Air National Guard Base**, the 105<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing of the Air National Guard and Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 452 (VMGR-452) of the Marine Corps Reserve. In the year-long investigation, the FBI worked in concert with the NYC Police, NY State Police and the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations. (Bravo Zulu to ALCON.)

#### **JEM: Capabilities:**

The HARKAT-UL-MUJAHIDEEN (HUM), the JAISH-E-MOHAMMAD (JEM), an off-shoot of the HUM called the LASHKAR-E-JHANGVI (LEJ) and the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI) are all Pakistani *jihadi* organizations that are **capable of pulling off bombings and a frontal attack in an urban setting using tactics akin to Marine fire team rushes.**<sup>1</sup>

#### **JEM: Brazen and Defiant:**

In a public act of defiance that attracted little attention outside India and Pakistan, **all leading terrorist organizations – including banned outfits – appeared for a public meeting in Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan’s Kashmir province, 4 February.**

The conference was led by Syed Salahuddin, chairman of the MUTTAHIDA JIHAD COUNCIL (MJC, or UNITED JIHAD COUNCIL), an umbrella group of over a dozen armed militant outfits active in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir – among them JAISH-E-MUHAMMAD.<sup>2</sup>

#### **JEM: Tactics Mirror the New York Four:**

On 21 December, India’s RESEARCH & ANALYSIS WING (intel) and police thwarted an attack by JEM. Had it been carried out, it would have rivaled the Islamabad Marriott hit. **Like the four men in the synagogue bomb plot in New York, (a) the December 2008 JEM cell was *in place making final attack preparations* when they were arrested and (b) a *vehicle laden with explosives* was the weapon of choice.**<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See “Assessment” under “Capability Assessment of Terrorist Groups Likely in Pakistan.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-060, 4 March 2009.

<sup>2</sup> See “P.P.S.S.” under “Pak: Worst-Case Scenario Now Dominates Inquiry” (regarding the Lahore shooting of the Sri Lankan cricket team). *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-062, 6 March 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Under Short Bursts,” see “Indian intel, police prevent attack.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 08-050, 25 December 2008. (Yes, Christmas Day.)