

IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS SEEK TO DEPORT AIDE TO SHEIK

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Body

THE **IMMIGRATION** and Naturalization Service will attempt in hearings beginning today to **deport** a top **aide** to jailed **Sheik** Omar Abdel-Rahman, who is in jail for plotting to blow up New York landmarks.

However, a lawyer for the **aide**, Nasser Mohammed Ahmed, is arguing that if his client is sent back to Egypt he would be tortured and murdered.

Ahmed, an electrical engineer who lives in New York, was arrested Tuesday by **immigration** agents after he entered a federal building to attend a conference with an **immigration** judge.

An **immigration** spokesman said Ahmed was arrested "as a result of new information that has been brought to our attention." He would not elaborate.

Ahmed had been free on a \$ 15,000 bond while contesting charges that he had overstayed his visa.

Under provisions of a new anti-terrorism bill signed by President Bill Clinton last week, **immigration** authorities can now more easily **deport** foreigners suspected of terrorism.

Ahmed's attorney, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, said his client was named as an unindicted co-conspirator released by the government last year during the trial of Abdel-Rahman and nine of his followers. They were convicted in October of plotting to bomb the United Nations and other landmarks in New York City.

According to court papers filed by the defense, "A principal defense to his **deportation** is the fact that he would be persecuted, tortured and murdered if he was turned over to government police in Egypt and is entitled to political asylum in the U.S."

Ramsey said Ahmed also regularly visits Abdel-Rahman at the federal prison medical center in Springfield, Mo. Ahmed has been Abdel-Rahman's translator since 1992. During the **sheik**'s trial Ahmed served as a translator and paralegal for Abdel-Rahman.

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IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS SEEK TO DEPORT AIDE TO SHEIK

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