

The Pearl Project

The Truth Left Behind



Inside the Kidnapping
and Murder of Daniel Pearl



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Author's Note

By Asra Q. Nomani

Paris, July 2002

EVERY STORY has a moment when it was conceived, and this one is no different. In the Montmartre neighborhood of Paris, in the summer of 2002, I sat in a café with Jill Abramson, now managing editor for news at The New York Times. It had been five months since our friend Daniel Pearl, or Danny as we called him, had been murdered in Karachi, Pakistan. The three of us had been friends since our days together at the Washington bureau of The Wall Street Journal.

After the September 11, 2001, attacks, Danny's reporting had led him from India, where he was The Wall Street Journal's South Asia bureau chief, to Pakistan. Danny had been chasing a Bos-

ton Globe story identifying “shoe bomber” Richard Reid's alleged facilitator in Pakistan. That lead had turned out to have fatal consequences.

On that clear Parisian day, I told Jill that while four men had just been convicted in Danny's murder — the mastermind, Omar Sheikh, and three co-conspirators — there



Daniel Pearl with Asra Nomani in Karachi, Pakistan, in November 2001. Nomani is showing Pearl two stuffed animals. Credit: Asra Nomani

were still men on the streets who had been allegedly involved but not charged. And we didn't have a clue who had actually killed him.

Jill told me about the Arizona Project, an investigative reporting project by professional journalists into the 1976 murder of Arizona Republic reporter Don Bolles. Her eyes lighting up, Jill said, "We need an Arizona Project for Danny."

Jill's idea was a good one. I looked into the history of the Arizona Project and was moved by what I learned. Like Danny, Bolles had been lured to an interview that was a deadly hoax: the reporter believed he was going to meet with an informant regarding a land deal involving Arizona politicians and the Mafia. The source never showed up, and when Bolles returned to his car, his Datsun exploded, a bomb detonating after he started the engine. He died an agonizing death 11 days later. Among his last words: "They finally got me." After he died, reporters from all over the country descended on Phoenix to report on the corruption that Bolles had been investigating. It was a horrifying story, but also an inspiring one to put to rest all the unresolved issues surrounding my friend's murder.

I had been on book leave in Ka-

rachi when Danny and his wife, Mariane, had come to stay with me. Danny had left my home for the interview from which he was kidnapped, leaving Mariane to enter motherhood a widow. During the search to find Danny, I learned that I, too, was pregnant, but the biological father of my unborn child had not stepped up to the responsibilities of parenthood. Perhaps scared off by the frightening attention of the investigation into Danny's murder, or the more prosaic fears of becoming a father, he had abandoned me.

I had moved to Paris to be near Mariane when she delivered her son, Adam. Soon after I saw Jill, I returned to my hometown of Morgantown, West Virginia, to give birth to my son, Shibli, and with my parents' help, settled into life as a single mother. The realities of life got in the way of my pursuing a "Danny Project" and it would be longer than I had hoped before I could turn my attention to such an undertaking, but the vision stayed with me.

Morgantown, West Virginia, 2007

By 2007, five years after Danny's murder, I had moved forward with

my life — my son was four years old and thriving. I had left The Wall Street Journal and cobbled together a professional life as the author of two books, and I had become active in the Muslim community as a feminist activist. I also wrote pieces as a freelance journalist for publications such as The Washington Post, Time magazine, and Salon.

But inside there was a hole caused by a persistent, burrowing grief. As I'd done in other difficult times, I turned to my craft. Jill's idea for a "Danny Project" was still on my mind, and in my heart. And so, in the spring of 2007, I wrote a proposal to apply for a Nieman Foundation fellowship at Harvard University. It would give me a stipend and the time I needed to pursue an investigation.

I hoped to take a fresh look at Danny's case — where it was both in terms of the U.S. and Pakistani governments. Harvard wasn't exactly the right place, but I didn't know what was the right place; I knew only that I needed resources and an institutional home for this idea.

And then, in March, a friend introduced me to Barbara Feinman Todd, the director of journalism at Georgetown University. She was

trying to get more Muslim students interested in journalism. Our mutual friend thought maybe I'd have some contacts for her. Our e-mails back and forth quickly turned from the original topic to my dream for a "Danny Project" to investigate his death. "Come to Georgetown," she said. "I'll give you a classroom full of smart students." I paused. "I'll help you. I'll do all the grading," she added, a saleswoman if I ever met one.

Barbara and I are an unlikely team, our roots diametrically opposed. I was the Bombay-born daughter of conservative Muslim parents from India. At the age of four, with my parents and brother, I had migrated to the United States, and grew up in Morgantown, West Virginia, where my father was a professor of nutrition and my mother a boutique owner. Barbara was the daughter of liberal Jewish parents from Chicago and Brooklyn, grandparents from Russia and Austria. Her father was an 18th century English literature scholar turned businessman and her mother a high school English teacher.

But we had something in common: we were grounded in old-school gumshoe reporting. Barbara had been a research assistant to

Bob Woodward in the mid-1980s on a book about the CIA, after Bob and his partner Carl Bernstein had forged new ground in investigative journalism with their reporting of the Watergate scandal. Since then, she had become a ghostwriter and editor to well-known journalists and politicians, including Hillary Rodham Clinton. Soon after, I drove to Washington, D.C., to meet Barbara. She had the enthusiasm and the students. What she didn't have was the funding beyond paying me a modest salary for one semester. "We'll fund-raise it," she said confidently. It wasn't until later, after we got funding, that Barbara admitted that she had no clue how to raise the money we needed for a proper investigation. "I just told myself somehow we'd find the money," she said.

Phoenix, Arizona, June 2007

In early June 2007, as Barbara and I began to plan our seminar for the following fall, we decided to travel to the annual conference of Investigative Reporters and Editors, the world's largest association of investigative journalists, forged out of the Arizona Project. It was conveniently being held in Arizona.

Convenient because Randall Bennett, formerly the regional security officer for the State Department at the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, was going to be stateside in Phoenix. Randall and I had gotten to know each other during the horrible weeks after Danny had been kidnapped. Randall was a compelling figure, straight out of central casting, the kind of guy who comes to mind when you hear words like "swagger," and in fact, he had been portrayed in Hollywood's version of Danny's story. I wanted Barbara to meet him.

We picked up Randall and drove to a Mexican restaurant in Phoenix. Barbara asked about the day Pakistani officials found Danny's remains. Randall paused, then spoke eerily, his voice low, as he described going to the site in May 2002, watching as Pakistani cops with shovels dug in a corner of a walled off compound and unearthed Danny's mutilated remains. I just remember a candle on the table with the smoke wafting into the air as Randall spoke and Barbara grew silent.

I learned later that Barbara was sick to her stomach that night and couldn't sleep. What bothered her more than the gruesome details was the fact that my face remained im-

passive during Randall's narrative. She admitted later that caught in a long security line, trying to catch a flight back to Washington, D.C., the next day, she started to cry. She was bothered by how I seemed unmoved by the horror of what we heard. She also wondered whether she could remain stoic enough to do the investigation, whether she could teach our students to be professional when her own veneer was cracking.

On the logistics of support for our project, Barbara had been close: the money found us. In late June 2007, Marian Cromley, an advisory committee member from the Oklahoma City-based Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, read a piece I wrote in *The Washington Post*, headlined "A Mighty Shame," arguing that the movie *A Mighty Heart*, about the search for Danny, was disappointing because Danny ended up with a mere cameo in his own murder. She wrote to me asking if the project needed financial support. The Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation was established through an endowment left by a pioneer woman journalist from Oklahoma, Edith Gaylord, who covered Eleanor Roosevelt.

Marian invited us to her home to

talk about our project and our funding needs. A former journalist herself, now in her 80s, she followed our complicated tale involving more than 20 suspects. She assured us that the foundation would want to fund our cause and that she would be in touch. "She's our fairy godmother," Barbara said, leaving Marian's home in northern Virginia after our first meeting, a basket of blueberries — a gift from Marian — in her hands.

Wheaton, Maryland, August 2007

Barbara would soon learn that my impassivity was a mask, both to the world and to myself.

In Karachi, I had hand-drawn a chart to identify links between suspects. There was now software, I learned, that could do the same work. Every morning, I set off with my father for an office building in Reston, Va., to learn how to input data into a program called Analyst's Notebook. My father, now a retired professor, was my de facto researcher, at least until the Georgetown class got started and I could get help from our students. I sat in the second row of a classroom filled with clean-shaven Mormon members of the Utah National

Guard, in training before a stint in Afghanistan as drug intelligence analysts. An instructor taught my father and me how to fill the “fields” on individual people’s entries. We mapped a drug case. I was beginning to see how the events leading up to Danny’s murder could be translated into data with patterns, networks, and metrics. It was beginning to dawn on me that I was really going to be going back into the trenches of Danny’s kidnapping and murder.

One night, I tucked Shibli, my four-year old son, into bed. I told him I’d get a book from downstairs. I didn’t return.

“Mama?” Shibli yelled, as he ambled down the stairs.

He saw me in the living room, slumped on the hardwood floor. My mother came downstairs. She had seen me through such a range of emotions the past several years, and thought I had just gotten tired and fallen asleep on the floor. “Asra, wake up,” she said, to no response. She pulled me onto the sofa.

Waking up the next morning, groggy and tired, I went upstairs to slip into bed, but I fell before reaching the bed, unable to make my body do what I was willing it. “Call 911,” I said. The emotional weight

of what I was about to embark upon had perhaps slain me. My body was shutting down. For his part, Shibli was thrilled to ride in an ambulance. The physicians couldn’t diagnose what had happened to me, and within a few days I was back to normal and back on the job.

Washington, September 4, 2007

The clock read 5:48 p.m. Twenty eager students assembled behind the desks in a classroom on M Street, off the campus of Georgetown University—the first class of the Pearl Project. Barbara and I introduced ourselves, and I walked the students through the key moments of the case, identifying the questions students would be tasked to answer, setting up the investigation. “We couldn’t save Danny,” I said, “but, through the Pearl Project, we will find the truth left behind.”

I told the students how on the day of the kidnapping and well into that night, I sat hunched over Danny’s computer with his wife, Mariane, reading his e-mails and learning that he was going to an interview with a man named Sheik Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani, how Danny had told me with great excitement the afternoon of his kidnapping that he

had discovered the e-mail address to which Richard Reid was e-mailing.

“One of our jobs is to finish Danny’s work,” Barbara told the class. “We want to establish who Richard Reid’s facilitator was in Pakistan. That was the story Danny was chasing when he died.”

Next, we talked about other questions that had emerged over the years: lapses in the investigation and the court case; the identities of so-called absconders in the case.

I continued: “Another goal: To establish who killed Danny and why they killed him.”

We set up the class to operate as a newsroom, assigning students to beats including covering U.S. and Pakistani law enforcement and intelligence, as well as the many cells that handled different stages of the crime. We taught our students how to identify and develop sources, obtain documents, and verify information. They learned to work the phones. We met our secret sources, or “deep throats,” in Yahoo chat rooms.

In one of the first classes, Tarine “Ty” Fairman, a former FBI agent who worked on the Danny investigation, told the students: “One

thing that you have in this class which we did not have is that you have over 20 people with 20 different mindsets, different approaches, different backgrounds but you’re all inquisitive. Now you can take information that the bureau didn’t have access to and you’ll be able to put some things together that the bureau never did, or that they refused to do.”

Washington, January 2011

Nearly three-and-a-half years later, after conducting hundreds of interviews, scouring hundreds of documents, and filing one lawsuit, Feinman vs. CIA et al., against eight government agencies, we’ve resolved much of what we set out to accomplish. There are still some unanswered questions but, for the most part, we’ve reported out the story. It is a story of a murder case fraught with bungled leads, missed opportunities, and political expediency that stretches from Karachi to Washington. And it was done with the extraordinary help of 32 student-journalists from every walk of life — from a Russian-American immigrant to a Florida diving champion.

By triangulating information

from interviews, court documents, secret Pakistani police interrogation reports, FBI interview reports, and State Department cables, we made sense of a jumble of aliases, so that we could know the faces and stories of the men with whom Danny spent his final days. These men were mostly in their 20s and 30s at the time of Danny's kidnapping, members of the Pakistani jihadi culture born after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The story we have written is the one I think Danny would have reported.

The significance of what we were trying to untangle and uncover grew from an isolated murder case to a study of militancy, Islamic extremism, and terrorism in Pakistan, with foreign policy implications much larger than we imagined when we first began. Years later, Danny's case offers important lessons to the Obama administration as it grapples with its policy toward Pakistan as a safe haven for Taliban, Al Qaeda, and militant fighters that U.S. forces face in the war in Afghanistan. Danny's case was a harbinger of the issues U.S. national security officials are grappling to understand today.

At the Newseum in Washington, there is an exhibit for Danny that

includes his laptop, guide to Persian language, and passport. There is also an exhibit for Don Bolles featuring his mangled, rusted Datsun.

We hope that what follows here also serves as a tribute to Danny and to Don, and to all the other journalists around the world who have risked their lives or their freedom in the pursuit of truth. ■

Key Findings

THE DANIEL PEARL case is a window into several serious issues that have relevance today to U.S. foreign policy and America's war in Afghanistan: the emergence of a "Punjabi Taliban," made up of militants from the Pakistani province of Punjab; the role of Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, as a safe haven for militants; and the nexus between the Pakistani militancy and Al Qaeda. The case also offers important lessons related to problems with rule of law in Pakistan. Among the project's more specific findings:

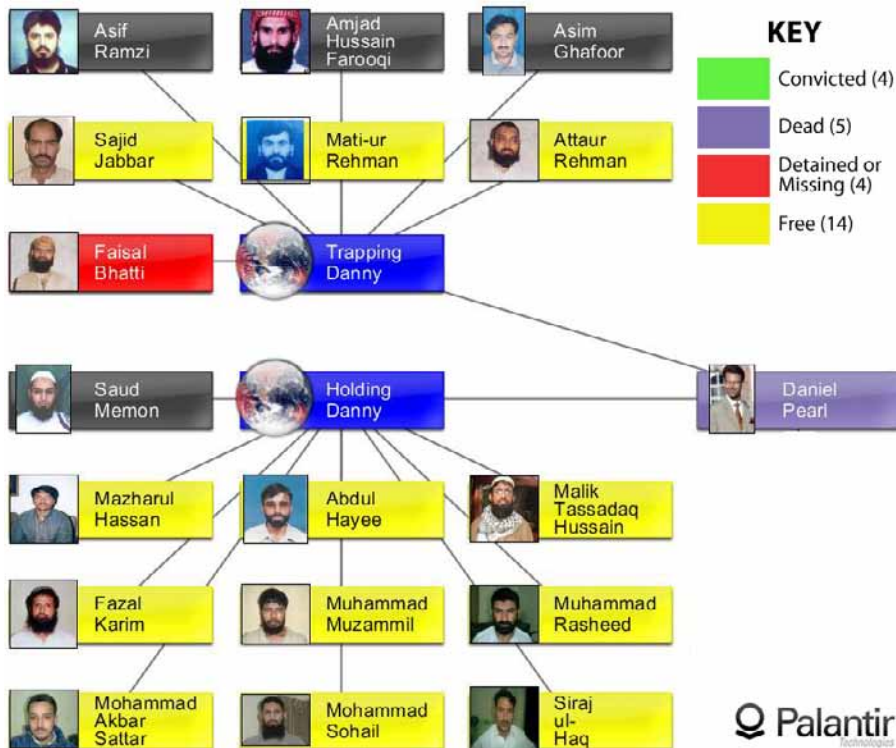
- The kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl was a multifaceted, at times chaotic conspiracy. The Pearl Project has identified 27 men who played a part in the events surrounding the case. Members of at least three different militant groups took part in the crimes, including a team of kidnappers led by British-Pakistani Omar Sheikh and a team of killers led by Al Qaeda strategist

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who is known as KSM.

- KSM told FBI agents in Guantanamo that he personally slit Pearl's throat and severed his head to make certain he'd get the death penalty and to exploit the murder for propaganda. Some U.S. and Pakistani officials believe KSM may have been assisted by two of his nephews, Musaad Aruchi, whose whereabouts aren't publicly known, and Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, KSM's trusted aide, who is incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay.
- After 9/11, KSM designated his young nephew, Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, to be the facilitator for "shoe bomber" Richard Reid. When he was kidnapped, Pearl was chasing a story that a cleric, Sheikh Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani, was the facilitator. He wasn't. Reid was an Al Qaeda operative.
- Doubts regarding KSM's confes-

The 27 men who played a part in the events surrounding the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl

1 of 2



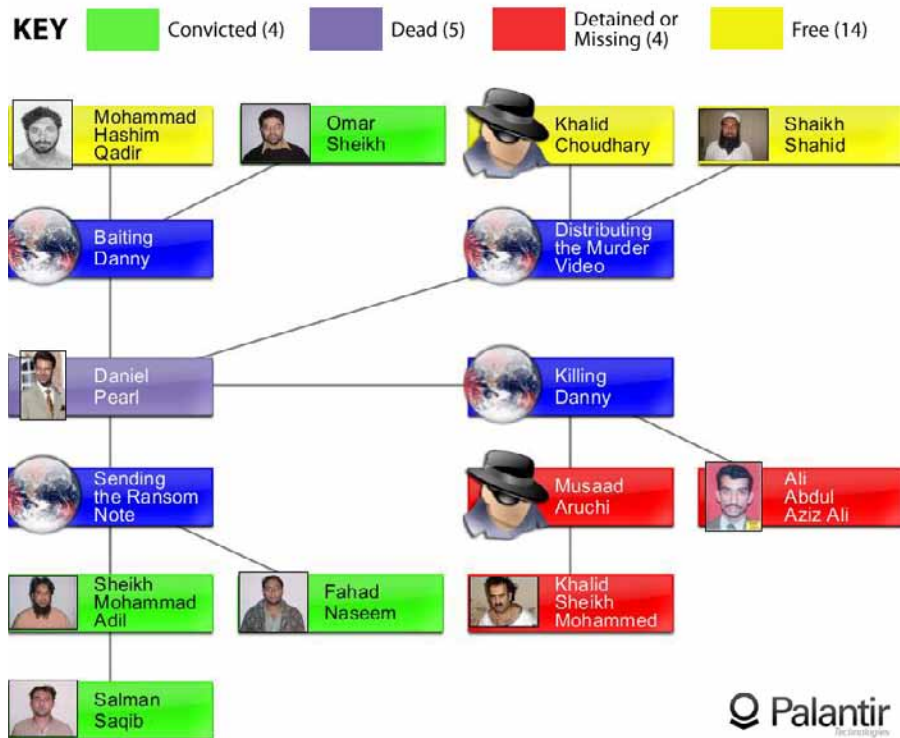
sions during “waterboarding” were eased when FBI agents and CIA officials used a technique called vein-matching to compare the hand of the killer in the mur-

der video with a photo of Mohammed’s hand.

- Nearly half of those implicated in Pearl’s abduction-murder — at

The 27 men who played a part in the events surrounding the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl

2 of 2



 Palantir
for intelligence

least 14 men with some alleged involvement — are thought to remain free. The list includes guards, drivers, and fixers tied to the conspiracy.

- In their haste to close the case, Pakistani authorities knowingly used perjured testimony to pin the actual act of murder on Omar Sheikh and his three co-conspirators.

tors. While the four were involved in the kidnapping plan and certainly were culpable, they were not present when Pearl was murdered. Others, who were present and actually assisted in the brutal beheading, were not charged.

- The conspirators were inept, plagued by bungling plans, a failure to cover their tracks, and an inability to operate cameras and computer equipment. Even the videotape of Pearl's murder was staged — replayed because the cameraman failed to capture the original scene.
- Despite ample leads, U.S. and Pakistani investigators began the case chasing the wrong suspect, giving the killers time to slay Pearl and disappear. Pakistani authorities let a key informant, admitted guard Fazal Karim, go free and failed to follow other potential leads.
- Omar Sheikh, who orchestrated the kidnapping plot, had contemplated bargaining over ransom demands for Pearl's freedom, but that possibility quickly faded when it became known that Pearl was Jewish and when Al Qaida

operatives took charge of him.

