



CONVERT: Padilla wearing his kaffiyeh at a Florida mosque

A few months into the job, Qureshi told NEWSWEEK, Padilla said he wanted to learn more about Islam. "We're here to make tacos and burritos," Qureshi told him, suggesting he seek out a mosque. Padilla and Stultz began attending Qureshi's. Within a few months they had declared themselves Muslims.

In the fall of 1993, Padilla quit Taco Bell, telling Qureshi he needed to make more money. He wound up doing maintenance at a nearby country club. In the years that followed, he became ever more engrossed in his new faith. He attended various Florida mosques, where he stood out in the crowd—as the only Hispanic, and the only worshiper

who wore a kaffiyeh. He got to know Raed Awad, the imam at a Ft. Lauderdale mosque who was an officer in the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, a Muslim charity now under scrutiny by the Feds for alleged ties to terrorism. Another worshiper at the mosque was Adham Amin Hassoun, who opened the Florida chapter of the Benevolence International Foundation, another Muslim charity now under investigation (both men and both groups deny any terrorist links). Last Wednesday, Hassoun was arrested on visa violations—though the Feds likely want to ask him about Padilla. In an interview with NEWSWEEK shortly before he was taken in, Hassoun de-

nied having met Padilla: "You know how many people pass by the mosque?" he said.

In the mid-'90s, Padilla at last seemed to be settling down. He held a steady job, and married Stultz. But the union didn't last long. In December 1998, he abruptly left his wife and flew to Egypt to continue his religious studies. He married an Egyptian woman and had two children. Then, on to Pakistan, and Afghanistan, where he began his journey deep into bin Laden's world. The next time he stepped off a plane in America nearly four years later, he was once again in Chicago—and, once again, in handcuffs.

With CATHARINE SKIPP in Florida

contaminating a wide area and creating huge economic disruption. Since he was not an expert in dirty-bomb construction, Abu Zubaydah told his interrogators, he arranged for the U.S. recruit to meet with Qaeda operatives inside Pakistan who had such expertise.

While Zubaydah was spinning this tale, U.S. intelligence operatives pored over physical evidence seized from his safe house and other raided Qaeda locations. Documents, possibly including a photocopy of Padilla's passport or identity papers, appeared to confirm Zubaydah's story. Other evidence, including images recovered from seized Qaeda computers, indicated the American recruit had been gathering information on dirty-bomb construction.

By late April, the pieces of the puzzle were coming together: U.S. intelligence agencies had linked the suspicious Hispanic in Karachi with Zubaydah's description. Other Qaeda prisoners, possibly including detainees sent to the U.S. prison in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, gave interrogators information that seemed to confirm Padilla's identity. Eventually, investigators reportedly took passport photos of Padilla and his suspected accomplice to Zubaydah at his secret prison. Were these the dirty-bomb suspects that he was talking about? They were, Zubaydah told his interrogators.

On April 24, less than a month after the capture of Zubaydah, U.S. officials told NEWSWEEK, the name of Jose Padilla was placed on the secret "watch list" of terrorism suspects. American intelligence now knew who Padilla was, and what his plan was. But they no longer knew where he was because he had already flown out of Karachi and was on his way to a mysterious visit to Cairo by the time Zubaydah began to sing. In late April, anxious analysts began to comb through international travel records. Two weeks after Padilla's name and alias were placed on the border watch list, a U.S. intelligence analyst got lucky. Studying air-travel records, the analyst came upon a garbled version of the name Jose Padilla, with a reservation to travel on Swiss International Air Lines on May 8.

One question is why Zubaydah, a fanatical anti-American, told investigators anything at all. Such is the nature of the shadow war that little is known about what goes on inside the interrogation rooms. U.S. officials insist they aren't sanctioning torture but physical discomfort like sleep deprivation, sustained with bright lights and marathon questioning, can work. "I would hope they're using it," says an ex-FBI senior counterterrorism official. And if that doesn't work? "Some of the real badasses they've been flying them back to their home countries: Jordan, Egypt, Saudi," where