

Montreal and claimed political asylum. For the next few years he supported himself with petty crime. Recruited by an alumnus of Abu Zubaydah's Khal= dan camp, Ressay trained in Afghanistan in 1998, learning, among other things, how to place cyanide near the air intake of a building to achieve maximum lethality at minimum personal risk. Having joined other Algerians in planning a possible attack on a U.S. airport or consulate, Ressay left Afghanistan in early 1999 carrying precursor chemicals for explosives disguised in toiletry bottles, a notebook containing bomb assembly instructions, and \$12,000. Back in Canada, he went about procuring weapons, chemicals, and false papers.¹⁸

In early summer 1999, having learned that not all of his colleagues could get the travel documents to enter Canada, Ressay decided to carry out the plan alone. By the end of the summer he had chosen three Los Angeles-area airports as potential targets, ultimately fixing on Los Angeles International (LAX) as the largest and easiest to operate in surreptitiously. He bought or stole chemicals and equipment for his bomb, obtaining advice from three Algerian friends, all of whom were wanted by authorities in France for their roles in past terrorist attacks there. Ressay also acquired new confederates. He promised to help a New York-based partner, Abdelghani Meskini, get training in Afghanistan if Meskini would help him maneuver in the United States.¹⁹

In December 1999, Ressay began his final preparations. He called an Afghanistan-based facilitator to inquire into whether Bin Ladin wanted to take credit for the attack, but he did not get a reply. He spent a week in Vancouver preparing the explosive components with a close friend. The chemicals were so caustic that the men kept their windows open, despite the freezing temper= atures outside, and sucked on cough drops to soothe their irritated throats.²⁰ While in Vancouver, Ressay also rented a Chrysler sedan for his travel into the United States, and packed the explosives in the trunk's spare tire well.²¹

On December 14, 1999, Ressay drove his rental car onto the ferry from Victoria, Canada, to Port Angeles, Washington. Ressay planned to drive to Seattle and meet Meskini, with whom he would travel to Los Angeles and case

A Case Study in Terrorist Travel

Following a familiar terrorist pattern, Ressay and his associates used fraudulent passports and immigration fraud to travel. In Ressay's case, this involved flying from France to Montreal using a photo-substituted French passport under a false name. Under questioning, Ressay admitted the passport was fraudulent and claimed political asylum. He was released pending a hearing, which he failed to attend. His political asylum claim was denied. He was arrested again, released again, and given another hearing date. Again, he did not show. He was arrested four times