- False and contradictory evidence presented in Pakistan's kidnapping trial raises serious doubts the convictions of Sheikh and his three associates will stand up in currently pending appeals. Omar Sheikh's defense attorney is also using KSM's confession as grounds for his appeal.
- KSM told the FBI that he was pulled into the kidnapping by a high-level leader in Al Qaeda circles today, an Egyptian named Saif al-Adel, who told him to make the kidnapping an Al Qaeda operation.
- Pearl's actual murderers will likely not stand trial for their crime. Federal officials decided in the summer of 2006 not to add the Pearl murder to charges against KSM in military tribunals because they concluded that would complicate plans to prosecute him and four alleged accomplices in the 9/11 attacks. KSM's suspected accomplices aren't expected to be charged, either. One nephew is being tried for the 9/11 attacks, and the whereabouts of the older nephew aren't publicly known. ■

Finishing Danny's Work

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd,
Katie Balestra and Kira Zalan

ON THE MORNING of May 17, 2002, Pakistani police investigator Fayyaz Khan ordered officers to dig inside a compound in the Gulzar-e-Hijri neighborhood, a poor area on Karachi's outskirts. It was not a pleasant task. At the scene, Randall Bennett, the U.S. State Department's regional security officer in Karachi, lit a cigarette to mask the stench of death.

This was the stomach-turning culmination of the search for kidnapped Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl. He had been abducted nearly four months earlier on January 23 while trying to chase down possible Pakistani connections to "shoe bomber" Richard Reid, the British Muslim man who attempted to blow up an American Airlines jetliner over the Atlantic.

Gently, under the watchful eye of a colonel in Pakistan's intelligence



Wall Street Journal bureau chief Daniel Pearl want to Karachi, Pakistan, to follow the trail of "shoe bomber" Richard Reid.

Credit: The Daniel Pearl Foundation

agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, or ISI, police officers lifted their find. First: a skull four doctors on the scene said had been “decapitated,” the U.S. consul general, John Bauman, later wrote in a State Department cable. Then the upper torso, still wearing the light blue track suit that Pearl’s kidnappers had him wear. Pearl’s body, cut into about 12 pieces, was removed. This outcome, sadly, came as little surprise.

A gruesome videotape had circulated earlier, drawing worldwide attention, showing Pearl’s beheading by a man whose face the camera never revealed.

Locating the remains, however, was a breakthrough. Pakistani police and U.S. officials for the first time had established a link to Pearl’s actual murderers. The man who led police to the site, a young militant named Fazal Karim, sat in jail across town.

Picked up in connection with the bombing of the Sheraton Karachi Hotel on May 8, Karim told Pakistani police investigator Fayyaz Khan that



Daniel Pearl's passport, photographed at an exhibit at the Newseum. Credit: Queerbubbles

he had been one of the guards holding Pearl. He said he witnessed the murder by three men whom he described variously as “Arabs” or as “Balochis,” a reference to natives of Pakistan’s restive Baluchistan province abutting Afghanistan and Iran.

But it would be more than another year before the actual perpetrator would say that he was the unidentified man wielding the knife that killed Pearl.

That man was Al Qaeda operative Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, a Balochi raised in Kuwait, who confessed to the Pearl murder after being ap-

prehended by Pakistani and U.S. agents for his alleged role as the 9/11 mastermind.

The details of his confession to the CIA remain classified, but the Pearl Project has learned some details of what he told two FBI agents, Frank Pellegrino and John Mulligan, who interviewed him in Guantanamo Bay in 2007. “I wanted to make sure that I got the death penalty,” he said, according to a source. The FBI agents were part of a “clean team,” tasked to get material that could be used in a criminal trial. In the interview, the Pearl Project has learned, KSM said he was pulled into the kidnapping by a high-level leader in Al Qaeda circles today, an Egyptian named Saif al-Adel.

U.S. officials have released a transcript of a hearing in which KSM admitted his role in the murder. His admission is corroborated by Pakistani police interrogation reports of at least two suspects involved in the kidnapping. One of them is Muhammad Rasheed, a driver from the northern Pakistani district of Swat, tied to the militants groups. He allegedly drove a taxi, ferrying Arab members of Al Qaeda around Karachi.

Today, KSM, as he is called by U.S. officials, is a high-value de-

tainee at Guantanamo Bay awaiting trial for the 9/11 attacks. Neither he nor his accomplices, however, have been charged in Pearl's death.

While the U.S. government has not passed judgment on KSM's involvement in the Pearl case, it appears that Osama Bin Laden has done so. Morris Davis, former chief prosecutor for the Guantanamo Bay military commissions, told the Pearl Project, “One of the high value detainees [held at Guantanamo Bay] told interrogators that Osama bin Laden was angry that KSM had slaughtered Pearl so publicly and brutally, arguing that the murder brought unnecessary attention on the network.”

The failure to indict KSM appears due, in part, to the fact that he first confessed to U.S. officials in the midst of tactics known as “waterboarding,” according to sources close to the interrogation. The harsh techniques, which human rights activists describe as torture, would likely derail any prosecution in the United States.

To piece together the story, a faculty-student investigative reporting team at Georgetown University performed hundreds of interviews with past and present law enforcement officials, diplomats, and intelligence

officers, as well as with relatives and lawyers of suspects, many for the first time — all of it spanning five countries. We relied as well on hundreds of documents ranging from Pakistani police and court records to FBI reports to Pearl's e-mails and personal notes, including details about events, conversations, and meetings never previously reported. We read 2,400 pages of court records chronicling the trial of men involved in the kidnapping.

This effort to create the definitive public record of Daniel Pearl's last days and the hunt for those behind his death was sponsored by Georgetown University and the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, a program of the non-profit Center for Public Integrity in Washington, D.C. Our efforts were funded by grants from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, based in Oklahoma City.

This is a story filled with bad guys. But there are some good guys. They are the Pakistani cops, former



While reporting in Karachi, Pakistan, Daniel Pearl and his wife, Mariane, stayed at the house of a friend and colleague, Asra Nomani. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

and current FBI agents, and former and current U.S. government officials who helped the Pearl Project, despite great risk to their careers and lives. Among them is Pakistani police officer Fayyaz Khan, who has continued to pursue those believed to be responsible in Pearl's kidnapping and murder. In September 2002, he was seriously injured when a mail bomb exploded in his face in Karachi, and, in November 2010, he narrowly missed a suicide bomb attack that killed 17 people and injured more than 100 people, leveling

the offices of the Crime Investigation Department, where he works. The Pakistani Taliban took credit, saying it was trying to avenge the extrajudicial detention of its members.

Among the Pearl Project's findings are that Pakistani and American authorities missed key opportunities to develop witnesses and forensic evidence that might earlier have led to KSM, his two alleged accomplices in the murder, and many others who allegedly had roles in the kidnapping. In all, the project identified 27 men who were involved in events surrounding Pearl's kidnapping and murder. Fourteen of the men are free. While some of these men's names have floated around with aliases, signified by the "@" sign in Pakistan police reports, the Pearl Project established their real identities, identifying home addresses and family members. In some cases, there are alternate spellings to their Arabic and Urdu names.

"Justice wasn't served," Pearl's mother, Ruth Pearl, told the Pearl Project.

The handling of Fazal Karim, the young militant who led police to Pearl's grave, is emblematic of the shortcomings that plagued the investigation. While U.S. and Pakistani officials vowed to spare no ef-

fort in tracking down Pearl's killers, and some did make enormous efforts, the difficulties in investigating and prosecuting the case present a cautionary tale about the obstacles to realizing justice for such crimes. In pointing police to the remains, Karim had a horrific story to tell which stretched from Pearl's terrifying days in custody to the final moment of his life, when a video camera malfunction prompted his captors to re-enact the killing. Pakistani investigators passed on word of this informant to Bennett, the State Department's security officer, but, U.S. officials say, they refused to let him interview their prisoner.

Karim's emergence, it turns out, was a problem. By that time, police already had a prime suspect in jail named Ahmad Omar Saeed Sheikh, the radical who indeed orchestrated the kidnapping but was out of the picture — in fact, was in another city — at the time Pearl was beheaded.

Karim's account threw a wrench into the strategy Pakistani police and prosecutors had mapped out to convict Omar Sheikh and three co-defendants. Pakistani authorities, in a series of decisions which American officials accepted, didn't bring charges against Karim and failed to follow up his leads to avoid draw-



Jameel Yusuf, one of the last people to see Pearl alive. In 2002, he was director of the Citizen-Police Liaison Committee and helped with the effort to find Pearl. Credit: Kira Zalan

ing attention to his information and undermining the court case against Sheikh and his co-defendants.

To make matters even more complicated, Sheikh's defense attorney, Rai Bashir Ahmad, who is often known as Rai Bashir, implicated Pearl's friend Asra Nomani, who later became a co-director of the Pearl Project, in the kidnapping because Pearl was staying with her at the time of the kidnapping. A Pakistani

newspaper quoted Bashir as saying he suspected Nomani, born in India, of working for the Indian intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing, or RAW.

By some accounts, the Pakistanis didn't want to jeopardize an already problematic case against Sheikh at a time when they were under pressure to show Washington that they were being tough on terrorism. In fact, Sheikh seemed like something of a

poster boy for Pakistan to show off its law enforcement efforts, since he was already under indictment in the United States for a 1994 kidnapping of an American in India.

Had investigators pursued earlier clues such as Karim's, they might have discovered what the Pearl Project's student-reporters can now put on the record: four men tried and convicted of Pearl's murder in Pakistan were involved in the kidnapping but not in the killing. Those responsible for the murder have not yet faced justice.

Not only was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed the alleged killer, but his two chief accomplices may have been his own nephews, according to U.S. and Pakistani officials familiar with the case: Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, now a Guantanamo Bay detainee alleged to have sent money to the 9/11 hijackers at the behest of uncle KSM, and Musaad Aruchi, an alleged Al Qaeda operative whose whereabouts have been unknown since he was arrested in Karachi in a joint Pakistani-CIA raid in 2004.

Why is all this news after nine years? While much has been written and broadcast about the Pearl case, the passage of time has made it possible to fill in some of the gaps, to get access to information and peo-

ple that previously was not possible, and to ensure a full accounting on Pearl's behalf.

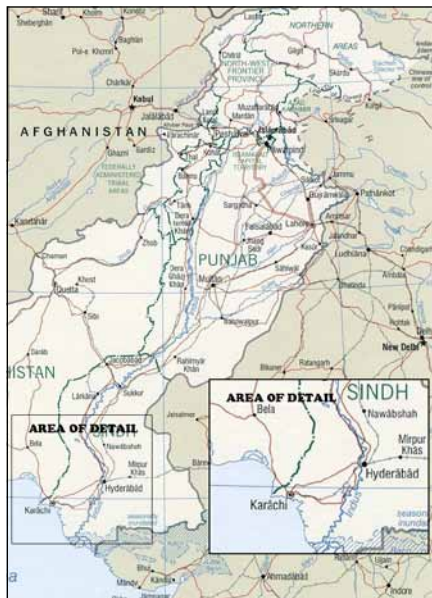
And in addition to getting at the truth of what happened to one journalist, this investigation's findings serve as a primer for how this region's web of militancy activities has broad geo-political significance. The Pearl case demonstrates the dangerous consequences of an extremist interpretation of Islam to Pakistan and the world. Nearly all of the men believed to be involved in the Pearl kidnapping and murder were members of sectarian militant organizations that had cropped up in Pakistan in the 1980s and 1990s, influenced by Wahhabism, the dogmatic, fundamentalist brand of Islam prevalent in Saudi Arabia, and, similarly, Deobandism, an Indian-born school of thought that has taken root among militants and Islamists in Pakistan.

In a 2002 diplomatic cable, Sheldon Rapoport, acting U.S. consul general in Karachi, made a reference to these groups as fundamentalist, calling them "jihadi/fundo organizations." Understanding the ideological underpinnings of people waging war against the United States is critical to deterrence.

A full investigation of the plot

also offers a window into militancy in Pakistan — particularly the nexus of homegrown extremists, the Afghan Taliban, and Al Qaeda — that has grown to become an ever-larger threat to the stability of the nuclear-armed nation. The murder was the first known operation in which Pakistani militants collaborated with Al Qaeda. In the time since Pearl's death, the interaction has become more commonplace, and the situation has grown more volatile in Pakistan, threatening both stability in the region and the safety of Americans and others around the world. Many of the men involved in the Pearl case hailed from the Punjab province that sits in the country's political, military, and cultural heartland, and they are a harbinger of a domestic and global threat that some Pakistani officials are just now reluctantly starting to acknowledge, "the Punjabi Taliban."

Since Pearl's murder, Pakistan has been dubbed "the most dangerous place in the world," Pakistani and U.S. intelligence officials have nabbed key Taliban and Al Qaeda figures in Karachi, Pakistan, and Pakistani militant groups have been tied to brutal assaults on civilians both in Pakistan and abroad, from



The Daniel Pearl Case is a roadmap to understanding the geography of militancy in Pakistan.

Credit: University of Texas

the killing rampage in Mumbai in late 2008, to the attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore, Pakistan, in March 2009, to an attempted car bomb in New York's Times Square in May 2010. Last year, the Committee to Protect Journalists declared that Pakistan is the most dangerous country in the world for journalists to work.

Further, this is an effort to highlight the need for follow-through and accountability when a journalist is murdered. The death of a reporter such as Pearl is a loss not only to his family and friends, but to the much, much wider circle of people who rely on such fair and inquisitive journalists to search out the truth and to help explain events far away. Governments may be eager to close the books on such cases, but a failure to energetically pursue the criminals may only raise the risks for other journalists facing similar perils.

Pearl was actively trying to report on and untangle the many threads of militancy activities in the region and spent his last hour of freedom in that pursuit, interviewing Jameel Yusuf, a Karachi businessman, about the effectiveness of judicial and police reforms the U.S. was attempting to put in place in Pakistan. Yusuf, then-chief of the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee, a group formed in 1989 after a wave of kidnappings hit Karachi, was involved trying to find Pearl. Reform continues to be badly needed, Yusuf told the Pearl Project. But he said, “Sadly, this has not been effectively and beneficially liaised by the U.S. government with their Pakistani counterpart.” Thus, he said, for example, the Pearl case

has seen ad hoc justice with suspected co-conspirators never prosecuted. “As regards the suspects never charged,” he said, “I am sure they have been bumped off so as not to compromise the proceedings and judgments earlier given by the courts.” Indeed, in a report released in December 2010, the U.S. State Department said that extrajudicial killings are a problem in Pakistan.

Pearl’s story demonstrates the risks that journalists face in doing the vital work of reporting on terrorism, delving into a radical culture in which their crucial independent role provides little, if any, protection.

It is now clear that Pearl, in trying to report on the dark world of terrorism, had the tragic misfortune of being lured into the hands of men who had already well established their credentials for ruthlessness, terror, and murder — men linked to kidnappings of Americans and others, the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1995 plot to blow up jetliners over the Pacific, the 9/11 attacks, and the attempted jetliner “shoe bombing,” among other misdeeds.

The young journalist wanted to shine a light on that world. With Danny gone, we are continuing his work through the Pearl Project. ■

Baiting the Trap

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd, Katie Balestra,
Kira Zalan, Mary Cirincione, and Margo Humphries

ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, as hijacked jetliners slammed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Daniel Pearl was 7,500 miles away in Bihar, India. Pearl, South Asia bureau chief for The Wall Street Journal, was horrified as he watched replays of the attacks flash on his hotel television.

The next day, he flew to Karachi, the chaotic port city that is Pakistan's commercial center, because he suspected the trail of responsibility might lead to Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden and his associates in neighboring Afghanistan.

Pearl recognized the dangers of being an American journalist in a city plagued by criminal gangs, growing Islamic extremism, and violence. On September 17, 2001, he wrote lightheartedly to a friend: "Hi from Karachi, which would be a great city if we weren't scared to go out of the hotel."

From there, Pearl flew north to

a quieter Islamabad, the capital, where he hoped officials and other sources could give him their take on who organized the terrorist attacks in America. One of those sources was Khalid Khawaja, a former officer with Pakistan's powerful intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, known as the ISI. He was also a self-proclaimed companion of bin Laden during the days when both Pakistan and the U.S. were providing semi-covert military aid to Afghan militants fighting Soviet occupation.

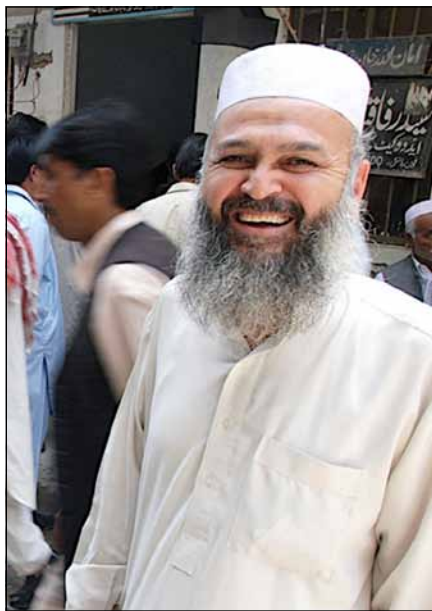
Khawaja was something of a windfall for Pearl, although his connections highlight what remains a serious concern among U.S. counter-terrorism officials — the degree to which there are ties between ISI and militant Islamists, including the Taliban in Afghanistan. "I got hooked up with one of OBL's buddies, who has been taking me around to see the people who are

secretly pro-OBL,” Pearl wrote in a September 20 e-mail. “I’m writing a story about how everybody here thinks the Jews did it. Bound to piss everybody off, but I think people should know what people in other parts of the world REALLY think, and why. Right?”

That was the kind of enthusiasm that Pearl brought to his reporting. Born on October 10, 1963, in Princeton, N.J., he was the son of Jewish immigrants from Israel. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Stanford University, Pearl got his first reporting gigs in Massachusetts, at the North Adams Transcript and The Berkshire Eagle, before moving up to The Wall Street Journal in 1990. In 2000, he moved with his wife, Mariane, to Mumbai, India, to take on new challenges as the Journal’s South Asia bureau chief.

Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, Pearl e-mailed Bob Baer, a former CIA station chief, asking: “Who do you think did it?” Baer reminded Pearl of an earlier conversation about a suspected terrorist, a “Khalid Sheikh Hammed,” whom Baer had heard dodged the FBI in Qatar some years earlier. The name didn’t ring any bells with Pearl — though it would turn out to be a harbinger.

In Pakistan, Pearl chased down



Khalid Khawaja, a former Pakistani intelligence officer and a self-proclaimed companion of Osama bin Laden, was a source to Pearl. Khawaja was kidnapped and killed in early 2010 by a group claiming to be Pakistani militants.

Credit: Derek Henry Flood

stories on the stirring of dangerous militancy. He wrote about Pakistani scientists accused of passing nuclear secrets to extremist groups. Then, another big terrorism story broke. On December 22, 2001, a

Muslim convert, Richard Reid, tried to blow up a jet flying over the Atlantic — by igniting explosives in his shoes.

There were initial hints that Reid, who quickly became known as the “shoe bomber,” had ties to Pakistan. A young American journalist working for The Boston Globe in Islamabad, Farah Stockman, got a tip. Her local “fixer,” Pakistani reporter Rana Mubashir, introduced her to a man who trolled the Islamabad Marriott hotel pitching stories to foreign media. The man, a government official, was something of a “publicity whore,” Stockman later said. “He was a person that people trusted,” she added, though “his motives were something I never completely understood.” In an interview at his home, the man told Stockman he believed Reid had stayed with a radical Pakistani cleric, Sheik Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani, head of a group called Jamaat ul-Fuqra (Community of the Poor) that the U.S. State Department had



A press report indicated that Richard Reid had stayed at the house of Sheik Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani. Daniel Pearl thought he was going to an interview with Gilani when he was kidnapped. He is pictured here during a 2002 interview with the late George Crile of 60 Minutes II.
Credit: 60 Minutes II

described as a terrorist group as recently as 2000.

It seemed credible that Reid, the son of a black Jamaican father and a white British mother, might be among the disciples of Gilani, who has followers among African-Americans as well as Pakistanis. Stockman flew with her fixer to the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore, where Gilani has a home. She went door-to-door, showing a photo of

Reid. Down the street from Gilani's home, she said she found a relative of Gilani's who told her Reid indeed had been at the house.

