

The FBI assembled, and the U.S. Attorney's office put forward, some evidence showing that the men in the dock were not the only plotters. Materials taken from Ajaj indicated that the plot or plots were hatched at or near the Khaldan camp, a terrorist training camp on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Ajaj had left Texas in April 1992 to go there to learn how to construct bombs. He had met Ramzi Yousef in Pakistan, where they discussed bombing targets in the United States and assembled a "terrorist kit" that included bomb-making manuals, operations guidance, videotapes advocating terrorist action against the United States, and false identification documents.⁹

Yousef was captured in Pakistan following the discovery by police in the Philippines in January 1995 of the Manila air plot, which envisioned placing bombs on board a dozen trans-Pacific airliners and setting them off simultaneously. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed—Yousef's uncle, then located in Qatar—was a fellow plotter of Yousef's in the Manila air plot and had also wired him some money prior to the Trade Center bombing. The U.S. Attorney obtained an indictment against KSM in January 1996, but an official in the government of Qatar probably warned him about it. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed evaded capture (and stayed at large to play a central part in the 9/11 attacks).¹⁰

The law enforcement process is concerned with proving the guilt of persons apprehended and charged. Investigators and prosecutors could not present all the evidence of possible involvement of individuals other than those charged, although they continued to pursue such investigations, planning or hoping for later prosecutions. The process was meant, by its nature, to mark for the public the events as finished—case solved, justice done. It was not designed to ask if the events might be harbingers of worse to come. Nor did it allow for aggregating and analyzing facts to see if they could provide clues to terrorist tactics more generally—methods of entry and finance, and mode of operation inside the United States.

Fourth, although the bombing heightened awareness of a new terrorist danger, successful prosecutions contributed to widespread underestimation of the threat. The government's attorneys stressed the seriousness of the crimes, and put forward evidence of Yousef's technical ingenuity. Yet the public image that persisted was not of clever Yousef but of stupid Salameh going back again and again to reclaim his \$400 truck rental deposit.

3.2 ADAPTATION—AND NONADAPTATION—IN THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

Legal processes were the primary method for responding to these early manifestations of a new type of terrorism. Our overview of U.S. capabilities for dealing with it thus begins with the nation's vast complex of law enforcement agencies.