



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 28, 2011

Saudi “Student” Arrested in Bomb Plot Obtained Visa for Jihad

The Saudi Arabian “student” arrested for plotting terror attacks against multiple targets in the United States last week had been planning his mayhem and murder for years, and, like the hijackers who knocked down the World Trade Center towers and attacked the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, easily obtained a student visa to enter the country.



Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari, the 20-year-old suspect, entered the United States lawfully in September 2008 and was enrolled at South Plains College in Lubbock, Texas, where he took classes in chemical engineering, [the FBI says](#). A chemical company owned by the Saudi royals, Saudi Basic Industries Corp., [gave Aldawsari](#) a scholarship to pay for his tuition, living and medical expenses in the United States.

He was arrested after a biological supply company in North Carolina and a nationwide freight hauler [both alerted the FBI](#) to his attempt to purchase a dangerous chemical.

His plan for mass murder and destruction was far-ranging, [the FBI alleges](#):

[According to](#) the affidavit filed in support of the complaint, Aldawsari has been researching online how to construct an IED [improvised explosive device] using several chemicals as ingredients. He has also acquired or taken a substantial step toward acquiring most of the ingredients and equipment necessary to construct an IED and he has conducted online research of several potential U.S. targets, the affidavit alleges. In addition, he has allegedly described his desire for violent jihad and martyrdom in blog postings and a personal journal.

[Wrote Aldawsari](#): “And now, after mastering the English language, learning how to build explosives and continuous planning to target the infidel Americans, it is time for Jihad.”

“Chemical Engineering”

[According to](#) the FBI, Aldawsari attempted to purchase 10 bottles of concentrated phenol, which can be used to make highly explosive trinitrophenol, or picric acid. But that plan went awry when both the chemical supplier and the trucking company used in the attempted purchase notified authorities, the FBI says.

Aldawsari allegedly attempted to have the phenol order shipped to a freight company so it could be held for him there, but the freight company returned the order to the supplier and called the police. Later, Aldawsari falsely told the supplier he was associated with a university and wanted



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the phenol for “off-campus, personal research.” Frustrated by questions being asked over his phenol order, Aldawsari cancelled his order and later e-mailed himself instructions for producing phenol. [The affidavit alleges](#) that in December 2010, he successfully purchased concentrated nitric and sulfuric acids.

[The Los Angeles Times reported](#) the phenol purchase in great detail. Jim Parrish, president of Caroline Biological Supply Co., told the paper that “[o]ne day after shipping the product, we became aware that the order was suspicious. We immediately notified the FBI and ordered the product returned to us.”

Using his debit card, Aldawsari purchased 10 500-millimeter bottles of 80-percent-concentration phenol for \$434.57. The shipment [was sent](#) via FedEx.

“FBI Special Agent Michael N. Orndorff said in the affidavit that he asked a company employee to call Aldawsari, who told them that he wanted the phenol for ‘off-campus, personal research,’” the *Times* reported.

Next, Orndorff said, he phoned Aldawsari, pretending to be another company employee, and Aldawsari said “he was conducting research into cleaners which contained phenol for the purpose of reducing their odor.” He said he hoped the research would get him into a larger university.

Aldawsari phoned the company back, complaining of his “frustration and displeasure” and hinting that he would obtain the phenol somewhere else.

[Con-way Freight](#), a trucking company, [also notified](#) the FBI about a suspicious package it had received and returned to the supplier.

Con-way Freight has been working closely with local police and the FBI on this case from the beginning. The case stemmed from a shipment we determined to be of a suspicious nature, received at our Lubbock, Texas service center on February 1, 2011.

Based on training and experience, Con-way’s local management immediately flagged the shipment as suspicious and notified Con-way’s corporate security department. The shipment matched profiles outlined in Con-way’s security protocols for identifying shipments of a suspicious nature, and which appeared for use not consistent with known commercial application of the product.

Just two weeks ago, according to the FBI, [Aldawsari emailed](#) himself a recipe on making picric acid, and as well e-mailed himself directions on booby-trapping a car using household items and turning a cell phone into a remote bomb detonator. In addition, he purchased “a gas mask, a Hazmat suit, a soldering iron kit, glass beakers and flasks, wiring, a stun gun, clocks, and a battery tester,” the FBI alleges.

As well, [the affidavit says](#), Aldawsari “conducted research that could indicate his consideration of the use of infant dolls to conceal explosives and possible targeting of a nightclub with an explosive concealed in a backpack.”

“Nice Targets” And “Time For Jihad”

[Aldawsari planned](#) to hit several “nice targets,” according to the emails [he sent](#) to himself. They included hydroelectric dams and nuclear power plants. He also emailed himself Bush’s address in Dallas with the label “Tyrant’s House.” Aldawsari also planned to attack three American military officers who had been stationed at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison camp in Iraq, where Americans [were caught](#) torturing and humiliating prisoners.

Handwritten journals [described his plan](#). Aldawsari had been planning the attack for years, [the FBI](#)



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[says](#), and obtained the student visa only so he could come to the United States to attack it.

One entry describes how Aldawsari sought and obtained a particular scholarship because it allowed him to come directly to the United State and helped him financially, which he said “will help tremendously in providing me with the support I need for Jihad.” The entry continues: “And now, after mastering the English language, learning how to build explosives and continuous planning to target the infidel Americans, it is time for Jihad.”

[The rest](#) of the passage reads, “I put my trust in God, for he is the best master and authority.”

Aldawsari [also posted](#) extremist messages at his blog called [FromFarAway90](#), where the [FBI found](#) some of his jihadist sympathies in writing as well: “You who created mankind. ... grant me [martyrdom] for Your sake and make jihad easy for me only in Your path.”

Facebook [was another](#) outlet for his message of jihad.

[Said one](#) the emails he sent to himself, “one operation in the land of the infidels is equal to ten operations against occupying forces in the land of the Muslims.”

Easy Entry

For all intents and purposes, [Aldawsari waltzed](#) into the United States, Saudi money in hand. He merely applied for a student visa and obtained one, no questions asked.

In that respect, he was little different from the 19 hijackers who masterminded the terrorist attacks on [Sept. 11, 2001](#). Fifteen of them obtained visas in Saudi Arabia, and three of those [obtained their visas](#) through the “Visa Express Program,” which permits travel agencies to pass out visas. It was established just four months before the attacks. The rest of the hijackers had little if any trouble obtaining visas. A few of them [attended flight training](#) after arriving in the United States.

[According to](#) the *New York Times*, Aldawsari studied English at Vanderbilt University and transferred to Texas Tech in August 2009. From there, he went to South Plains College in Lubbock to study chemical engineering.

Mr. Aldawsari led a solitary life at Texas Tech, rarely speaking to other students, said three former roommates who requested anonymity because they feared association with him would hurt their careers. They said Mr. Aldawsari lived with them for a year while he studied chemistry.

He kept his food separate in a small refrigerator in his room and kept his room locked when he was out. He would often bang on the walls of his room in anger or frustration.

“He was just in his own bubble,” said one 20-year-old roommate from Dallas.

He could often be heard talking loudly on the telephone in Arabic in the mornings, and in the afternoon he streamed Arabic television stations at a high volume.

He was not outwardly religious, the roommates said.

But they didn’t see his handwritten journal or blog, [FromFarAway90](#). At the latter, again, [Aldawsari petitioned](#) Allah to “grant me [martyrdom] for Your sake and make jihad easy for me only in Your path.”

As [he wrote](#) in his journal, “it is time for Jihad.”

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Photo: Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari, 20, is shown in this undated photo made available by the Lubbock County Sheriff's Office, Feb. 24, 2011.: AP

Images



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