On January 6, 2002, The Boston Globe ran a page-one story by Stockman tying Reid to Gilani: "Bomb Probe Eyes Pakistan Links. Extremist May Have Influenced Reid." The story indicated U.S. officials were eying Gilani, but it also had the caveat that Khalid Khawaja, a former Inter-Services Intelligence officer Pearl had interviewed, was a friend of Gilani who believed the cleric had no ties to the shoe bomber.

Pearl wanted to take the story to the next level by locating and interviewing the elusive Gilani. With the help of his fixer, local journalist Asif Farooqi, Pearl sought to find contacts who could put him in touch with the radical cleric.

As word spread through Islamist circles, among those who heard of Pearl's interest was Omar Sheikh, a radical already experienced in kidnapping, who later told police that he initially suspected that the inquisitive American might be a Western spy. Sheikh passed word through an intermediary, Mohammad Hashim Qadir, that he could arrange an interview with Gilani.

Pearl wrote to a colleague, ask-

ing, "Did you see Boston Globe story on U.S. officials trying to tie Richard Reid to Sheikh Mubarik Ali Gilani of Pakistan? Would be pretty big news if true; I'm about to meet with a Gilani associate here."

On January 11, 2002, Pearl and Farooqi went to the Akbar International Hotel in Rawalpindi, near Islamabad, to meet with Omar Sheikh, who introduced himself using a fake name, Chaudrey Bashir Ahmad Shabbir. By whatever name, he would have seemed like a promising source with a sophistication and reassuring manner reflecting his education at a British prep school and the London School of Economics before his turn to radical Islam.

From that moment on, however, Pearl was heading into a trap.

What Pearl had no way of knowing was that Gilani wasn't mixed up with Reid, as investigators later concluded. In an interview with FBI agents who had been in Guantanamo Bay, the Pearl Project has learned, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of 9/11, said Reid was working with Al Qaeda's military chief, Mohammed Atef, a somber Egyptian strategist whose daughter was married to one of Osama bin Laden's sons. In



The exterior of the Akbar International Hotel where Daniel Pearl met Omar Sheikh, the alleged mastermind behind his kidnapping. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

November 2001, as the U.S. shelled Afghanistan, KSM said Atef was killed, and a top al-Qaeda leader, either Ayman Al-Zawahiri or Saif al-Adel sent Reid to KSM; the hapless young man arrived in Karachi to meet KSM. “I was given all his crap,” KSM told the FBI. He didn’t want anything to do with Reid, said people familiar with the interview. “He said he looked like trouble.” KSM said he told Reid, “You better

shave.” He said Reid responded, “I’ve been a drug dealer.”

KSM was incredulous at what an amateur Reid was. “Whether you are picked up for being a drug dealer or a terrorist, you still end up in jail,” KSM said he told Reid, according to people familiar with the interview.

In Karachi, KSM handed off Reid to someone he could trust — his young 20-something nephew, Ali

Abdul Aziz Ali — with instructions to give Reid money and teach him how to send emails. The nephew allegedly had already proven himself capable with other delicate work: wiring money to the 9/11 hijackers. KSM told the FBI he didn't like Western operatives because they felt they knew better.

Pearl knew none of this. He also had no way of knowing that his new source, ready to introduce him to Gilani, was an experienced kidnapper. Pearl was doing what reporters do, developing sources and trying to break a big story. He flew off to Karachi for a promised interview with Gilani.

Coincidentally, Omar Sheikh was not entirely off America's radar. Weeks earlier, U.S. prosecutors had obtained a sealed indictment of Sheikh for the 1994 kidnapping of an American tourist, Bela Nuss, in India. Sheikh had been caught and jailed in India for the kidnapping, but was freed in a swap deal for passengers aboard a hijacked 1999 Indian Airlines flight. "It was one of the saddest days in my life," said G. Parthasarathy, India's high commissioner to Pakistan at the time. Inside the government of India, he argued against the exchange, saying it would put hardened militants back

on the streets of Pakistan.

On January 9, 2002, two days before Pearl's fateful meeting at the Akbar International Hotel, the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan, Wendy Chamberlin, met with Pakistan's foreign secretary Inam ul Haque "to press for the rendition of Sheikh Omar Saeed" on kidnapping charges, according to a U.S. State Department diplomatic cable. (In official documents, the U.S. government sometimes refers to Omar Sheikh as "Sheikh Omar Saeed.")

Chamberlin didn't know that Sheikh had already set into motion another kidnapping plot, this time an American journalist as his target. ■

Trapping the Journalist

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd,
Caitlin McDevitt, Shilpika Das, Katie Balestra, Kira Zalan

ON MONDAY, January 21, 2002, Daniel Pearl, South Asia bureau chief at The Wall Street Journal, walked out into the afternoon sun, following a visit to a sonogram clinic in Islamabad, Pakistan, with his pregnant wife, Mariane. Beaming, he sent a text message to a friend: “It’s a boy!!!!” He even had a name for his son: Adam.

That same day, 700 miles to the south, a plot was taking shape that would rob Pearl of the chance to ever see his son. A young man by the name of Omar Sheikh flew into Karachi, Pakistan’s chaotic commercial hub, that morning to assemble a kidnapping team. He began with a series of clandestine meetings at innocuous locations, including at a McDonald’s restaurant, tapping a local network of militants who would provide the muscle for his scheme.



Omar Sheikh was already experienced in kidnapping when he passed word to Pearl that he could arrange an interview with Sheik Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani. Credit: FBI

It was Sheikh’s latest venture into the ruthless business of kidnapping. He had been jailed in India in 1994 for allegedly kidnap-

ping Western tourists, including an American, on behalf of a militant Pakistani group. He had been freed in 1999 in exchange for passengers on a hijacked Indian Airlines plane. The United States was pressing Pakistan for Sheikh's extradition, even as he slipped coolly through the streets of Karachi putting his next conspiracy into place.

But, rather than being a professional operation, Pakistani police and the FBI later discovered, the plot to kidnap Pearl was simple and at times even bumbling, with operatives struggling with the most simple of matters, such as how to use a Polaroid camera to photograph their hostage.

Still, the plot offers a window into the growing militancy in Pakistan — particularly the nexus of Punjabi militants, the Afghan Taliban and Al Qaeda — that has grown to become an ever-larger threat to the stability of the nuclear-armed nation and the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan.

In 1947, Pakistan was born out



Sheikh Mohommad Adil met with Omar Sheikh at the Stadium Road McDonald's in Karachi to plot Pearl's kidnapping. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

of India's independence from British rule and the partition of the nation into two countries. For most of its first decades, Pakistan slipped between military and civilian rule but it was mostly ruled according to the secular vision of its founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The men in the Pearl plot were mostly born in the 1960s and 1970s and many had roots in the northeast Punjab province heartland where radicalism is fostered by an austere interpretation of Sunni Islam called Deobandism. In 1977, during their formative years, Gen. Mohammad Zia ul-Haq

took over Pakistan, leading a strict Islamist movement, funded in part by the government of Saudi Arabia, exporting its rigid Wahhabi ideology to the world to counter the 1979 Iranian Shia revolution.

The men came of age in the 1980s just as Afghan fighters, fueled by their Islamic fervor and covert aid from Pakistan and the United States, were defeating the mighty Soviet military. After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, an alphabet soup of Pakistani militant groups with acronyms such as HUM (Harkat ul-Mujahideen), LeJ (Lashkar-e-Jhangvi), JeM (Jaish-e-Mohammed), SSP (Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan), HUI (Harkat-ul-Islamiya), and LeT (Lashkar-e-Taiba) took off in the Pakistani province of Punjab, fueled by the Islamist transformation of Pakistan. One of these groups, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, later became closely linked to the Pearl case and is part of a loose collection of militant groups dubbed the Punjabi Taliban. Many of the young men involved in the Pearl case joined these groups and trained at Afghanistan-Pakistan border camps tied to Pakistan's spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, and were drawn to the radical views of the Taliban fight-

ers who subsequently took control of Afghanistan.

Now in their 20s and 30s, they were eager foot soldiers in what some regarded as a growing industry, Jihad Inc., many of them living in the same dicey Karachi neighborhood of Nazimabad and listening to sermons from radicalized imams at neighborhood mosques.

"They are sons of darkness," says Massoud Ansari, a Pakistani journalist who writes about radicalism.

These young men were prime candidates to be subcontractors in Omar Sheikh's dark scheme. He had met Pearl two weeks earlier in a hotel in Rawalpindi, outside Islamabad, pretending to be a disciple of a Pakistani religious leader, Sheikh Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani. Pearl wanted to interview Gilani, chasing a Boston Globe story that claimed Gilani had ties to "shoe bomber" Richard Reid.

Sheikh set a trap for January 23, when he told Pearl he could have a rare interview with Gilani in Karachi. Pakistan police reports, based on interrogations with various suspects, describe what happened next.

Now, arriving in Karachi, Sheikh had just two days to put his opera-



From left: Amjad Hussain Farooqi, Asim Ghafoor, and Asif Ramzi all were allegedly implicated in helping Omar Sheikh plot Daniel Pearl's kidnapping.

Credit: Pakistani Police

tion in place. Could he find the right men? Would they keep his secret?

A friend from militant circles, Amjad Farooqi, 28, had promised to help but only if the operation was in Karachi, where he could tap into a trustworthy network. A Punjabi, Farooqi had great connections in militant circles. Pakistani police said Farooqi had been involved in the 1999 Indian Airlines hijacking that set Sheikh free from jail in India. Sheikh arrived in Karachi with a middleman: Asim Ghafoor, about 28, a deputy in a Deobandi militant

group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, which would be instrumental in doing Sheikh's dirty work on the streets of Karachi.

At the airport, Sheikh was met by Salman Saqib, 27, a militant he had met years earlier in a training camp in Afghanistan. The day before, he had called Saqib to pick him up at the airport. The ringleader skipped the introductions. He wanted his operational cells separate, so Saqib knew Ghafoor only as "the fat guy." Born in Multan, the fourth largest city in Punjab province, Saqib had



From left: Attaur Rehman, Mati-ur Rehman, and Faisal Bhatti allegedly helped arrange the logistics in Pearl's kidnapping. None has been prosecuted in the Pearl case. Credit: Pakistani Police

a physics degree from a college in Bahawalpur, Punjab, a notorious breeding ground for militancy. In the 1990s, he joined Harkat ul-Mujahideen, training in the Pakistani frontier town of Miranshah and fighting with the Taliban. He moved to Karachi after a gunshot left bullet fragments in his hip.

First, according to the Pakistan police reports, Saqib ferried the men to an uncle's home where Sheikh called his old friend, Farooqi, who told him to head to a local hangout, Student Biryani restaurant, for an

important meeting. There, Sheikh met the deputy leader of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in Karachi, Asif Ramzi, a 20-something bespectacled bomb-making expert with a scruffy beard. Ramzi, in turn, said he would arrange for Sheikh to meet his boss outside the prestigious Aga Khan University Hospital.

The group left with a carryout order of biryani, a Pakistani rice dish, arriving at the home of an aunt of Sheikh's at about 12:30 p.m., before heading to Aga Khan Hospital. There, at about 1:15 p.m., Ramzi

introduced Sheikh to his Lashkar-e-Jhangvi boss, Attaur Rehman, who pulled up on a Honda CD 70 motorcycle.

Sheikh later told police he was impressed by Rehman as someone who could pull off the tactical details. Rehman said he had a place to hide Pearl, but wouldn't say where. It would compromise the location. Did Rehman need any money? No, according to one interrogation report with a suspect involved in the kidnapping. But Rehman later told police that Sheikh gave him 50,000 rupees in "advance money," worth about \$830. Could he find him an English speaker for the rendezvous with Pearl? Yes, he could.

Also allegedly at the meeting: a young militant named Mati-ur Rehman, according to Pakistani police. Importantly, Rehman later allegedly becomes involved in other high profile incidents, landing on Pakistan's Most Wanted List as a suspect in the attempted assassinations of Pakistani leaders Gen. Pervez Musharraf and Shaukat Aziz, as well as a May 2002 bombing at the Sheraton Karachi Hotel.

It was just mid-day, and the plot was falling into place.

Now, Sheikh still needed to line up somebody to pick up photos of

Pearl in captivity. Before arriving in Karachi, he had called a man he'd met the year before at a training camp in Afghanistan: Sheikh Mohammad Adil. He was a police constable — but also a secret member of Harkat ul-Mujahideen, one of the Islamic militant groups responsible for the December 1999 hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight 814 that was used to free Sheikh and two other men from prison in India.

Sheikh had told Adil that he had "jihadi work" for him. Adil asked him for about \$115, for "a special medical treatment for his sister," he later told FBI special agents John Mulligan and Michael Dick. Adil picked up the money from a courier Sheikh sent to Ashraf ul Madaris, a religious school tied to fund raising for a charity, Al Rashid Trust, and later, a new charity, Al-Akthar Trust, both allegedly supporting the Taliban and Al Qaeda, according to the U.S. Treasury Department. The militant-cop's request for money for medical help, if true, reveals the economic dynamic in militant work. In Karachi, Sheikh met Adil at a McDonald's in the Nazimabad neighborhood. Adil agreed to help.

Next stop was a hotel in Gulistan-e-Jauhar, a Karachi neighborhood, where Sheikh waited for the Eng-

lish speaker to arrive. After a while, Rehman, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi boss, said the meeting would have to wait until morning.

A good day's work done, Sheikh paid a house call to the home of a killed militant. Before calling it a night at the home of a sympathizer, he prayed.

Would all of the pieces fall into place? He just had another day and a half.

Meanwhile, for Pearl, it was business as usual at his guesthouse in Islamabad. His bosses cleared a story proposal he had pitched called "AFGHANPIE." In his proposal, he wrote: "Let's roll out the old regional map and look at how each of Afghanistan's neighbors is jockeying for a share of the \$10 billion reconstruction." He wanted to chase a story about Dawood Ibrahim, an Indian mobster who had allegedly found sanctuary in Karachi, but he was only as far as reading old articles about the man. He asked his research assistant in Mumbai to look for information about the mobster's financial clout in Pakistan.

Pearl shared with his editor the exciting news from a sonogram of the baby his wife, Mariane, was carrying, which he had affection-



Sheikh Mohammad Adil was a police constable, but also a member of Harkat ul-Mujahideen, one of the Islamic militant groups responsible for the 1999 hijacking of an Indian Airlines flight. He received a life sentence for his role in Pearl's kidnapping. Credit: FBI

ately been calling their "fetus." "We found out today our fetus is male!" he wrote. "And normal, more importantly. There's a very good clinic here in Islamabad that offers sex selection — but that's a whole other story."

As a side note to his editor, Pearl added: "Still trying to get a break on Reid. I meet Sheikh Gilani Wednesday. Going to Karachi tomorrow for that" ■

Finding a Safehouse

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd,
Katie Balestra and Kira Zalan

AS THEY HAD done together so many times before, Daniel Pearl and his wife, Mariane, headed out to an airport. They first met in Paris, when Pearl was based in London, and had been married for less than a year when he was sent by The Wall Street Journal to cover South Asia in 2000. Since then, they often traveled together, avoiding the frequent separations that can be a strain on married life for a foreign correspondent. And now, expecting their first child, their time together was more important than ever.

On this morning, Tuesday, January 22, 2002, the Pearls flew from Islamabad to Karachi. He was excited



Sheikh Mohammad Adil met with Omar Sheikh under the Baloch Colony Bridge in Karachi, where he received instructions about his role in Pearl's kidnapping. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

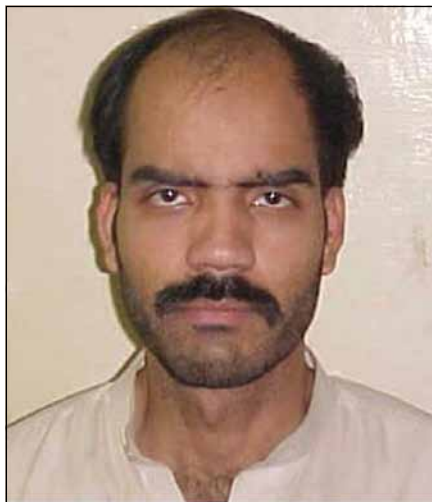
about an interview set for 7 p.m. the next evening with Sheikh Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani, a Pakistani religious leader who reportedly was tied to “shoe bomber” Richard Reid.

In Karachi, there were a lot of preparations being made for the meeting, but not of a kind Pearl anticipated.

Omar Sheikh, a Pakistani-British man arrested for kidnappings in India years earlier, was heading to a meeting under a busy overpass, the Baloch Colony Bridge, to find just the right English-speaking Pakistani to draw Pearl into his trap.

The day before, Sheikh had burrowed into the dark network of criminals and thugs who acted as leaders in the Karachi militancy, according to Pakistani police files. In just a day's time, with the right introductions, he was wired. But in the business of jihad, leaders alone can't pull off an operation. It takes low-level hired guns, some of them influenced by ideology, but others just trying to make some money.

Those were the people Sheikh needed to recruit that day. The first candidate arrived in a white car driven by Attaur Rehman, chief of the militant Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in Karachi. He was Sajid Jabbar, the English speaker that Sheikh so desperately needed. Jabbar had joined Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and trained in Afghanistan after graduating from high school and, then, college. Asked later by police what kind of



Sajid Jabbar, an English speaker who helped lure Pearl into the trap.

Credit: Pakistani police

crime he was used to doing, he answered: "Against America." Sheikh sized him up for the role of "Imtiaz Siddiqui," who would be Pearl's contact for the promised interview the next day. Only 23, he was balding, and his alias was "old man." He had a split in his eyebrows. Could he fool Pearl? He said he would.

Sheikh gave the men a final briefing and introduced Rehman to his rogue cop, a man by the name of Sheikh Mohammad Adil. When Sheikh had first asked him for help,

Adil requested about \$115 to help an ailing sister. Sheikh had given it to him. Now, Sheikh had a job for him: When the time was right, he would pick up photos of Pearl in captivity from Rehman. In effect, Adil was the cut-out to keep the operational cells separate, providing a break between the armed men who would hold Pearl hostage and the messengers who would send ransom e-mails. Even if Adil or the e-mailers got caught, they wouldn't be able to lead authorities to Pearl.

Adil agreed, and they settled on Sabeel Wali Masjid, a mosque, as the drop-off point for the photos. While mosques in the region are sometimes considered "no-go" zones for soldiers and police, militants often used them as safe havens.

Next, Sheikh turned his attention to setting up the cell that would tell the world of Pearl's abduction and the kidnappers' demands. At 10 a.m., Sheikh called Salman Saqib, a young militant with shrapnel in his hip, and told him to come to Sheikh's aunt's house. Around noon, Saqib walked in with a younger cousin, Fahad Naseem, an unemployed computer programmer.

Sheikh responded with enthusiasm: "God has helped me. I was in search of such a person and have

found him." He now had his tech support.

Sheikh sent them out on a key errand: to buy a Polaroid camera and two film cartridges for about \$50. Saqib protested, "I have never purchased a camera." Sheikh assured him the job was simple enough, and the two cousins set off by taxi to Saddar Electronic Shop. A little later, camera in hand, they headed back to Sheikh's aunt's house. However, no one knew how to work the camera. The cousins promised to read the instructions and figure it out.

On the front lawn, Sheikh told Saqib that Adil, the rogue cop, would contact him with a delivery. Most of the men dispersed, but not before the cop led the group in the early afternoon prayer.

The cousins stayed behind. Sheikh placed two pieces of paper in front of them: his ransom note in English and in Urdu. Sheikh told them to read the note "with full attention" and not to "carry out any amendments." He wanted them emailed to journalists.

The younger cousin later told police he was excited to have Sheikh's trust. "He said that if I helped them in this job God would reward me," the cousin said. "This was a big job

and I was going to be part of this big job by sending the e-mail, he told me.” He asked Sheikh why he wanted to kidnap Pearl. “He answered that Daniel Pearl was in fact a Jew working against the Muslims in Pakistan,” he told police. It’s not clear if Naseem recollected this accurately or he learned of Pearl’s background later from a Pakistani newspaper account.

When he probed Sheikh for some details of the kidnapping plan, Naseem said, “He admonished me and said to limit myself only to things I was told to perform otherwise I would create problems for myself.”

Saqib later told the FBI that he protested “that it was not the right thing to do” and a kidnapping “will cause a bad name to be given to both Pakistan and the Mujahadeen.”

