

## **TUNISIAN FLIGHT STUDENTS ARE KICKED OUT OF U.S.;** **NO CONNECTION WITH SEPT. 11 ATTACKS SEEN**

Saint Paul Pioneer Press (Minnesota)

November 18, 2001 Sunday EARLY EDITION

Copyright 2001 St. Paul Pioneer Press All Rights Reserved

**Section:** MAIN; Pg. A22

**Length:** 387 words

**Byline:** PETE YOST, Associated Press

### **Body**

---

WASHINGTON -- Three Tunisians attending flight schools in Florida, including a student who acknowledged knowing a roommate of terrorist hijacker Mohamed Atta's, were ordered deported last week.

None of the students were accused of being connected to the Sept. 11 attacks.

The FBI noted in a letter, however, that Maryem Bedoui, 21, had attended flight schools in Venice and Punta Gorda about the same time that hijackers Atta and Marwan Al-Shehhi, had trained at a nearby flight school.

During a deportation hearing Thursday on immigration violations in Bradenton, Fla., Bedoui told Immigration Judge R. Kevin McHugh that she was friends with one of Atta's roommates, but she denied knowing Atta.

The immigration judge ordered Mohamed Kharbech and Nabil Ferchichi, both of whom had been in the United States about a year, to leave by the end of the month. Bedoui also was ordered deported once a shoplifting charge against her is resolved.

"In ordinary times this may not be such a big thing," the judge said during the deportation hearing. "But these are not ordinary times."

All three said they were the victims of flight schools that misinformed them of immigration rules and took tens of thousands of dollars without providing training.

In Virginia, an attorney said his Saudi client who was arrested the night of Sept. 11 near Dulles Airport, where one of the hijackers' flights originated, will plead guilty to a criminal charge that has nothing to do with the terrorist attacks.

The government is dropping a second charge and Khalid al-Draibi would spend only a few months in jail under federal sentencing guidelines after he pleads guilty Monday in Alexandria, Va., said attorney Drew Hutcheson Jr.

Al-Draibi passed two FBI polygraph examinations in which he denied any links to terrorists and denied knowing anything about the Sept. 11 attacks, said Hutcheson.

Police pulled him over for driving on a bare wheel rim 13 miles south of Dulles, where American Airlines Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon had taken off from earlier in the day. Flight manuals were found in al-Draibi's car, and he carried driver's licenses from eight states. Hutcheson said the plea will be to a charge of making a false statement on a visa application. Al-Draibi has been in custody since Sept. 11.

### **Classification**

TUNISIAN FLIGHT STUDENTS ARE KICKED OUT OF U.S.;NO CONNECTION WITH SEPT. 11 ATTACKS  
SEEN

---

**Language:** ENGLISH

**Subject:** HIJACKING (92%); IMMIGRATION (91%); DEPORTATION (90%); JUDGES (90%); IMMIGRATION LAW (90%); **FLIGHT** SCHOOLS (89%); LAW ENFORCEMENT (89%); **SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACK** (89%); TERRORISM (89%); **STUDENTS & STUDENT** LIFE (89%); GUILTY PLEAS (89%); SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE FORCES (89%); PASSPORTS & VISAS (78%); TERRORIST **ATTACKS** (78%); ARRESTS (78%); CRIMINAL OFFENSES (77%); FALSE STATEMENTS (77%); SENTENCING (75%); LAWYERS (75%); LITIGATION (75%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (72%); JAIL SENTENCING (70%); SHOPLIFTING (69%); SENTENCING GUIDELINES (64%); DRIVERS LICENSES (61%); LICENSES & PERMITS (60%)

**Company:** AMERICAN AIRLINES INC (52%)

**Organization:** FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (58%); FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (58%)

**Industry:** **FLIGHT** SCHOOLS (89%); AIRPORTS (89%); LAWYERS (75%); AIRLINES (73%); DRIVERS LICENSES (61%)

**Geographic:** VIRGINIA, USA (92%); FLORIDA, USA (90%); **UNITED STATES** (93%)

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2001

---

End of Document