

tas, one of the suspects. Defreitas said that he had met the informant at services at the mosque, took him into his confidence, and slowly disclosed his plan to attack Kennedy.¹⁴ Imams of conservative or fundamentalist mosques who reject terrorism could be excellent sources of information on their congregations. They would be valuable allies to recruit, because they often know which members of their congregations are relatives or former friends of suspected terrorists. However, this radicalization does not always occur at mosques, since jihadists have become adept at evading detection. Mohammad Sidique Khan radicalized his group in the back of a van. Others may become radicalized in bookshops, on camping trips, or in other venues.

In Afghanistan, for example, police and intelligence officials focused on working with imams at mosques to counter Taliban and al Qa'ida recruitment efforts. As an Afghan intelligence report concluded, "The ease which the Taliban use the mullahs against us [needs to] be challenged." Consequently, the report concluded that

this requires establishment of [a] relationship with every significant mullah in the country. . . . We should put our weight behind the nationalist ones and not allow the militant or fanatic ones to take over. This is only possible if we keep the nationalist ones on our pay-rolls.¹⁵

Since social bonds play a critical role in al Qa'ida's network, friends and relatives of identified terrorists need to be pursued and investigated wherever they reside. Especially important are those who were friends of a terrorist just before he or she started jihad, such as traveling to Pakistan for training. These friends may have helped transform him or her from an alienated Muslim into a dedicated terrorist. Arresting key individuals would degrade the network into isolated units or

¹⁴ See *United States v Russell Defreitas, Kareem Ibrahim, Abdul Kadir, and Abdel Nur*, indictment, E.D.N.Y., filed June 28, 2007; U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York, "Four Individuals Charged in Plot to Bomb John F. Kennedy International Airport," press release, Brooklyn, N.Y., June 2, 2007; and NYPD (2007).

¹⁵ Amrullah Saleh, *Strategy of Insurgents and Terrorists in Afghanistan*, Kabul: National Directorate for Security, 2006, p. 16.