In response, he said, Sheikh replied threateningly, “I’ve given you my secret. This is a big thing. Remember, I can locate you anywhere!” Sheikh quieted him with religious arguments, saying, “If you do this thing God will reward you.” Saqib relented. Still, there was a certain amateur hour character to all this. Sheikh may have realized this himself, for instance, warning the cousins against simple mistakes like using one of their personal

computers for the job. The cousins would later wish they had listened.

That evening, between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m., Mati-ur Rehman, a member of a militant group, Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami, showed up with Mohammad Sohail, 34, a thin bearded man. Born in Karachi, he had a college degree and, he later told police, was a follower of the strict Deobandi school of thought in Islam. He made about \$240 a month, supporting his wife, Hammada, and their four children. The cousins showed the two men how to work the Polaroid camera. The ransom note cell was falling into place.

In another part of town, Attaur Rehman, the local boss of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, had to make good on a promise to Sheikh to find a safe house to keep Pearl in captivity. He reached into his mental Rolodex and plucked out the name of a hired gun, Fazal Karim, 33. Born in the city of Rahim Yar Khan in south Punjab, Karim had worked for Harkat ul-Mujahideen, the militant group to which Sheikh belonged. In the 1980s, as a teenager, he trained and fought in Afghanistan against the Soviets. After Afghanistan, Karim went to Karachi and worked as an electrician before landing a job as a driver for a local business-



Fazal Karim, allegedly one of the guards who held Daniel Pearl in captivity. Arrested in connection with a 2002 bombing of the Karachi Sheraton, Karim told Pakistani police where to find Pearl's remains. Credit: Pakistani police

man, Saud Memon, earning about \$100 a month to support his wife and five daughters.

Rehman tasked Karim with finding a place to hold their expected hostage. "There is this big American," Rehman told Karim, according to Pakistan police reports, "and we need to kidnap him. In exchange, they might free some prisoners in Cuba I don't have any place to keep him, and you should

find a solution to this."

Karim later told police he thought of a compound his boss owned outside town in a remote neighborhood called Ahsanabad. It was relatively isolated with only a madrassa, or religious school, nearby. Rehman and Karim headed over to the compound, which was surrounded by a boundary wall, set off from other buildings. Inside, there was a small cinderblock building, an outhouse,

and a courtyard. Rehman blessed the location. Sheikh had his safe house.

In early questioning by police, Karim tried to keep his boss out of it. He told police that he only told his employer that people from his village were coming to Karachi for work and needed a place to stay. At first, he said, his boss balked, but then relented. In a subsequent version, though, Karim said Memon was directly involved in the scheme in meetings at his home in the Paposh Nagar neighborhood of Nazimabad, volunteering, first, his own home and, then, the remote compound.

The landowner's brother, Mehmood Memon, told the Pearl Project that his brother didn't know his compound was being used for the kidnapping. He said that his brother was innocent, involved only in a charity, Al-Rashid Trust. But that charity had a checkered record. After 9/11, the United States said that it funneled money to Al Qaeda.

Also involved in some of the meetings laying out the logistics for Pearl's kidnapping was Muhammad

From: sima shabbir
[mailto:nobadmashi@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2002

To: Pearl, Danny

Subject: Mr. Imtiaz Siddique

Dear Mr. Pearl,

I hope you are in excellent health and spirits. Shaikh Saab is expecting you at 7 p.m. on Wednesday and hopefully you will get at least half an hour with him, plus some time to speak to the mureeds staying with him if you wish. When you get to Karachi please contact Mr. Imtiaz Siddique 0300-2170244 who will arrange to meet you and take you there.

I am sure you will gain a lot from the meeting. Do tell me all the details.

Look forward to hearing from you, Adaab, Bashir.

Omar Sheikh used a fake persona to send Pearl this e-mail, promising to connect him with mureeds, or “students,” of Gilani.

Rasheed, a driver who ferried Arab members of Al Qaeda around Karachi, said a police official.

Now, the time was coming to draw Pearl to his abductors. Sheikh continued his ruse, sending Pearl an e-mail from a fake persona, promising to connect him with mureeds, or “students,” of Gilani.

Little could Pearl know that the man was just across town, scheming. That evening, Jabbar, the balding militant playing the role of “Imtiaz Siddique,” talked with Pearl by phone for three minutes, long enough to confirm arrangements for the next day’s supposed interview.

On Wednesday, January 23, Pearl awakened with his wife in the home of a friend from the Wall Street Journal, Asra Nomani, who later became co-director of the Pearl Project. It was a day that would end in betrayal.

Around 11 a.m., his local “fixer,” a journalist, arrived late after getting lost, and they set off for Pearl’s interviews.

Around the same time, less than a mile away at his aunt’s house, Sheikh had a final meeting with the militant with shrapnel in his hip and his younger cousin. Sheikh told them, “I am going.” His plan was to get on a plane out of town.

Giving them about \$350, Sheikh laid out his instructions: Send out the ransom notes “word for word” and, again, do not use your own computers.

In another part of town, Karim, the driver-militant, was working at a warehouse his boss owned in the Nazimabad neighborhood in

Karachi when his phone rang. It was Rehman, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi boss. He told him: Get out to the safe house immediately. Karim told him he didn’t have a ride, so Rehman fetched him on his Honda CD 70 motorcycle and they drove out together, arriving just before the late afternoon prayer.

Four men waited, anxiously. They were the guards that Rehman had assembled over the last couple of days. He told the men, “Today the job will get done,” before taking off on his motorcycle, leaving the men behind to guard the hideaway.

At about the same time, Pearl was meeting with Randall Bennett, regional security officer at the U.S. Consulate in Karachi. Pearl asked: How safe would it be to meet Gilani? Bennett cautioned him to meet only in a public place. It was advice that Pearl would have wished he had heeded, but he knew that he might be driven to a madrassa, or religious school, to do the interview.

Later in the day, Pearl zipped back to Nomani’s home. He was excited about something he’d learned: the Internet service provider that supported the e-mail address to which Reid was writing was a local company, Cybernet. Nomani knew it well. It was her Internet provider.

She looked up its office address and gave it to Pearl.

Outside around 4:30 p.m., parrots swooning overheard in the bright sunshine, Pearl slipped into a taxi driven by a burly Pashtun driver, Nasir Abbas. Pearl said he'd be back around 9 p.m. His wife, Mariane, and his friend, Nomani, stood on the edge of the roadway and waved goodbye. It would be the last time they would ever see him.

"Lakson Square Building," Pearl told his taxi driver. It was the headquarters for Cybernet. The driver finally found his way after getting lost. Once there, Pearl told his driver with hand signals to wait. About 15 minutes later, he returned. He had struck out trying to find out more about the man to whom Reid was e-mailing.

Next stop: the offices of the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee, a government-citizen crime-fighting cooperative established in 1989, with solving kidnappings as a core part of its business. At 5:10 p.m. Pearl called Jameel Yusuf, chairman of the committee, to tell him quickly that he was running late. Again, the driver got lost. Finally in the office, Pearl asked Yusuf whether U.S. aid was useful toward achieving police and judicial reform in Pakistan. He

also asked him if it would be safe to meet Gilani. Yusuf said he had never heard of Gilani.

During the meeting, Pearl got two phone calls. In the middle of the interview, at 5:52 p.m., Pearl received a phone call from the balding militant called "the old man," and talked for a little over a minute. Outside, his taxi driver heard the call for the sunset prayer as Pearl emerged for his next and final stop: a meeting at the Village Restaurant.

At 6:26 p.m., Pearl called Nomani's house and told her he'd be back for dinner. At 6:28 p.m., Pearl received another phone call from Jabbar and talked for less than a minute. At 6:30 p.m., Pearl called home again to tell his wife he was en route to his meeting. His taxi driver dropped him off at the Village Restaurant and later told police he didn't notice anyone distinguishable. Importantly, the taxi driver's account would be different in court months later.

As he stepped out of the taxi, Pearl handed the driver a 500 rupee note, insisting the driver keep the change of 200 rupees. It was the last generous act of a free man. ■

Kidnapping the Journalist

By Asra Q. Nomani, Kira Zalan and Barbara Feinman Todd

AS DUSK FELL on the evening of Wednesday, January 23, the Karachi streets swelled with people bustling to get home. Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl stood in front of the Village Restaurant, waiting for a 7 p.m. meeting.

Pearl thought he was about to have an interview like so many he had had in the past with dodgy characters in Pakistan. Even in the early days after 9/11, it was common for reporters to go in the vehicles of suspicious strangers to interview known extremists. It was a calculated risk. At the time, most journalists felt they had certain immunity with even the most hardened criminals



On the night he was kidnapped, Daniel Pearl believed he was going to meet with Sheik Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani at the Village Restaurant in Karachi. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

or radicals because they gave voice to the disenfranchised and dispossessed. Yet, Pearl was certainly no cowboy. After war broke out in Afghanistan, he had written to a friend:

"I'm dying to go to Afghanistan, but not really anxious to die."

What was to happen to Pearl shows how the rules of the game have changed in this age of terrorism, how reporters can no longer assume they possess a special immunity to the violence. To the contrary, reporters can seem like easy targets — vulnerable and offering a way to snare global headlines. The case demonstrates the challenges that law enforcement and intelligence officials continue to encounter in attempting to pursue terrorists and prevent acts of violence. Pearl's abduction was characterized by low-tech, personalized communications that relied on pre-established ties of friendship and family. The episode underscores how critical it is to understand what is known in defense and intelligence circles as "the human terrain," if authorities want to uncover and prevent terrorist activities.

But, in this case, Pearl stood alone in the most populated city in Pakistan, out of the war zone, with just a writing pad, labeled "Reporter's Notebook," a pen, and a shoulder bag. A car arrived — by one account a red Suzuki Alto — and the driver beckoned him inside. "Daniel got in without hesitation and

sat quietly," a U.S. diplomatic cable later reported, the Alto heading up the busy Shahrah-e-Faisal road to the outskirts of Karachi.

It was an innocuous start to what was a diabolical trap set by Omar Sheikh, a 28-year-old British-Pakistani man who had used the ruse of an interview with an extremist Muslim spiritual leader to draw Pearl into his grip.

In just two-and-half days, Sheikh had put the operational details into place. Now he was nowhere to be seen: To later deny involvement in the kidnapping, he had gotten on a Pakistan International Airlines plane out of town, using the alias "Muzaffar," according to Pakistani police. Pakistani police files, based on interrogations and other evidence, lay out what happened next.

At 7:11 p.m., Pearl received a call that lasted about four minutes. About 7:45 p.m., Pearl's local "fixer," Afzal Nadeem, a journalist, called Pearl to tell him he'd gotten an interview scheduled with a cyber security specialist. Pearl didn't answer.

Around that time, just before the sunset prayer, Attaur Rehman, a local boss in the militant group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, arrived at a compound in a remote neighborhood on the outskirts of town. A

group of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi men stood by, awaiting orders. They were young, low-level militants Rehman had plucked out of his Karachi neighborhood to be guards in this scheme.

“The guest is coming. Get ready,” Rehman told them.

He took two Russian-made TT-30 semiautomatic pistols from a side compartment of his Honda CD 70 motorcycle, giving one to a guard and keeping the other. He turned to one of the men, Fazal Karim, a low-level militant with five daughters, and told him to watch the gate and open it as soon as a car arrived.

When the car pulled up, Pearl was in the front seat. Karim and another guard later said it was a red Suzuki Alto, matching a description of the kidnap car later given by Rehman. The color of the vehicle would end up being an important detail, but nobody realized it at the time. Karim opened the gate. Rehman opened the front door and led Pearl out of the car. With a pistol in one hand, he put his other hand around Pearl's neck and took him inside the small cinderblock building.

“Come on,” he said, in English.

Inside were several men. Rehman told Pearl to take off his clothes and hand over his belongings, in-

cluding his camera, tape recorder, mobile phone, wrist watch, eyeglasses and case, wallet, four to five mobile phone cards, shoes, and a Citibank credit card. Pearl complied. Rehman asked Pearl what he wanted to eat. The guards suggested a hamburger.

Rehman tied the belongings in a handkerchief and, with Sajid Jabbar — the English-speaking “Imtiaz Siddique” who met Pearl at the Village Restaurant — left for the nearby neighborhood of Sohrab Goth. It isn't clear whether Pearl just remained in his underwear, but his clothes were taken.

The men stood around not sure what to do. They were a motley crew. By day, Karim, the father of five daughters, was a driver for the owner of the compound where they now stood. He'd arranged the safe house for Rehman.

Rehman recruited a young militant, Siraj ul-Haq, 27, who was an electrician by day. Married with two young children, he'd grown up in Karachi in the Nazimabad neighborhood of Paposh Nagar in a Pashtun family, studying only until the fifth grade. The Pashtuns are an ethnic group in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region and make up most of the Afghan Taliban. In



Clockwise from top left: Malik Tassadaq Hussain, Mohammad Akbar Sattar, Siraj ul-Haq, and Abdul Hayee. All allegedly guarded Daniel Pearl while he was kidnapped. None of them has been prosecuted. Credit: Pakistani police

their home neighborhood, he met Rehman, who talked to him about joining the jihad. He went to Kashmir, the divided region claimed by both Pakistan and India, for 40 days of training and returned a member of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the Sunni sectarian group that Rehman headed

in Karachi. In 1999, he allegedly helped kill a Shia man.

Another guard was Malik Tassadaq Hussain, 27, the son of a former mid-level Pakistan army officer. In the 1990s, Hussain went to Afghanistan for training at militant camps, illustrating how some Paki-

stani families have one foot in the military and the other in militancy. By day, Hussain ran a family chicken shop near the Student Biryani restaurant, one of the meeting spots used by Omar Sheikh in setting up the kidnap plot. Unmarried, he was a Sunni Muslim from the northern Punjabi Malik Awan tribe, a group heavily recruited by the Pakistani army. In 1996, at his neighborhood mosque, a local militant leader, Asif Ramzi, recruited him and some of his friends into Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, a Sunni sectarian militant group. Listening to sermons, he met Rehman. Over the next years, Hussain spent time behind bars with members of his neighborhood militant cabal, and had been released from jail on October 27, 2001. Sheikh had turned to Ramzi to help him with the kidnapping plot, and Hussain got a job as a guard.

Another guard was Abdul Hayee, about 30, a militant who came from the same district in Punjab, Rahim Yar Khan, as the guard, Karim. He lived in the same Gulshan Iqbal neighborhood of Karachi as many of the other alleged culprits in the Pearl case. Standing only about 4 feet, 11 inches tall, he had a short, thick beard and a noticeable mark on his forehead. Hayee was one of

ten children born to a poor couple in Karachi and grew up in his family village of Alipur in Punjab, where he memorized the Koran at a madrassa, or religious school. One of the meetings he had with Rehman, laying out his role in the kidnapping, was at Snoopy Ice Cream Shop.

For about two-and-half hours, the men sat around. At around 10 p.m., Rehman returned with food and items he bought at the Sohrab Goth flea market — bedding, chains, a lock, and a tracksuit with a jacket. The jacket was red, black, and blue.

Pearl put on the clothes, confused. “What is going on?” he asked.

Mohammad Akbar Sattar, 27, watched. He had been assigned to guard Pearl because he knew some English. He replied with a lie that the coercive arrangements were being carried out at the order of Sheikh Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani, the cleric Pearl still thought he was going to interview.

“Is this security?” Pearl asked.

Sattar answered, “Yes, this is security.”

The guards tied Pearl’s legs with the chain and tied the chain to an old car engine in the room.

Rehman left, telling the guards, “Look after him.” ■

Holding the Hostage

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd, Kira Zalan,
Erin Delmore, Jessica Rettig, and Adil Awadh

BY THE MORNING of Thursday, January 24, 2002, Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl's family, friends and colleagues had alerted everyone from the U.S. State Department to Pakistani police that the reporter had been missing since 7 p.m. the night before. Pakistani cops were scouring Pearl's laptop at the home where Pearl was staying, searching for clues to his whereabouts.

In an urgent call about 2:10 a.m. to the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, Asra Nomani, co-director of the Pearl Project and then a Wall Street Journal reporter on book leave, said she and Pearl's wife, Mariane, hadn't heard from him for almost eight hours since he had called to say he



One of the photos of Daniel Pearl sent by his kidnappers in their first ransom note.

was off to an interview with a cleric, Sheik Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani. A Marine guard told her to call back in the morning to talk with Randall Bennett, the U.S. regional security

officer. Meanwhile, she alerted The Wall Street Journal, which called the State Department in Washington. Mariane called Pearl's parents.

At 6 a.m., Nomani talked to Bennett, who had met with Pearl just the previous afternoon about the potential dangers of his interview. He gave Nomani the name of trusted Pakistani cops she should call.

By 9 a.m., Pakistani cops flooded Nomani's house. The case was assigned to two veteran Pakistani police investigators, Mir Zubair Mahmood and Dost Ali Baloch, led by the Crime Investigation Department (CID), an office behind the Karachi Sheraton, notorious among criminals for the ceiling hooks from which police would hang them during beatings.

Mahmood, a retired Pakistani Army captain with decades in the CID, had less experience with kidnapping cases, but he'd logged plenty of time investigating murders. Baloch was a member of the Special Branch unit with expertise in kidnapping cases but little experience with homicides.

They scanned Pearl's laptop. His Palm Desktop had this entry, "rest behind metropole," from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. "Rest" was shorthand for the Village Restaurant near the

Metropole Hotel. And there were e-mail exchanges with the seemingly helpful Bashir — the alias being used by a man named Omar Sheikh — about the arrangements to meet with Gilani. Mahmood raised his eyebrows at Bashir's e-mail address: "nobadmashi@yahoo.com." In Urdu, the native language of many Pakistanis, badmashi means troublemaking. "No troublemaking" seemed an odd e-mail address.

Mahmood called Khalid Khawaja, described as a friend of Gilani's in a Boston Globe article; Khawaja said Gilani would never meet a journalist in Karachi, far from his home in Lahore. And Baloch doubted that Gilani was involved. While some U.S. officials wondered about his alleged ties to militancy in the United States, he was a respected spiritual leader in Pakistan.

The Pearl mystery was fast becoming global headline news, including the details of the Richard Reid story he was chasing. In the United States, the Newark FBI office took the lead in the Pearl case, setting up a command center at the Journal's office in South Brunswick, N.J. The special agent put in charge of the Pearl case was Jay Kanetkar, 34, a two-year veteran of the terrorism squad who had his own near-death

experience on 9/11. He survived that day only because, when his partner ran late, they missed their flight to San Francisco — the hijacked United Flight 93 which crashed in Pennsylvania after passengers heroically challenged the terrorists onboard.

That day in Islamabad, with FBI Director Robert Mueller coincidentally in Pakistan for a visit, Wendy Chamberlin, the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan, “makes a forceful demarche on Pearl’s behalf to President Musharraf,” according to a State Department cable. Among diplomats, a *démarche* is an official message to a foreign government, often a protest or warning. The cable, referring to the government of Pakistan as “GOP,” notes: “In the same meeting with President Musharraf, Ambassador again requests GOP action on our rendition request for Sheikh Omar Saeed.” The United States didn’t realize his connection to the Pearl case.

Unbeknownst to the authorities, Pearl was being held about an hour’s drive away in a compound on the outskirts of Karachi. His kidnapping had been arranged by a charismatic British-Pakistani, Omar Sheikh, affiliated with Pakistani militants, but even Pearl didn’t know it.

At around 10 a.m., the logisti-

cal kingpin of the operation, Attaur Rehman, a local militant leader, brought Pearl breakfast. The day passed slowly for everyone.

By evening, Pearl finally got fed up. He told his guards he didn’t want to wait to interview Gilani, the cleric he thought he would be meeting. “Let me call someone, or let me go,” he told his guards. “I don’t want to talk to him anymore.”

One of the guards, Malik Tas-sadaq Hussain, slapped Pearl across the face and said, “You are in our custody. Shut up and sit there. If you talk, we will kill you,” according to an account that a police officer said Hussain told him. One of the logistical chiefs, Faisal Bhatti, kicked and shook Pearl, clutching the back of his hair, said the police officer.

A day after his abduction, this was the first time that the guards revealed the truth to Pearl. Pearl gave up trying to leave — for the moment.

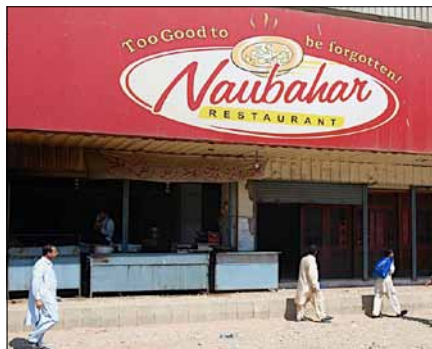
The next morning, Rehman, the local militant boss heading the operational details, arrived with a Polaroid camera that had been the focus of much hand-wringing in the days before, as members of the kidnapping operation tried to figure out how to use it.

Rehman handed Pearl that day’s issue of *Dawn*, a leading English-

language newspaper. Pearl held it up in front of himself. Hussain, a militant who had just learned how to use the Polaroid, pointed the camera at Pearl and took the first photograph, according to police. Hussain took several other photos that the world was soon to see: one of Pearl bound in chains, his head bowed, his fingers in an unusual position that would raise questions with investigators later; another of Pearl, bound again, this time with a man holding a gun to his head; and a final photo of Pearl, his legs sprawled, pointing at the newspaper, hung on a curtain behind him. In the last photo, Pearl had a smirk on his face.

The militants had a “proof of life,” as it’s known in the hostage negotiation business, evidence that kidnappers use to show that their captive is alive.

That afternoon in Karachi, men thronged towards the Sabeel Wali Masjid, the “Mosque of the Way of the Trusted One,” for the Friday congregational prayer, an important service akin to Sunday service in Christianity. Inside, two men were using the mosque as a sanctuary for their nefarious purposes, according to a police report. Discreetly, Rehman, the militant boss, handed an envelope to another hired gun in the kid-



The Naubahar Restaurant in the Saddar neighborhood of Karachi, where Sheikh Mohammad Adil, a rogue cop, gave Salman Saqib an envelope containing photos of Pearl. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

napping scheme, Sheikh Mohammad Adil, a rogue cop who had become a militant. He also provided a mobile phone SIM card so Adil could make phone calls without detection.

After the sunset prayer, Adil called another hired gun in the operation, Salman Saqib, a militant with shrapnel in his hip from fighting for the Taliban in Afghanistan. The mastermind of the kidnapping plot, Omar Sheikh, had assigned him the task of e-mailing ransom notes to journalists. The two men made arrangements to meet at the Naubahar Restaurant in the neighborhood of Saddar that evening



Salman Saqib and Fahad Naseem bought a Canon printer and a Hewlett-Packard scanner from Jogi's Computer store in Karachi. At their uncle's home, the cousins scanned photos of Pearl in captivity and saved them to a floppy disk. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

around 9 p.m. There, the rogue cop gave Saqib an unsealed white envelope. Saqib's younger cousin, Fahad Naseem, stood nearby. According to the younger cousin, Saqib opened the envelope in the bathroom of the restaurant.

The cousins went to the apart-

ment of an uncle in a high-rise apartment complex, Noman Grand City, in the Gulistan-e-Jauhar neighborhood of Karachi. Saqib claimed he opened the envelope there. Either way, they found four envelopes inside the one envelope. Each one contained a photo of Pearl.

Sheikh, the mastermind of the plot, called to tell them it was time to send the ransom notes to journalists.

The cousins went to Jogi Computer Super Store on Shahrah-e-Faisal, a busy road named for Saudi King Faisal, an important inspiration, in death, for Pakistan's turn toward fundamentalism in the 1970s and 1980s. It would emerge as a major artery in the geography of the Pearl case. There, they bought a Canon printer and a Hewlett-Packard scanner with money that Sheikh, the mastermind, had given them two days earlier. Back at their uncle's home, the cousins scanned the photos and saved them onto a floppy disk.

As the hunt for Pearl ramped up, there was no word from the kidnappers. That wasn't part of the plan. As it turns out, for a day, the cousins couldn't get their e-mails sent. The images were too big. Internet connections were too slow. Nothing worked.

Finally, on Saturday evening, sitting at a computer at a cyber café, Naseem, the younger cousin, pushed the "send" button on a ransom note from kidnapperguy@hotmail.com. It included the four photos of Pearl. The subject line

"American CIA officer in our custody." It declared:

The National movement for the restoration of Pakistan sovereignty has captured CIA officer Daniel Pearl who has posing as a journalist of The Wall Street Journal.

Unfortunately, he is at present being kept in very inhuman circumstances quite similar infact to the way that Pakistanis and nationals of other sovereign countries are being kept in Cuba by the American Army. If the Americans keep our countrymen in better conditions we will better the conditions of Mr.Pearl and all the other Americans that we capture.

If the America wants the release of Mr.Pearl, all Pakistanis being illegally detained by the FBI in side America merely on suspicion must be given access to lawyers and allowed seeing their family members.

The Pakistani prisoners in Cuba must be returned to Pakistan and they will be tried in a Pakistani Court. After all Pakistan was a full member of the international coalition against terror and it deserves the right to try its own citizens. And Send Afghanistan's Ambassador Mulla Zaeef back to Pakistan and if there is any accusation Pakistani Government should handle it.

“Those guarding Daniel were given the impression that Daniel was being kept as a bargaining chip for the release of the Al-Qaida prisoners in Cuba,” a U.S. diplomatic cable reported. These were grandiose demands, since realistically none would be granted. Still, at least Pearl was still alive. And there was still some chance that he would be rescued or that the kidnappers, having had their moment of world attention, would relent and free him unharmed. There was a quiet hope in the Wall Street Journal newsroom that the newspaper could offer money in lieu of other demands to get his freedom.

The FBI, which saw the e-mail for the first time the next morning, officially declared the Pearl case a criminal investigation. But, in Pakistan, agents had to follow the lead of local police. “We were very beholden to them,” said Dean Phillips, an FBI agent in Karachi for the Pearl investigation.

One night, Pearl told his guards he needed to go to the bathroom. As he walked out of the two-room hut to an outhouse, Pearl pushed his English-speaking guard, Mohammad Akbar Sattar, into an open wash tank. He bounded toward the six-foot boundary wall surrounding



Muhammad Muzzamil was allegedly one of the men guarding Daniel Pearl during his captivity. He claims to have witnessed Khalid Sheikh Mohammed kill Pearl.

Credit: Pakistani police

the property and started climbing over it.

He got halfway over the wall, shouting, “Help me!” It was a futile effort since there were few buildings nearby and one of them was a mosque tied to Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, the Deobandi sectarian militant group. “It is unlikely that anyone heard his cries,” U.S. Consul General John Bauman reported

to headquarters, “let alone would involve themselves if they did.”

A guard on duty, Muhammad Muzzamil, heard the yelling from inside the room. Two guards, Malik Tassadaq Hussain and Fazal Karim, awakened and leapt up from woven cots where they slept in the courtyard. The guard in the water pulled himself out. He, too, ran towards Pearl.

Within seconds, they pulled him down, dragging him back inside the hut. There, they beat him with the butt of a pistol, one of the guards later told police, finally handcuffing him from behind and tying a cloth over his mouth.

On Monday, January 28, the mastermind, Omar Sheikh, told Adil, the rogue cop, to hand over a second envelope to Saqib, the militant with bullet fragments in his hip. Sheikh called Saqib and told him to expect another phone call from Adil. That evening, Saqib got the call and made arrangements to meet the cop again at the Naubahar Restaurant. Around 9 p.m., near the restaurant restroom, the cop handed Saqib another envelope.

At home, the cousins opened the envelope and found two new photographs of Pearl. Sheikh called and told the cousins: “Also mail these.”

The younger cousin scanned the photographs at home onto his laptop — not heeding advice Sheikh had given them earlier not to use his own laptop. He typed up the new ransom note, and his cousin burned the photos, but they’d soon learn that this cyber trail would be used as evidence to implicate them in the kidnapping.

Omar Sheikh later told police he instructed the militant leaders overseeing the operation, Asif Ramzi and Anjad Farooqi, to release Pearl, and that Farooqi had agreed.

The FBI and Pakistani cops, meanwhile, were still on a wild goose chase. They had caught a son of Gilani, the man that Pearl thought he was going to meet. Omar Sheikh was not yet on their list of suspects.

The CIA issued a statement denying that Pearl was a spy. And The Wall Street Journal issued a statement stating that Pearl “has never worked for the CIA or the U.S. government in any capacity.”

By Tuesday, Sheikh had called Saqib, the militant, with a new e-mail address, unzza@hotmail.com, where he said he’d find a second ransom note. The password: “313786.” The number “313” has symbolic meaning because it’s be-

lieved that, in the 7th century, 313 Muslims fought with the Prophet Muhammad in the Battle of Badr to defeat an enemy that far outnumbered them. “786” is used by Muslims to symbolize the phrase, “Bismillah ir-rahman ir-rahim,” meaning, “In the name of God, the most gracious, the most compassionate.”

Riddled with intentional typos, perhaps to avoid detection by intelligence community spy software that flags certain words when e-mailed, the note read:

we have interrogated mr. D. Parl
and we have come to the conclusion that contrary to what we thought earlier he is not working for the cia Therefore we are releasing him unconditionally. if we had found him to be a cia man we would certainly have killed him.

That night, at the last minute, Sheikh called and told the cousins to edit the note, because Pearl was “not CIA, but a Mossad agent,” the older cousin later recalled to police. Sheikh also said he had another edit. He told the older cousin to delete the wording that said Pearl would be released. The new message: Pearl would be executed within 24 hours.

The next day, Wednesday, January 30, the Pakistan newspaper, The News International, reported Pearl was Jewish, under the byline of a Washington Post local stringer named Kamran Khan. He reported that “some Pakistani security officials — not familiar with the worth of solid investigative reporting in the international media — are privately searching for answers as to why a Jewish American reporter was exceeding ‘his limits’ to investigate [a] Pakistani religious group.” In an interview Khan later said, “I feel sorry that I wrote that Danny was Jewish.”

It’s unknown whether the kidnappers took note of the story, but the article certainly made Pearl less sympathetic a victim in the eyes of Al Qaeda, the Pakistani militancy, and their sympathizers.

That day, police reported that they had located Gilani. But investigators Mahmood and Baloch sensed they were on the wrong track. And time was running out.

At a hotel room in the Karachi Sheraton, just blocks from where her husband was kidnapped, Pearl’s wife, Mariane, sat down for an interview with CNN.

At 4:35 p.m., the cousins pressed the “send” button on an edited

e-mail from a cyber café on the busy Shahrah-e-Faisal boulevard. It came from strangepeoples@hotmail.com and the subject line read, “This one” with the message:

We have interrogated mr.D.Parl and we have come to the conclusion that contrary to what we thought earlier he is not working for the cia. in fact he is working for mossaad. therefore we will execute him within 24 hours unless amreeka flils our demands.

There was one easy distraction that Sheikh could manipulate: India, Pakistan’s longtime enemy. Sheikh soon demanded Saqib send a third message. Salman refused. Sheikh insisted, “Yes, you will, and you will also call the American consulate and embassy,” and gave him phone numbers for the interior minister and the prime minister of India. The government of Pakistan already was accusing India in staging the kidnapping. Any links Sheikh could establish with India would be good for conspiracy theories and would stir Pakistani nationalism. But Saqib later told police that the work made him “tense” and took the SIM card out of his mobile phone so he couldn’t receive any more calls from Sheikh.

All throughout this period, the guards later told police, Pearl badgered them with a simple plea: “Let me go.”

In response, several of the guards later told police, they beat him. Pearl hadn’t received survival training from kidnapping specialists who advise victims to appear compliant to avoid retribution. Finally, after the beatings, Pearl would curl up and sleep. ■

Killing the Journalist

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd, Kira Zalan,
Shilpika Das, Sakshi Jain, and Bonnie Rollins

Editor's Note: Some of the passages in this chapter may be disturbing because of their violent and graphic nature.

IN THE BRIGHT SUN of Pakistan's winter, three men walked through the gate of a compound on the outskirts of Karachi, the fate of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl in their hands. One was a tall, beefy man, clean shaven except for a big black mustache. He called himself "Mukhtar," an Arabic word denoting leader. His two allies carried bags containing video gear and the implements for Pearl's death and dismemberment, two knives, and a meat cleaver.

Some of the handful of local thugs guarding Pearl called them "the Arabs." It isn't clear if this was an ethnic reference or shorthand for Al Qaeda. And the guards' boss, At-

taur Rehman, the local leader of a militant group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, told them to do whatever these new men asked. If the kidnapping had been something of an ad hoc operation, this changed everything.

The three men were pros at terrorism. They came to kill Pearl and to herald their brutality in a gruesome video that would be seen by millions around the world. The video horrifies most viewers, but it is meant to stir the passion of jihadis in their quest to spread radical Islam and go to war with the West, in particular America and Israel. Coming as it did only months after 9/11, the murder video played well among militants in places such as Pakistan where the call to jihad resonates among the young and disaffected.

Exactly how these ruthless men were drawn into the Pearl plot is one of the unresolved mysteries of the

case. It points to a nexus between Pakistan's indigenous militants and members of Al Qaeda, who have more global ambitions. Based on his own confession and the testimony of witnesses, the heavy-set man was top Al Qaeda operative Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, or "KSM," about 37, the alleged mastermind of 9/11. Perhaps that day his work was as simple as a family affair. His accomplices, authorities have told the Pearl Project, may have been two nephews: Musaad Aruchi, who was in his 40s, and Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, Mohammed's trusted 20-something aide.

Inside the Pakistani police reports, there was a cultural clue indicating the family could have been involved: one of the guards described the killers as "Baloch," an ethnic group in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan and across the border in Iran and Afghanistan. The KSM family is, in fact, Balochi. Another one of KSM's nephews, Ramzi Yousef, was in prison in the U.S. for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

The Pearl Project has learned KSM's version of the story, as told to FBI agents who interviewed him in Guantanamo Bay as he awaits trial. He said that he was initially pleased by the 9/11 attacks, but then alarmed. "When he saw the planes hit the



Khalid Sheikh Mohammed told FBI agents that he was pulled into the kidnapping by a high-level al Qaeda leader, an Egyptian named Saif al-Adel (shown above), who is on the FBI's Most Wanted list with a \$5 million reward. Credit: FBI

World Trade Center, he was happy, but when the towers collapsed he was worried," a person familiar with the interview said. When the towers collapsed, he told investigators, he said, "Shit." He was concerned how President George W. Bush, whom he called "the cowboy" would respond, he told investigators.

KSM told FBI agents: "I think we bit off more than we could chew. We

had no idea what the cowboy would do.” When the towers fell, KSM told the FBI he thought, “We’ve awakened a sleeping bear.”

Indeed, KSM’s friends were dying in U.S. bombing raids in Afghanistan, causing him to inherit folks such as “shoe bomber” Richard Reid. In late January 2002, the newspapers were filled with headlines of Pearl’s kidnapping. “He said he had no idea about the kidnapping. It wasn’t his,” the person said. “It wasn’t Al Qaeda.”

But then, one day in Karachi soon after the Pearl kidnapping, KSM told FBI agents, he got a phone call from a trusted senior leader in Al Qaeda, Saif al-Adel, an Egyptian who is on the FBI’s Most Wanted list with a \$5 million reward; his name means “sword of justice” in Arabic. KSM wasn’t sure who had contacted al-Adel, but his colleague told him about Pearl. “He says, ‘Listen, he’s been kidnapped. These people don’t know what to do with him. They want to know if we want him.’ He thought this was an opportunity. We can take advantage of it. He said he wanted to make sure it’s an Al Qaeda thing,” according to sources familiar with the interview.

Rohan Gunaratna, an Al Qaeda expert based in Singapore, who has

knowledge about KSM’s interviews, believes his confession. After the 9/11 attacks, as U.S. bombs dropped in Afghanistan taking out Al Qaeda operatives, “Khalid Sheikh Mohammed at that time wanted to send a message to the United States that we go tit for tat,” Gunaratna said.

KSM didn’t implicate his relatives or anyone else by name. He said he just took the one trip that day to the secret hideout where Pearl was being held captive, and he picked up two random men to help him. But he told FBI agents, he had a purpose: “I wanted to make sure I got the death penalty,” if the U.S. caught him, and so he wanted blood, literally, on his hands.

Another reason, he cited: “Propaganda” He told the FBI, “Conveniently, Danny was Jewish.”

Pearl had stumbled into his kidnappers’ hands through his effort to find the identity of the man who gave instructions to Reid in Pakistan. He was wrongly thought to be cleric Sheik Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani. In his final moments of life, Pearl may have come face to face with Richard Reid’s facilitator, though he would never know it. U.S. intelligence believe that the shoe bomber was directed by KSM’s younger nephew, who is now a Guantanamo Bay detainee for allegedly passing money

to the 9/11 hijackers.

KSM, who is known to have used “Mukhtar” as one of his pseudonyms, boasts of killing Pearl, but has not been charged in that murder. “I decapitated with my blessed right hand the head of the American Jew Daniel Pearl in the city of Karachi,” he declared at a 2007 detainee hearing.

Officials have withheld the highly classified details of his CIA interrogations. The only other accounts of what happened that day come from some of the other men there — and their accounts vary considerably.

The first issue in dispute is exactly when the three men showed up. According to a version of the facts told by Malik Tassadaq Hussain, a Pakistani militant assigned to guard Pearl, the men arrived four days after Pearl’s kidnapping, making it January 27, 2002. That was three days before the second ransom note was e-mailed out, threatening Pearl would be killed. Hussain’s timeline jibes with Sheikh’s recollection. According to the Pakistani police’s report of his interrogation, Sheikh, the mastermind, said that militant leaders Attaur Rehman and Amjad Farooqi told him on January 29, 2002, that Pearl was already dead.

Another guard, Fazal Karim, a driver with five daughters, said in

one account that the captivity lasted one week, ending it on January 30, but also had a different account in which he told police the captivity “went on for eight to 10 days,” making the arrival date for the three men sometime between January 31 and February 2.

The logistical chief of the kidnapping plan, Rehman, later told police something shocking: Pearl hadn’t been killed until after the mastermind of the kidnapping, Omar Sheikh, had been picked up on February 5, 2002. Rehman told interrogators that Sheikh had left instructions: If he was arrested, then kill Pearl. By this account, Pearl was alive for about two weeks, not one week as previously thought.

The next issue of dispute: Who brought the men? Who was the Al Qaeda connection?

Rehman, the logistical chief, said that he instructed a businessman named Saud Memon, the owner of the land where Pearl was held, to call the “Arabs” to kill Pearl, and “the way of killing was decided.” Memon gave money to support Al-Rashid Trust, a charity with alleged ties to Al Qaeda.

“The Arabs wanted to kill Daniel Pearl by themselves,” Rehman is quoted saying in a police report of



Saud Memon owned the land where Daniel Pearl was held. On April 27, 2007, Memon, barely alive, was found dumped near his home. He is pictured here after he received hospital care. Credit: Pakistani police

his interrogation, “so that somehow they could take the revenge of the massacre of Muslims in Afghanistan and Palestine.” In return, “the Arabs” promised to pay Memon \$10,000, he said. But one of the guards, Siraj ul-Haq, told police he understood that Memon brokered a \$50,000 deal for Pearl, but that only \$10,000 ended up being paid.

The day of the murder, Rehman said, a man arrived, accompanied with “the two Arab natives,” who he described as having “curly hairs”

and being “Makrani type,” referring to an ethnic group descended from African slaves that Arab merchants brought to the Pakistani province of Baluchistan in medieval times.

There are yet more versions buried in Pakistani police reports and U.S. State Department cables. What is clear is that Pearl’s fate changed disastrously once “the Arabs” arrived at the compound. Interviews with Pakistani police and police interrogation reports chronicle what happened next in the compound.

The newcomers had a video camera, something wrapped in a cloth, and a shopping bag with more shopping bags inside.

Within minutes, they started filming Pearl.

The older nephew, a trusted leader in KSM's operations, started asking Pearl questions in English, according to one version pieced together by Pakistani police. "The Arabs interviewed Daniel and gave no impression that he was going to be killed," a diplomatic cable later said, relaying what a Pakistani police official had told the U.S.

The men gave Pearl a script to read while the younger nephew filmed the scene. A guard who understood English told Karim that the script had Pearl telling the United States, "Stop the cruelty and violence against the Muslims."

Subdued, Pearl followed the script. He had a flat affect, not revealing any real emotion. He wasn't wearing his glasses. He looked like he had just a few days of stubble on his face, a sign that this taping may have happened early in his detention — before the arrest of Omar Sheikh, the mastermind. "Daniel felt confident that he might be released," the diplomatic cable reported. "One of the Arabs spoke with Daniel in a lan-

guage other than English or Arabic." A guard thought it might have been Hebrew. "Daniel seemed very comfortable with the person who spoke in that language," the cable said.

The group read the early afternoon prayer together. Rehman, the logistical chief, moved to leave, but first told the guards, "They have come to do something. Let them do it." Some time later, between the late afternoon prayer and the sunset prayer, Karim would tell a Pakistani police officer, Fayyaz Khan, that the men told him, "We have to slaughter him."

The men then tied Pearl's hands behind his back and wrapped a blindfold around his eyes so he couldn't see what was about to happen, guards later told police. They made Pearl lie on the floor on his left side. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed pulled two knives and a cleaver from the bundle of cloth that he'd carried into the room. He grabbed Pearl by his hair. Karim, the guard with five daughters, and another guard, Muhammad Muzzamil, held Pearl in place at his hips and legs. According to the scenario U.S. and Pakistani officials are considering, the younger nephew turned on the video camera, while the older nephew helped hold Pearl down. "Daniel was caught off guard from the relaxing interview

and was held as they killed him and he could offer no resistance,” the U.S. diplomatic cable said.

Without hesitation, KSM took a knife and slashed Pearl's neck. Muzzamil, a guard, said the “Arabs did ziba,” the Muslim ritual of slaughter. Muzzamil started to wretch. KSM yelled at him angrily and threw him out of the room. Another guard was told to go: Hussain, who later described the strangers as “Arab” to police. Only Karim and the spindly guard, Siraj ul-Haq, remained. KSM then returned his attention to Pearl. Ul-Haq was later quoted in his interrogation report saying, “Sheikh Khalid slaughtered him.”

But then there was a problem. It's not clear if the camera actually jammed, but the cameraman, who U.S. and Pakistani officials believe may have been the younger nephew, exclaimed that he hadn't been able to videotape the killing. KSM yelled at him. Chastened, he hurriedly fixed his camera. “The camera guy was startled,” KSM later told the FBI. “He didn't put the video in.” KSM reenacted the scene, “this time separating Danny's head from his body,” the guard Karim said later. To prove that Pearl was alive just before the beheading, KSM pressed on Pearl's chest to show blood still pumping

through his throat. It was a scene that would later turn the stomachs of even the most hardened Pakistani and U.S. investigators.

KSM then took Pearl's decapitated head by the hair and held it in the air for the camera. “Khalid Sheikh picked up his head and said something in Arabic” before cutting the body into pieces, Siraj ul-Haq later told cops. Dispassionately, KSM later told FBI agents that, indeed, he had chopped up Pearl's body. “We did it to get rid of the body,” he said.

Afterwards, the guards took the pieces of Pearl's body and stuffed them into the shopping bags. They walked around the plot, debating where to bury him and ordering the guards to dig a hole in a corner of the courtyard. Siraj ul-Haq took the pieces of Pearl's body out of the shopping bags to bury them. He also buried the bags.

Then, it was time to pray. The guards washed the bloody floor where Pearl had been killed, and the men touched the same ground with their foreheads in prostration. KSM and the other two men took the murder knife, the camera and the other weapons and left, leaving evidence behind of Pearl's bedding and other personal belongings.

Their job was done. ■

Losing the Race Against Time

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd, Kira Zalan, Karina Hurley, Bonnie Rollins, John Gregory, Erin Delmore, Clara Zabłudowsky, Jill Phaneuf and Doug Lane

FROM THE START, everyone knew that the hunt to find Daniel Pearl was a frantic race against time. They knew that it might not have a happy ending.

The kidnappers had quickly gone from an initial ransom note to a death threat. Their first note called him a CIA spy but then, learning he was Jewish, they declared he was not CIA but was working for the Israeli intelligence service Mossad. “Therefore,” they vowed, “we will execute him within 24 hours unless amreeka fulfils our demands.”

That was on January 30. Little did the FBI and Pakistani police know their efforts were futile. Three men



The lobby of the Karachi Sheraton where a courier handed an FBI agent the video documenting Daniel Pearl's murder. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

had suddenly arrived just days after he was kidnapped and killed him, recording Pearl's last words, “I am a Jew,” on a video.

There was an adrenaline rush

when Pakistani police and FBI agents caught a break just a few days later. That kicked off a succession of dramatic raids across Karachi that would lead to the kidnapping mastermind and the men who sent out the ransom notes, but not to Pearl and the men who by then were in charge of his fate.

The ransom notes were the tipoff. In sending those notes by e-mail, the kidnappers unintentionally gave investigators an electronic trail they could trace back to the sender's computer. On February 4, 2002, police traced the e-mails and photos of Pearl's kidnapping to a cyber café, Speedy Internet. The owner produced records showing that a young man, an unemployed computer programmer named Fahad Naseem, had sent the e-mails. The tipoff led police to him, and they grabbed his laptop.

For hours, at the U.S. Consulate, FBI computer forensics expert Ronald J. Wilczynski dug into the hard drive, which had been reformatted to hide its old contents. He looked in the directory for clues. Nothing. He did a search of Pearl's name. Nothing. He found a job inquiry letter Naseem had written, asserting, "I believe in personal ethics such as integrity, honesty, and account-

ability for actions taken." Then, the computer forensics expert took a word from one of the ransom notes: "Amreeka." Bingo. He got his first hit: an electronic trail of the ransom notes. He searched for photos and hit pay dirt: hostage photos of Pearl.

In custody, the young man — later described by one U.S. official as a "jihadi wannabe" — gave police a damning confession, describing his excitement at being part of the plot.

That wasn't all. Naseem fingered the kidnapping instigator as a man named Omar Sheikh, an all-around bad guy known in radical circles for kidnappings and ties to Pakistani militants. FBI notes from an interview with Naseem stated: "Omar advised that this was a big job and that Fahad was going to be a part of this big job by sending the e-mail."

Naseem said he didn't know Sheikh before an older cousin, Salman Saqib, 26, had introduced them on January 22 — as the plot was being organized just a day before Pearl was seized.

Naseem insisted he didn't know how to find Sheikh, but pointed police to where they could get his cousin Saqib. With his information, police moved quickly and nabbed Saqib while he was leaving his home



In this photo taken from a video, Daniel Pearl spoke about his family, his Jewish heritage, and the need to change American foreign policy. Credit: FBI

to make a phone call. After about two hours in police custody, he broke and gave police another name, one of Sheikh's couriers named Sheikh Mohammad Adil. It had been Adil's job to deliver envelopes — with a hostage photo of Pearl holding the local newspaper Dawn, and with a gun held to his head — to be sent out with the kidnap e-mail messages.

Saqib told the police where to find Adil. The team sped to the house, an hour away. Arriving about 4 a.m., as dawn arrived on the morning of February 5, 2002, they scaled the walls and entered the house, finding Adil and a brother. The police grabbed Adil, a hardcore jihadi who had fought in Afghanistan. He was also — to the shock of po-

lice — a cop. He served as a police constable in the Special Branch, a police intelligence unit, but he was a secret member of an Islamic militant group, Harkat ul-Mujahideen. He had gone to Afghanistan for a six-week training camp in February 2001, where he first met Sheikh.

All this information gave Pakistani and American investigators the first real traction on Pearl's abduction. They now had a good idea about how Pearl was kidnapped. But they had few clues to his whereabouts. They hammered away at the men, beating them amid the questioning, according to officials at the scene.

But what about a location for Pearl? The best Adil could offer: try the home of Sheikh's aunt, where the three men had met with Sheikh in the days before Pearl's kidnapping. He likely knew Pearl wasn't held there, but it would throw police off the trail.

In a SWAT operation at about 5 a.m., about 35 Pakistani police officers scaled the nine-foot wall around the aunt's bungalow, overpowering the night watchman. Breaking down doors, they entered the house, opening the front door for the rest of the team. Inside, the police rounded up Omar's aunt

and her young sons. She claimed to know nothing.

At that point, lead police investigator Mir Zubair Mahmood got a phone number for Sheikh from his aunt. Sheikh answered the call, Mahmood recalled. "I know who you are," he told him. "I know you kidnapped Daniel Pearl."

It was time to play hardball, and Mahmood was ready to use what leverage he had at hand. It is not uncommon in Pakistan to round up relatives of a wanted man and use family to pressure the suspect to surrender.

Mahmood put Sheikh's aunt on the phone. With police threatening to take her young sons into custody, she pled with her nephew to admit what he had done and turn himself in. Check, but not checkmate. Mahmood took the phone back, but all he heard on the other end was silence. Sheikh had hung up.

Mahmood had lost his man. At least for the moment.

But he wasn't one to give up, not when they were so close. Police surrounded the homes of several different wings of Sheikh's family, from his ancestral village of Nankana Sahib in the province of Punjab to his wife's home in Lahore.

On the morning of February 5,

2002, after the raids, Mahmood went to the U.S. Consulate to brief John Bauman, the U.S. consul general in Karachi. He had news. The prime suspect was Omar Sheikh. The police told him they had Sheikh's aunt and a child in custody, leverage to get their prime suspect to surrender.

Bauman knew about the beatings. The Pakistani police, Bauman recalled later, were "caught up in the adrenaline of having kicked down some doors and gotten information from people in the Pakistani fashion." Pakistani police, he said, were "obsessed with getting a good outcome." The embassy's chief security officer, Randall Bennett, "thought it was kind of cool that he got to go along" with the police on their raids, Bauman recalled, and that it had been a night of "kicking down doors, grabbing someone, scaring them to death." Because of the urgency of the matter, investigators "don't stop and say, 'Is this the right move at this stage?'" Bauman said.

That morning, after meeting with Mahmood, a person familiar with the scene said, Bauman walked into Bennett's office where he saw on the desk a bamboo stick of about one-and-a-half feet long, bro-

ken in two. Bauman knew the drill. Beating someone with a bamboo stick inflicts pain but doesn't leave marks.

"What's that?" Bauman asked, wanting to confirm his suspicions.

"The answer to a question," Bennett responded.

The name of the suspect, Omar Sheikh, was new to Bauman. Back in his office, he did a Google search and read details of how the passengers on a hijacked 1999 Indian Airlines flight had been traded for three convicted Pakistani militants in India — Omar Sheikh and two other militants.

Bauman ran down the hall to Bennett waving the printouts. To his surprise, an FBI agent in the office exclaimed, "This is the guy we came to pick up!" Indeed, Sheikh was the man that the U.S. ambassador had repeatedly asked to have extradited to the United States. Bauman, the consul general, didn't know about this pick-up effort.

Until then, no one had thought of the one Pakistani that America already wanted for kidnapping an American.

That evening, FBI agent Ron Duce updated his colleagues on the night's raids during the daily call to the FBI command center. Duce

detailed how the office of the lead Pakistani investigator, Mir Zubair Mahmood, had giant hooks hanging from a ceiling of about 30 feet high. The night before, police tied a suspect to the hook, hoisted him a little bit and “beat the shit out of him” with a bamboo stick, Duce explained.

Kevin Donovan, an FBI supervisor in New Jersey, screamed: “Whoever goes over there, if you see or you know someone’s about to get beat, you leave!”

That same day, February 5, Omar Sheikh’s father and an uncle, who was a judge, met him at a mosque, and he reportedly assured them that he wasn’t involved. Still, they said later in court, he agreed to go with them to surrender to local authorities.

However, it wasn’t until a week later, on February 12, that U.S. officials learned police had Omar Sheikh in custody. And



Investigating Daniel Pearl’s murder was dangerous for Pakistani police officers such as Fayyaz Khan, who was struck by a parcel bomb in Karachi. Credit: Pakistani police

the circumstances of his arrest would become one of the lingering questions as he faced trial. ■

Catching the Mastermind

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd,
Kira Zalan, Afgan Niftiyev, Jill Phaneuf, Doug Lane,
Clara Zabłudowsky and J.P. Finlay

KIDNAPPING plotter Omar Sheikh had scurried out of town after turning over Daniel Pearl to local militant leaders in Karachi. Sheikh later told police that Asif Ramzi, an operational leader, called him and told him that Pearl had been killed. Sheikh recalled that he immediately phoned Amjad Farooqi, his contact to the local militant leaders, and asked him to get the details. Farooqi met

Sheikh in Lahore and confirmed that Pearl was dead. This account has Pearl dead before Sheikh was arrested. It isn't clear how Sheikh re-



Omar Sheikh surrendered on February 5, 2002, and was later charged as the mastermind behind the Pearl kidnapping. In this grainy video still shot by an FBI agent, he is shown in police custody in Karachi. Credit: Tarine Fairman

sponded, but when he was arrested he claimed to police that Pearl was still alive.

Sheikh had experience as a kid-

napper, nabbing tourists in New Delhi in 1994, but, as far as is known, wasn't a killer. Was his intention to carry through on the Pearl death threat, or was he playing to see what he could get? After all, he was sprung from jail in India by militants who had demanded and won his freedom in return for passengers aboard a hijacked Indian passenger flight. By his account, he was going to free the American he kidnapped in India, Bela Nuss. Police investigators familiar with Sheikh see him as a man who approached his crime as a tactical strategist, like the chess champion that he was as a British schoolboy, rather than as a cold-blooded killer. Even before the Pearl kidnapping, he had evaded U.S. efforts to extradite him for the Delhi kidnapping.

On March 10, 2002, about four weeks after ISI officials handed Sheikh over to police custody, FBI agent Tarine "Ty" Fairman sat across from Sheikh, plying him and the Pakistani intelligence and police officials in the room with tea and cookies. Fairman had never been in Pakistan before, but he did know how to build rapport. Sheikh told the agent his life story. "Omar stated that the first time he did a kidnapping he had sort of a pain of

conscience. The second time he did a kidnapping it was not so bad, and the third time it got easier and so on," according to the FBI interview report, called a "302."

About the practice of beheadings, Sheikh said, "I think it strikes fear in the enemy."

But, about Pearl's murder, he said, "My intention was to kidnap him, not kill him," and that "I've got nothing against Jews per se, it's the Zionist policies." He added: "I would target a Zionist, not a Jew. ... I knew that Daniel Pearl was a Jew before the second e-mail; I read it in the newspapers. ... When I said to release him, referring to Daniel Pearl, they already knew he was a Jew." (That is questionable: The article identifying Pearl as Jewish was published on January 30, 2001, the day after Sheikh had told his lieutenants to edit his second ransom note to claim that Pearl was an agent for Israel's Mossad.)

But he said Pearl's captors had to hold him once the local newspapers revealed he was Jewish. "Those people couldn't release him once they found out he was a Jew," he said.

Sheikh said another militant had told him Pearl was a "reporter who wished to infiltrate a number of Jihadi organizations, and interview

their leaders,” which was an indicator for him that he was working for the CIA.

Sheikh told the FBI agent, “I feel bad, I tricked him, Pearl, into coming there and he was killed.” Later in the interview, he said, “Daniel Pearl would not be dead if I didn’t do what I did.” He acknowledged, “I feel sorry for Pearl’s wife,” but added, “What should I do? Give food packets to Mrs. Pearl, like the Americans dropped food packets to the Afghan people?”

It would be four months before Pakistani police would get a clue about what happened inside the secret compound outside Karachi. That break came when Fazal Karim, a guard, was picked up in connection with the bombing of the Sheraton Karachi Hotel on May 8. By then, the trail to the killers had long gone cold.

For the moment, the cops would only be left with clues to the mastermind, Omar Sheikh, and his low-level operatives — men who never witnessed Pearl’s captivity or murder.

There is nothing that indicates that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged 9/11 mastermind who later confessed to killing Pearl, was in on the original kidnapping plan so, for him, Pearl’s murder may have been

a crime of opportunity. Pearl’s poking around, looking for Reid’s facilitator, might have raised alarms that Pearl would stumble across family business and ultimately learn that KSM’s nephew, Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, was actually Reid’s facilitator.

While KSM slipped back into Al Qaeda’s furtive network in Pakistan, a manhunt was closing in on Omar Sheikh.

As it turned out, February 4, 2002, was a critical day for the investigation — and would become a very problematic one. Across the bustling city of more than 12 million, police SWAT teams fanned out to nab Sheikh’s kidnapping associates one by one.

There was mounting pressure on Pakistani law enforcement officials to find the abducted American journalist before it was too late. Pearl had gone missing on January 23, 2002, and now, twelve days later, his friends, family, and colleagues continued to hold out hope for his safe return despite threatening ransom notes.

Police surrounded the homes of members of Sheikh’s extended family, demanding to know Sheikh’s whereabouts and threatening to detain those related to him.

As the pressure on his family in-



Omar Sheikh's uncle, Rauf Sheikh, is a judge at the Lahore High Court in Lahore, Pakistan. Omar Sheikh came from a well-off family with connections to the government. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

tensified, Sheikh's father and uncle convinced him to surrender.

Unlike Omar, these were respectable men. Saeed Ahmed Sheikh, the father, had obtained British citizenship in 1986. As a royal chartered accountant he had enjoyed a prosperous life in London, sending his other children to Oxford and Cambridge. The uncle, Rauf Sheikh, was no less

distinguished. He was a judge in Punjab province, which includes the historic city of Lahore.

The police strategy worked. Judge Sheikh later testified in court that he called a senior police official in Lahore, asking the authorities to go easy on the family and that he would produce his fugitive nephew. That afternoon, February 5, the fa-

ther and uncle told the court, they went to a mosque in a neighborhood called Gulberg in the heart of Lahore. Shortly before early afternoon prayers, the younger Sheikh arrived, the father and uncle later said. They said he assured them that he wasn't involved.

To piece together what happened next requires picking through a near-impenetrable morass of facts and rumors. It has provided fodder for conspiracy theories which, appropriately enough, revolve around whatever connections Omar Sheikh may have had with Pakistan's powerful, secretive intelligence service, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), Pakistan's version of the CIA.

What retired Gen. Ehsanul Haq, the ISI chief at the time, acknowledged in an interview with the Pearl Project is that on February 5, Omar Sheikh gave himself up to Ejaz Shah, the home secretary for the province of Punjab, a retired army brigadier and close ally of then-Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf. Sheikh told the FBI he was in Shah's care for the seven days. Shah had worked as an intelligence officer for the ISI. He also came from the same ancestral village, Nankana Sahib, as Omar Sheikh's mother. Later, in court testimony, Omar Sheikh's uncle and

father made no mention of the ISI, simply stating that they handed the young man over to Lahore police, asking the police not to beat him. Whether Sheikh sought refuge in Shah's custody because there was a family connection and would, therefore, provide a soft landing into the legal system, or whether it was because Sheikh had a long history with the ISI is still unresolved.

This interlude has raised numerous questions. Was the ISI protecting Sheikh? Was it holding him to make sure he wouldn't spill any of its secrets? Was Omar Sheikh hoping the intelligence service — perhaps the most powerful institution in Pakistan — would provide him some protection? Most provocatively, were elements in the ISI, which have backed the Taliban and Pakistan militant groups, knowledgeable about Omar Sheikh's kidnapping activities? Even worse, was the ISI involved? Haq denied any ISI involvement in the kidnapping.

On such questions, American officials found their Pakistani allies distinctly unhelpful. If there was a limit to Pakistani cooperation, the subject of the ISI was it. In an interview, Chris Reimann, the FBI's legal attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad during the Pearl investi-

gation, confirmed his understanding that Sheikh was held in ISI custody for at least five days. Reimann said, “During the Pearl investigation, I was upset when I found out, when it became public knowledge that Omar had been secretly kept in ISI custody. I contacted my Pakistani intel sources, but no one would tell me what happened or what Omar said.” Reimann said that he had assumed that Ejaz Shah, the former ISI officer, was a relative of Sheikh’s.

Former FBI case agent Jay Kanetkar, who oversaw the Pearl investigation from the FBI’s Newark, New Jersey, office, said that he had always wondered what happened during the time Sheikh spent in ISI custody. “That has never been resolved,” he said. “It will probably never be resolved.”

After the “seven lost days,” on February 12, Sheikh was handed over to the Pakistani police in Lahore. It would be another month until he was formally charged by the Pakistanis — by then not only with the kidnapping but also the murder of Pearl, whose barbaric slaughter had been captured on video.

On February 21, 2002, FBI special agent John Mulligan fielded an unexpected phone call at the U.S. Consulate. It was an agent-friend



Chris Reimann was the FBI’s legal attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad during the Pearl investigation. Credit: Claire Callagy

from the FBI’s New York office. He had a lead, Mulligan recalled. A “source” had a “source” who said that he had a video that documented Pearl’s murder, Mulligan said. “We had about 20 minutes from when I got the call that he was willing to make the deal,” Mulligan said. “All I knew was, ‘Hey, I gotta get this.’ If he says he’s only going to give it to somebody from NBC News, then that’s who I’m gonna be.”

That evening, Khalid Choudhary, a man standing a shade over six-feet

tall, crossed the lobby of the Karachi Sheraton to meet Mulligan. Ironically, both introduced themselves as journalists. Choudhary called himself “Abdul Khalique” from Online International News Network, Mulligan recalled. He and a second FBI agent posed as reporters for NBC News. In the man’s hand: a compact digital video camera.

Choudhary had gotten the video from a young man, Fazal Karim, who had been a guard during Pearl’s captivity. Karim later told police his militant boss had told him to publish Pearl’s murder video, and he had asked a friend, Shaikh Shahid, a militant whom he believed was raising funds for the Taliban in Karachi, for help in selling the murder video. Shahid introduced Karim to Choudhary, who told him he had a buyer. He didn’t tell him it was the FBI.

“Probably the most nervous I’ve ever been in my career was when we got the tape,” Mulligan recalled. He stood face to face with the man for the exchange. The price to be paid to Online International News Network if the tape proved to be authentic: \$200,000.

At 9:40 p.m. Karachi time, Mulligan got custody of the tape.

Choudhary walked away from the meeting at the Sheraton, sup-

posedly under surveillance by Pakistani police. According to one FBI official, the plan was for Choudhary to return later to collect his payment when the tape’s authenticity had been verified; the plan was to give him a bag packed with money and a secret tracking device to lead investigators to other participants in the plot. However, after word of the tape leaked out, the kidnappers didn’t answer their phones.

U.S. documents identified Choudhary as a U.S. citizen with an extensive drug-related criminal record in New York City going back to 1992. The Pearl Project confirmed his identity with a brother of Choudhary, who lives in Orlando, Florida. In Karachi, Pakistani police interviewed Choudhary, as did FBI agents, but former FBI agent Tarine “Ty” Fairman called Choudhary “one of those no-touch people.” Fairman last saw Choudhary leaving the U.S. Consulate in Karachi with a Pakistani police escort.

During the time between when Sheikh was taken into police custody in February and the trial began in April, Sheikh was frequently interrogated. At times he refused to eat or speak. An FBI agent documented that Pakistani police, known for harsh interrogation techniques, put

him through what was euphemistically called “softening” while interviewing him.

In part for these reasons, before a trial in Pakistan began, U.S. officials decided not to press for extradition of Sheikh to face a subsequent American trial for the kidnapping. “It would be a nightmare of a case,” according to Kanetkar, the FBI case agent. And he said that “the U.S. did not want to do anything that would cause the Pakistani government” to release or retry Omar Sheikh.

There were other priorities, too. Pearl was dead, the U.S. was still hunting Osama bin Laden, and it hadn’t caught the operational chief for 9/11. Finally, in March, the U.S. got a break, not in the Pearl case, but in the 9/11 case.

In the city of Faisalabad in the province of Punjab, in a bloody nighttime raid, Pakistani and U.S. forces nabbed an Al Qaeda operational man, Abu Zubaydah, out of a safe house he had set up for characters such as “dirty bomber” Jose Padilla, “shoe bomber” Richard Reid, and French Muslim operative Zacarias Moussaoui, according to the U.S. Defense Department. An FBI agent put a photo in front of him that Frank Pellegrino, an FBI agent tracking KSM for years, had given

him. “That’s Mukhtar,” and he oversaw the operational details for 9/11, Zubaydah said, according to FBI agents familiar with the case.

U.S. officials said that Padilla said that, after meeting Zubaydah in Faisalabad, he met Al Qaeda operatives KSM, Ramzi bin Al Shibh, and KSM’s younger nephew, Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, at a safehouse in Karachi in March to discuss “a nuclear/dirty bomb operation.” It didn’t take sophisticated data analysis to see that, while there wasn’t a direct line to be drawn from Pearl’s case to those of some of the deadliest terror plots to date, there were certainly overlapping circles. KSM and his nephew, as well as Richard Reid, all intersected with the Pearl case.

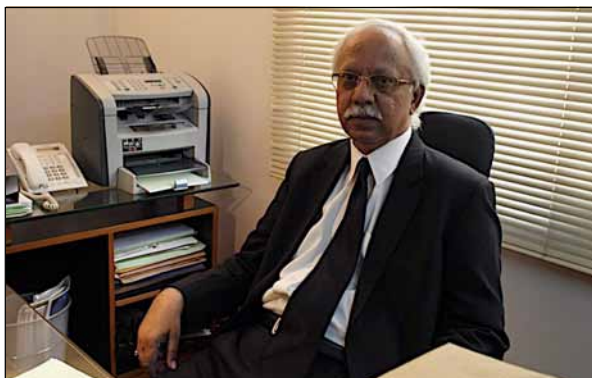
With these pressures, Pakistan’s leader, President Pervez Musharraf, wasn’t inclined to send Sheikh for an American trial. A powerful though divisive political figure at home, Musharraf wanted to show Washington that he was fully an ally in the terrorism fight. On March 28, a month before the trial got underway, The Washington Post quoted U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Wendy Chamberlin as saying that Musharraf had unequivocal words on the subject of extraditing Omar Sheikh: “I’d rather hang him myself.” ■

Rushing to Judgment

By Barbara Feinman Todd, Asra Q. Nomani,
Rochelle S. Hall, Katherine Major, and Rachel Claytor

TWO MONTHS after Omar Sheikh and his cohorts were apprehended, the Pakistani judicial system was putting into place all the pieces necessary to try the four men in a court of law. But what followed turned out to be less about meting out justice and more about putting a quick end to this embarrassing incident.

The trial was closed to the public. Through interviews with those in attendance as well as a close examination of the voluminous 2,400 pages of court records chronicling the case, the Pearl Project has stitched together much of what



Raja Qureshi prosecuted Omar Sheikh, Fahad Naseem, Salman Saqib, and Sheikh Mohammad Adij for their roles in Daniel Pearl's kidnapping and murder. Some have raised questions about the quality of the evidence. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

unfolded in the three-month trial, offering a rare window into the Pakistani judicial system and its tenuous relationship with the ideal of the rule of law.



Clockwise from top left: Fahad Naseem, Salman Saqib, Sheikh Mohammad Adij, and Omar Sheikh. All four were convicted for the Pearl murder.

Credit: Pakistani Police

Sheikh, who arranged Pearl's abduction, was charged with kidnapping and murder — still, the actual killers were still at large in Pakistan. Undaunted, Pakistan's unique form of justice rolled forward.

As the trial, which began on April 22, 2002, progressed through two changes of presiding judges

and a move from Karachi to Hyderabad, a smaller city 100 miles to the northeast, prosecutor Raja Qureshi successfully fought attempts by defense attorneys to open the trial to the public. This rocky beginning was only a harbinger of what was to come: a carnival atmosphere that was defined by its frequent delays

and theatrical disruptions.

The Hyderabad courtroom itself was stifling hot, a single fan creaking overhead. The defendants were in cages to one side of the courtroom and they spent much of their time leering and shouting threats and obscenities at the prosecution and the prosecution's witnesses.

On May 8, Sheikh's co-defendants — Fahad Naseem, Salman Saqib, and Mohammad Sheikh Adil, represented by their attorney Rai Bashir Ahmad — made vague threats to “boycott” the trial unless it was opened to the public. In his filing, Bashir argued that the world would be watching to “see whether the trial of the case was being conducted impartially without any fear and favor.”

Anti-Terrorism Court Judge Syed Ali Ashraf Shah, citing the security concerns that had caused the trial to be moved from Karachi to the more secure Hyderabad Prison, denied the defense motion. An exception was made for Omar Sheikh's father, who was given permission by the provincial government to attend the trial.

The witnesses for the prosecution consisted of 23 people, while the defense called only two.

Much of the trial's outcome piv-

oted on two points: (1) whether or not Sheikh was at the restaurant where Pearl was last seen in public and (2) significant inconsistencies in the February timeline concerning when Sheikh was taken into police custody.

The Pearl Project's examination of Pakistani police files and the court record found major discrepancies between them. What suspects and witnesses told investigators was at direct odds with what police and others testified in court. Indeed, Pakistan police officials acknowledged in interviews that prosecutors and police fixed the trial by fabricating a story to place Sheikh at Pearl's abduction and inducing witnesses to lie to corroborate the fabrication on these points.

The prosecutor called his first witness: Nasir Abbas, the 36-year-old cab driver who had dropped Pearl off at the Village Restaurant. He had initially told police that he hadn't seen anyone greet the journalist when he dropped him off. Now, he had something different to say. It was critical to the prosecution strategy.

As he pulled up at the Village Restaurant, Abbas testified, a white Toyota Corolla drove up with four men inside and parked in front

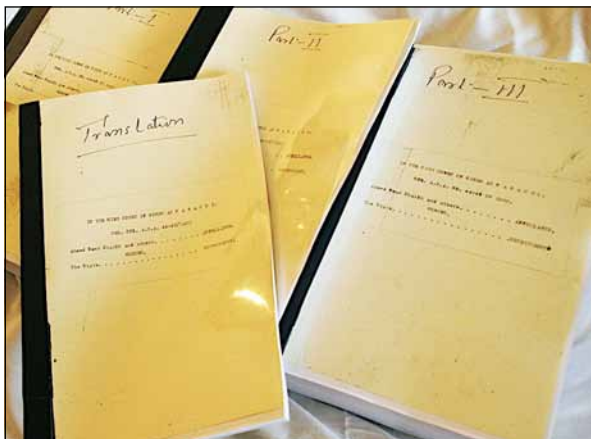
of his taxi. A man stepped out of the car and shook hands with Pearl, greeting him in English. The cab driver, who said he didn't speak English, said he couldn't understand what was said. Pearl opened the door to the Corolla, got inside, and the Corolla drove off.

That was a surprise to Pearl's wife Mariane and friend Asra Nomani. The day after Pearl disappeared, the driver had given them

a different account, saying that he hadn't seen Pearl shake anyone's hand or even greet anyone in any way. Nor had he bothered to mention the Toyota Corolla.

In court, Abbas testified that on February 5, police charged him as a suspect and had him lead them to the place where Pearl had been dropped off. The taxi driver, who said he couldn't read Urdu, said police told him to sign papers they handed him, before freeing him.

Abbas said police later took him to a Karachi police station to try to identify the men who stood by



A series of documents and translations relating to Omar Sheikh's 2002 trial for Pearl's murder.

Credit: Derek Henry Flood

the Corolla. In a lineup, he identified Sheikh and the three co-defendants. Ten minutes later, he said, the lineup changed, and he again picked out Sheikh and his three co-defendants.

The next day, Abbas said, he received notice to appear before a judge on March 6. There, he was asked whether he could identify the man who had shaken hands with Pearl at the Village Restaurant. Confidently, he said, he answered, "Yes." Abbas returned, he said, on March 9 to give police a statement.

During cross-examination, Ab-

bas fervently denied ever having been cajoled by police to change his testimony. But according to two Pakistani police officials and a U.S. official familiar with the case, the police and prosecution engineered the testimony to give the prosecution an eyewitness who placed Sheikh with Pearl.

In Karachi, U.S. Consul General John Bauman worried about the taxi driver's testimony. Looking back, Bauman said in an interview with the Pearl Project that he has no doubts that Sheikh and his co-defendants "were guilty of dreaming up the idea of kidnapping Danny." But he said he was troubled that the testimony of the taxi driver contradicted the statement of an alleged guard, Fazal Karim, who had suddenly emerged in the midst of the trial, leading police to the site of Pearl's remains.

In a wide dragnet against militants, trying to find suspects in a May 2002 suicide bombing at the Karachi Sheraton, police caught another alleged guard in the Pearl case, Mazharul Hassan, with copies of the murder video, and he led police to Karim, according to a police official. Karim told police that Pearl had been picked up not in a white Corolla but in a red Suzuki Alto car.

"I worried [that] the contradiction between Fazal Karim and what the taxi driver said would result in a mistrial," Bauman said. "I suggested to the security higher ups to get the taxi driver to recant his testimony. ... I assumed that pressure was put on the driver to make up the story." At the time, Bauman sent his bosses in Washington a cable, "Pearl Case: The White Toyota-Red Suzuki Dilemma."

What Bauman discovered happening behind the scenes was even more disturbing. Bauman wrote his bosses that Pakistani officials told him that they considered an option to "lock up the suspect and wait to 'discover' the site until after the trial of Sheikh Umer is successfully concluded," but the news was leaked to the local Associated Press reporter. In a heated meeting at the Sindh home secretary's office, Bauman and the consulate regional security officer, Randall Bennett, met secretly with the home secretary, the police chief, the prosecutor, and the ISI chief for Karachi, along with others. Bauman argued that the government should restart the trial to include all of the evidence. He wrote in the cable, "As noted in previous trial reports, in its zeal to convict Sheikh Umer despite

meager physical evidence and no eyewitnesses, the prosecution apparently induced at least two witnesses to perjure themselves.”

But, at the secret meeting, the prosecutor argued that if they restarted the trial “the defense would have a tremendous advantage,” Bauman wrote in his cable, quoting the prosecutor saying, “They have already seen my game plan.” The prosecutor prevailed. Bauman told his higher-ups in Washington that the Pakistani government officials chose to keep the witness “secret.”

“Paradoxically, the unexpected discovery of Daniel Pearl’s remains could sabotage the prosecution’s case against Sheikh Umar Saeed and his co-defendants,” Bauman wrote. “This attempt to try the kidnappers first and then try the killers could easily go awry.”

The guard’s testimony never made it to court.

Besides the taxi driver’s flawed story, the other critical hole in the prosecution’s case comes from the major discrepancies in the timeline and circumstances of Sheikh’s detention.

The official version of how the Karachi police found and arrested the four defendants was told by the last of the prosecution’s 23 witness-

es, Investigation Officer Hameedullah Memon, who testified for five days, longer than any other witness.

According to Memon, the police traced the e-mails and photos announcing Pearl’s kidnapping and ransom request to Speedy Internet, a Karachi Internet café owned by a Pakistani, Sheikh Naeem. Naeem produced records which pointed to defendant Fahad Naseem. According to Memon, on February 11 at 1:30 a.m., Naeem led police to Naseem’s house. Memon rang Naseem’s doorbell and when the defendant answered, Naeem identified him. The police immediately arrested Naseem, and Memon said they found, sitting on a table in plain view, a laptop computer and hard drive, a scanner, and the two e-mails announcing Pearl’s kidnapping, in English and Urdu.

From there, they were led by Naseem to his older cousin Saqib, who led police to Adil, a renegade cop who was part of the conspiracy. And Adil, in turn, the story went, led them to Sheikh, who was waiting under the “Lipton Tea sign” at the Karachi Airport.

The key points that Memon — and the prosecution — were trying to make was that the raids took place on February 11, not on Febru-

ary 4, and that Omar Sheikh was in Karachi. There was no basis, however, for the idea that Sheikh was picked up, loitering at the Karachi airport.

It made for a tidy story but the audacious claim about the dates was contradicted both by tangible evidence, the statements of police officials in February, and the alternative logistics set out by Sheikh's father and uncle.

On February 5, 2002, Omar Sheikh's father, Saeed Ahmed Sheikh, said he returned to his home in the city of Lahore from the mosque after the pre-dawn prayer when he learned that police were surrounding various relatives' homes in pursuit of his son. The elder Sheikh testified in court that he and his wife's brother, Rauf Sheikh, a provincial judge, decided they had to find Omar and convince him to surrender. Judge Sheikh testified he "handed over" his nephew later that day to a Lahore police investigator.

On February 12, 2002, at about 9 p.m., Sheikh's father testified, he was watching PTV, the government-run television broadcaster, which reported that police had arrested his son in Lahore and handed him over to the Sindh provincial police.

He said he videotaped the newscast and he had that to offer as evidence to support his testimony.

This timeline discrepancy regarding when Sheikh was taken into police custody is particularly relevant not just because the evidence contradicts the police's version, but because it speaks to that "lost seven days" when Sheikh was in the custody of Pakistan's intelligence service, the ISI — an event still shrouded in mystery.

Bauman, U.S. Consul General in Karachi during Pearl's kidnapping, referred to the missing days in a May 22, 2002, e-mail to Pearl family members and Wall Street Journal reporters. In the e-mail, Bauman noted the testimony of a prosecution witness, Zaheer Ahmed, a local carpet-maker: "Zaheer claimed that the raids took place on the night of February 11-12, whereas they actually took place on February 4-5. This is an obvious attempt to gloss over the week of February 5-12 when [Omar Sheikh] claims he was in ISI custody."

In addition to the timelines for the defendants' arrests, other key evidence was shown to be unreliable.

The prosecution's handwriting expert, Ghulam Akbar, testified

that the original handwritten texts of what became the ransom e-mails sent by the kidnappers matched the handwriting samples given by the defendants. Under cross-examination, however, Akbar admitted that he had no training or degrees in handwriting analysis and that “there are persons who can write the same in similar handwriting.”

More damaging to the case against Sheikh was police investigator Memon’s admission that the recorded serial number of the laptop seized by police did not match the serial number of the laptop examined by FBI agent Ronald J. Wilczynski.

Wilczynski, a computer forensics expert, was called by the prosecution and flew to Pakistan to testify. Though suffering from kidney stones, his return home was delayed because he ended up having to return to court a second day, a week later, due to the defense’s objection that they had not been told



Defense attorney Khawaja Naveed Ahmed represented Sheikh Mohammad Adil, Fahad Naseem and Salman Saqib in the 2002 trial for Pearl’s murder. Credit: Derek Henry Flood

that Wilczynski was going to testify. On the stand for just 10 minutes, he testified that on February 4, he had been given a laptop computer. That date matches the date of the raids, not the date a week later that Pakistani police cited as the day they seized the laptop at the younger cousin Naseem’s house during his arrest.

Wilczynski also testified that he had found vital information in the computer’s unallocated space, even though it had been reformatted. The FBI agent also found webpages

that showed browsing to news websites prior to the kidnapping and Naseem's résumé and cover letter to potential employers.

The defendants glared at the witnesses as they testified, Wilczynski later said. They made lewd and threatening gestures at the prosecutor, sometimes drawing a finger across the neck in a slashing gesture, another court observer said. The defense attorney, Rai Bashir Ahmad, played to sentiments inside militancy culture that demonized Westerners, insinuating ties with Jews, a target of mistrust among many in the militancy. "Are you a Jew!?" the defense attorney shouted at the FBI agent as he took the stand, Wilczynski recalled later. When Naseem's laptop was presented as evidence, wrapped in brown paper with a string around it, the elderly judge said, "That's not a computer." After a moment of commotion, the judge agreed it was a computer and admitted it as evidence.

Though called by the prosecution, Wilczynski ended up strengthening a part of the defense's case. He testified that he had found the ransom note on the laptop that read, "We have interrogated mr.D.Parl and we have come to the

conclusion that contrary to what we thought earlier he is not working for the cia. therefore we are releasing him unconditionally." It was the original note that Sheikh had written. It confirmed just slightly Omar Sheikh's claim that he wasn't part of a plan to murder Pearl.

Police couldn't assert a specific day when Pearl was murdered. There was no time stamp on the murder video, and, at that point, police didn't have many leads to the actual day the murder occurred. Sheikh said he wasn't in Karachi.

On July 15, 2002, the judge issued the verdict against Sheikh and his three co-defendants: guilty.

The judge found that all four had "committed murder of Daniel Pearl by slaughtering and caused the evidence of the dead body to disappear." He sentenced Sheikh to death and his co-defendants to life imprisonment.

In his 54-page decision, the judge essentially ignored the discrepancies between the police and defense timelines. For instance, he stated that although the FBI computer expert testified that he had received the laptop on February 4, 2002, "the examination logically could have been conducted by him" between February 11 and 15.

Nearby, AFP reporter Mazhar Abbas broke the story of the convictions, but, like other Pakistani journalists, he was privy to the secret of the witness, Fazal Karim, that police and prosecutors had decided to hide. “Omar was not there for the killing. That’s why they didn’t bring anyone else in that was involved in the killing — to not undermine Omar’s arrest,” Abbas told the Pearl Project.

Outside the jail, Bashir, the defense lawyer, told reporters he rejected the verdict, claiming that Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf had buckled to pressure from the U.S. to get a guilty verdict. He read a statement from Sheikh saying: “We shall see who will die first: either I or the authorities who have arranged the death sentence for me. The war between Islam and kafirs [non-Muslims] is going on and everybody should show whether he is in favour of Islam or in favour of kafirs.”

If a guilty verdict were the intent, prosecutors had certainly achieved it — and in the face of considerable contradictory evidence. While Sheikh orchestrated the plot to kidnap Pearl and his three co-defendants were guilty of aiding him, none were actually present for the

murder. The actual killers were still free in Pakistan. Indeed, missing in the court room — and unmentioned by either prosecution or defense — were the names of the three men who investigators now say murdered Daniel Pearl or the 20 other men allegedly involved in his abduction.

While the Pakistani judicial system had put a close to the Pearl case, Pakistani police continued to pick up the real perpetrators and keep the U.S. government in the loop — but U.S. officials were not following up the leads.

In late August 2002, U.S. officials reported back to Washington, D.C., that a Karachi police officer told them about the arrest of Muhammad Muzzamil, a guard in the Pearl captivity who had gotten nauseated as Pearl was about to be killed. He said he had “tied hands and legs of Daniel Pearl on instructions by Arabs,” a cable reported. The regional security officer, Randall Bennett, asked the Pakistani government if he could be present during police interviews. It appears he never got permission. ■

Letting Sleeping Dogs Lie

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd,
Kira Zalan, Rebecca Tapscott, Bonnie Rollins,
Karina Hurley and Dmitri Ivashchenko

ON THURSDAY, October 16, 2003, a warm and slightly overcast day in Washington, D.C., White House National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice called Daniel Pearl's widow, Mariane, with some startling information. It was their first conversation ever, and Mariane was caught off guard.

In a cool voice, Rice delivered blockbuster news that would tie the Pearl abduction-murder to the horrors of the 9/11 attacks that preceded it. "We have now established enough links and credible evidence to think that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was involved in your husband's murder," Rice said. KSM, as he was



Khalid Sheikh Mohammed has been held for years at Guatanamo Bay prison, where he admitted to killing Pearl. He has yet to be tried. Credit: Spc. Cody Black/U.S. Army

called, was the alleged mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks.

"What do you mean 'involved'?" Mariane Pearl asked. Since the earliest days of discovering that her husband had been murdered, she

had suspected Al Qaeda's involvement. She had never been satisfied with the July 2002 convictions of Omar Sheikh and three co-defendants as closing the case.

"We think he committed the actual murder," Rice responded.

Rice doled out her information selectively. She didn't tell Mariane Pearl how officials had reached that conclusion or what evidence they had to back it up. She did not offer any proof that KSM was the killer, nor identify his accomplices in the murder. Most significantly, Rice didn't let on to what was then one of the Bush administration's most closely-held secrets — that KSM was being held in a secret CIA prison and had been subjected to waterboarding and other hard-core interrogation techniques. Those facts would turn out to have major consequences. They both raised questions about the reliability of KSM's confession and created a major obstacle to ever trying him in a U.S. criminal court for Pearl's murder.

Rice made a similar call to The Wall Street Journal's managing editor Paul Steiger, who in turn called John Bussey, the paper's foreign editor, to discuss running a story. There was no question in their

minds that this was an important development in the investigation of the murder of their colleague. And Rice had not specifically requested that the conversation be considered off the record, that is, not usable for publication. The editors decided to run a story in the newspaper's Monday edition. Bussey passed the assignment to Steve LeVine, who had known Pearl and worked with him in Pakistan.

On Friday, the day after Rice called Mariane, Frederick Jones II, deputy press secretary at the National Security Council, called back after learning that The Wall Street Journal was preparing a news story. According to the widow, he expressed outrage. "We're angry that the Wall Street Journal is doing a story. We called The Wall Street Journal as Danny's employer," Jones told Mariane.

Jones later told the Pearl Project that he could not recall details about the phone call, but he said Rice would have made the call to Steiger assuming it would be off the record, not to be published, since the Pearl investigation was ongoing. The Wall Street Journal had spoken to U.S. officials during the investigation to find Pearl with those ground rules. Rice "would

have called Steiger as someone who had been involved in the story and [as] this gentleman's employer," Jones said. "We do a lot of things as humans and as people. Daniel Pearl was another American citizen that people cared about."

In response to the National Security Council's concerns, the editors agreed to cite Rice anonymously as a "government official" in the article. That gave Rice some deniability and made it harder for other reporters to advance the story, which might have led them in the direction of the CIA's secret activities. Renditions, secret prisons, and "black sites" weren't yet part of the post-9/11 lexicon. Journalists would only soon start writing about secret detentions.

Despite the certainty expressed by Rice, KSM's culpability was not a sure thing to everyone. His possible role had surfaced in a January 26, 2003, *Time* magazine story when reporters identified KSM as the man wielding the knife, citing Pakistani police interrogation of a guard, Fazal Karim. Still, could the confession of a top terrorist be believed or was he just eager to boost his own importance by claiming responsibility for a string of high-profile terrorist acts? Further, there was

the issue of whether a confession extracted from waterboarding was reliable. Experts say that someone subject to torture will say anything to make it stop.

FBI agent Michael Dick, one of the agents sent to Pakistan immediately after Pearl's abduction, still was looking for some confirmation in early 2004, some four months after the *Journal's* story on KSM. He knew that the alleged 9/11 mastermind was in secret custody. He wasn't privy to the interrogation tactics used against KSM.

Dick edited the Pearl murder video to create still photos of frames of the video that showed the hand of the masked killer. His idea was to see if the beefy right hand matched KSM's. He turned to a CIA officer assigned to the FBI as a liaison officer. Dick asked him: Could he send the still to his CIA colleagues holding KSM? The liaison officer agreed to the request. A response soon arrived: "The photo you sent me and the hand of our friend inside the cage seem identical to me."

The distinguishable feature: the bulging vein that ran across the murderer's hand. Vascular technology, or "vein-matching," is a forensics technology that has not been widely tested. It's popular among

some forensics experts, but is not as reliable as other biometrics techniques such as fingerprints. However, the CIA and FBI sometimes use this type of technology in order to identify suspects. By extracting the information of the vascular structure of a hand or finger and converting it into a mathematical quantity, this technology creates a template for each structure and then compares the template of a known individual to a suspect.

The FBI agent was ecstatic. This was informal confirmation, and now he wanted to go through channels to get official documentation to add to the evidence against KSM. He asked Jay Kanetkar, the FBI case agent on the Pearl case, to send a forensic scientist to KSM to confirm the match. Eager to get the evidence, Dick went to the acting chief in his unit, Ed Dickson. “Let sleeping dogs lie,” Dickson responded, according to people familiar with the conversation.

The agent protested. Dickson reiterated his point: “Don’t mess with the case.” The caution reflected two concerns: keeping distance from CIA activities and upsetting the Omar Sheikh convictions by bringing in a suspect who actually wielded the murder weapon. The

agent walked away, frustrated.

In 2006, in a nondescript building in the northern Virginia suburbs, outside Washington, D.C., retired Army Col. Robert Swann, a lead military prosecutor, sat at his computer and accessed a database with the interrogation reports, evidentiary files, and other information against Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and the other high value detainees.

Among the evidence Swann pulled up were two images. Col. Morris Davis, chief prosecutor for the Guantanamo Bay military commissions at the time, studied them quickly. One was a still of the killer’s hand, the one from the video. There was just one murder video that the FBI had received; but it had been edited for distribution on the Internet. The video in FBI custody has better resolution than the one circulated on the Internet.

The second image was a close up of KSM’s hand in the same position, photographed while he was in CIA custody. Davis had heard the story of how KSM was told to hold his hand in a specific pose — to replicate the video image — but wasn’t told why he had to hold it that way.

And, indeed, forensic experts had found that the hands matched precisely, down to the pattern

of the vein that crossed over the back of the hand. “Looking at the two photos, there was nothing that stood out to me to contradict that conclusion,” Davis, who has since left the military to become executive director of the Crimes of War Project, a non-profit group based in Washington, D.C., told the Pearl Project. “I have no reason to doubt that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed killed Daniel Pearl.”

By the summer of 2006, the Bush administration was in a quandary about how to pursue a 9/11 case against the high-value detainees, including KSM. In a July 2006 meeting, more than a dozen people gathered around a conference table at the U.S. Justice Department, not far from the room where the U.S. had held proceedings on Nazi war criminals. This time, Justice Department, CIA, and military lawyers gathered, including Davis, the military prosecutor.

The team believed KSM’s confession of the Pearl murder, Davis recalled. But it had a strategy for bundling the cases against five of the detainees, including KSM, for the 9/11 attacks. If KSM was charged with the Pearl case, too, it would unravel the prosecutorial strategy because the other four defendants

would say they weren’t involved in the Pearl case, and their cases should be separated from KSM’s case. Complicating matters, U.S. officials had initially gotten KSM’s murder confession during the controversial interrogation tactic of “waterboarding” — casting doubt that it could be used in court.

For the time being, then, the complete truth about Pearl would have to wait. Beyond KSM’s confession, the U.S. government has never revealed any corroborating evidence. After scores of interviews, the Pearl Project found that the best evidence U.S. officials have against KSM is the vein match.

On September 6, 2006, almost five years after the attacks on the World Trade Center, President Bush publicly acknowledged for the first time that the United States had secret prisons outside the country where “high value” detainees — mainly suspects in the “war on terror” — were held and interrogated. That month, “high value” detainees were transferred to the U.S. Defense Department’s prison at Guantanamo Bay. Among them: Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and his young nephew, Ali Abdul Aziz Ali. The news that KSM had been water-

boarded a total of 183 times would come out only later.

In early 2007, John Bauman, who had been U.S. consul general in Karachi at the time of Pearl's kidnapping, had an opportunity to talk firsthand to Rice — by then Secretary of State — about KSM's confession. He had moved to Berlin in late 2002 as minister-counselor for political affairs at the U.S. Embassy. On February 5, 2007, Bauman was assigned to greet Rice at the Berlin airport. During the 10-minute ride to her hotel, Bauman reminded her that his last assignment had been in Karachi during the Pearl episode. "Of course you know that KSM has admitted to this," she told him, apparently satisfied that the issue was settled.

The next month, the Pentagon made public KSM's confession.

On March 14, 2007, U.S. Navy Lt. Commander J.D. Gordon, a Pentagon spokesman, prepared to release the transcript of KSM's proceedings before a military tribunal four days earlier in Guantanamo Bay. During the course of that session, the Al Qaeda operational chief claimed responsibility for Pearl's murder, along with a lengthy list of other attacks and plots.

U.S. Attorney General Alberto

Gonzales called Pearl's parents to let them know they were about to release KSM's confession to the public. Ruth Pearl, the slain journalist's mother, remembered, "We spent most of the evening convincing him personally that publishing the statement will only serve KSM and will not be in the interest of the United States to give him that platform. He was convinced and stopped it, but at five in the morning they let us know that it was leaked to the media."

At the Pentagon, Gordon started redacting KSM's statements about Pearl's murder and released the redacted transcript. Across the Potomac River at the Justice Department, Gonzales also called Mariane Pearl to tell her the Defense Department was about to announce that KSM had confessed to killing her husband.

The next morning, the Defense Department released the full transcript of the hearing, including the confession redacted the night before: "I decapitated with my blessed right hand the head of the American Jew Daniel Pearl in the city of Karachi, Pakistan. For those who would like to confirm, there are pictures of me on the Internet holding his head."

He went on to say the killing was “not related” to Al Qaeda, but just to Pakistani “mujahedeen” groups. He said Pearl drew attention by seeking to track Richard Reid’s activities, and he repeated unfounded allegations that Pearl was working for the CIA and Israel’s Mossad.

In October 2007, at the Guantánamo Bay detention camp, KSM had visitors. One he knew: FBI agent Frank Pellegrino, who had pursued him since the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993. He had interviewed him earlier in the year about 9/11. With him was an FBI analyst and another agent, John Mulligan, who had jetted to Karachi in the days after Pearl’s kidnapping.

“No one’s happy with the resolution of the Daniel Pearl case,” said an FBI agent. “If he did it, we want him prosecuted.”

Pellegrino explained Mulligan was there to ask about the Pearl murder. First, the men took photos of KSM’s hands in various positions. “I know what you’re doing,” Mohammed said at one point, repeating what he had supposedly said in CIA custody.

What they were doing was very simple: They wanted their own confirmation that KSM’s hand matched that of the man who killed Pearl.

Mulligan left the interview convinced KSM was the murderer. Pellegrino wasn’t sure. It had been a year and two months between Pearl’s murder and KSM’s arrest. He could have learned details of the murder from other folks. But he had started the interview not believing it was possible. After the interview, he sat on the fence.

Back in the office, Pellegrino looked at the images of KSM’s hand and the killer’s hand. It was enough of a match that he couldn’t rule KSM out. In Pakistan, the news of KSM’s confession was music to the ears of Rai Bashir Ahmad, the grizzled defense attorney that Omar Sheikh had hired to defend him in the 2002 case that sentenced him to death for Pearl’s kidnapping and murder. Bashir said he would file a new appeal that rested on one new fact: Khalid Sheikh Mohammed’s confession. It would join a long list of appeals, citing errors including contradictions in the evidence introduced in trial. ■

Waking Sleeping Dogs

By Asra Q. Nomani, Barbara Feinman Todd, Katie Balestra,
Kira Zalan, Jessica Rettig and Amanda Silverman

THOUGH Daniel Pearl's remains have long been recovered and laid to rest on a hilltop in Los Angeles, many loose ends to this story persist. And there are many casualties in this sad story.

Omar Sheikh and his three associates were convicted in the summer of 2002 for Pearl's kidnapping and murder and sit in jail to this day; despite their conviction for Pearl's murder in Pakistani court, the evidence of their direct role remains unconvincing.

Attorneys for Sheikh and his three co-defendants have filed numerous appeals that have been postponed repeatedly, and people



Sheikh Mohammad Adil after his 2002 arrest for Pearl's murder. Credit: Tarine Fairman

familiar with the case told the Pearl Project that Sheikh, at least, will be freed at some point.

Rai Bashir Ahmad, defense attorney for the four men, told the Pearl Project, "I believe the case will be reversed on appeal, as soon as the

appeal shall be heard, because there is absolutely no concrete evidence against the accused.”

Al Qaeda mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who said he killed Pearl with his own hands, and one of his two nephews who may have assisted him are incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay; they await trial for their role in 9/11, but not for Pearl’s murder. The second nephew who may have been KSM’s other accomplice is thought

to be in custody somewhere, but his whereabouts cannot be confirmed. Another suspect, Faisal Bhatti, an alleged logistical operator in Karachi, is in jail in Pakistan for other charges, but not the Pearl case.

Five other suspects have since died, violently or under suspicious circumstances. And 14 others allegedly involved in various ways with the plot are free.

Members of both Pakistani and U.S. government agencies involved in the case — investigators, diplomats, spies — have mostly moved on.



Maqbool-ur-Rehman served as defense attorney for Faisal Bhatti and Attaur Rehman. Both were held as suspects but neither was formally charged.

Credit: Derek Henry Flood

After initially allowing the Pearl Project to interview certain FBI agents, such as the legal attaché in Islamabad during the Pearl case, Chris Reimann, and the deputy legal attaché, Jennifer Keenan, the FBI declined to comment on the findings of the investigation. An FBI spokesman said, “We are going to hold off on discussing this until the military commissions are over.”

On December 17, 2008, the Pearl Project filed a Freedom of Information lawsuit after our requests had been met with denials, responses

that no pertinent information could be found, or that we needed first to obtain privacy waivers from suspects such as “shoe bomber” Richard Reid. As the Pearl Project neared publication in January 2011, the government produced thousands of pages of documents but much had been redacted and what wasn’t consisted of media reports. Meanwhile, despite the Freedom of Information Act lawsuit filed by the Pearl Project, and the limited number of responsive documents that have been provided, the Obama administration continues to withhold thousands of documents that might shed significant light on this case.

Years after Pearl was killed, Karachi has turned into a safe haven for not only Pakistani militants but members of the Afghan Taliban. In February 2010, Pakistani intelligence officials touted the arrest of a Taliban leader, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, in Karachi. Members of the Punjabi Taliban have been linked to numerous suicide bomb attacks against mosques, police stations, and bazaars within Pakistan, as well as to the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Pearl’s friends, family, and colleagues have found different ways of honoring him in their collective

conviction to never forget, and to never leave the truth behind.

What follows is an accounting of the various individuals involved with the case, either as perpetrators, co-conspirators, peripheral players, or the bereaved.

The Convicted

Omar Sheikh, who marked his 37th birthday on December 23, 2010, was the mastermind of the Pearl kidnapping plot. Born in London to Pakistani parents, he had been arrested in India in 1994 on kidnapping charges. In July 2002 he was sentenced to death for Pearl’s kidnapping and murder and is currently in jail in Karachi, his conviction and sentence under appeal.

Sheikh Mohammad Adil assisted in the logistics of the kidnap planning and ransom photo delivery. A police constable of the Special Branch, a unit of the police associated with intelligence gathering, he was also a secret member of an Islamic militant group, Harkat ul-Mujahideen. On February 4, 2002, Adil was arrested. In July 2002, a Pakistani court sentenced him to life in prison for his role in Pearl’s kidnapping. His case is under appeal.

Salman Saqib assisted with scanning the photos of Pearl and sending out the ransom e-mails. On February 5, 2002, Pakistani police arrested Saqib and, in July 2002, a Pakistani court sentenced him to life in prison. His case is under appeal.

Fahad Naseem, a cousin of Salman Saqib and an unemployed computer programmer, assisted with scanning the photos of Pearl and disseminating the ransom e-mails. In custody since February 4, 2002, he was convicted of Pearl's kidnapping and sentenced to life in prison in July 2002. His case is under appeal.

The Dead

Saud Memon, the Pakistani businessman on whose land Pearl had been held, murdered, and buried, was reported missing on April 26, 2007, by the Defense of Human Rights, a Pakistani nonprofit group. His brother alleged that Memon had been picked up by the FBI while on a business trip to South Africa in 2003 and was detained at Guantanamo Bay for over two years before being returned to Pakistani authorities. A U.S. roster of prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay from

January 2002 through May 2006 did not include Memon's name. On April 27, 2007, Memon, barely alive, was found dumped near his home. Memon, then 44, had been reduced to a skeleton. A week later, he was brought before the Supreme Court of Pakistan, where a judge ordered that he be freed and taken to a hospital. He died there on May 18.

Amjad Farooqi died a violent death. According to Sheikh's interrogation report, Farooqi helped arrange the kidnapping. On September 26, 2004, he was killed in a two-hour shootout with Pakistani authorities. In October 2009, a group calling itself "the Amjad Farooqi group" attacked Pakistani military headquarters.

Asim Ghafoor was reportedly the deputy of Amjad Farooqi, with whom he helped plan the kidnapping, police say. Ghafoor was shot and killed in "an encounter" with police November 17, 2004, in the Sadeedabad neighborhood of Karachi, according to Pakistan media reports.

Mazharul Hassan was allegedly one of Pearl's guards. According to Pakistani police interrogation re-

ports, he worked for Attaur Rehman, a logistical strategist in the Pearl case. In May 2002, Pakistani police arrested Hassan during a raid of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants, according to media reports, and he had videos of the Pearl murder, which Rehman had instructed him to distribute. His arrest led to the arrest of alleged guard Fazal Karim, who led police to Pearl's remains. According to Pakistani media, he became a lawyer while in jail, trying to clear the names of alleged militants upon his release from prison, and was shot and killed in Karachi on April 15, 2009, by four unidentified men riding motorcycles.

Asif Ramzi was the emir, or leader, of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in Karachi, according to Pakistani police, and he met with Omar Sheikh and two others at the Agha Khan hospital in Karachi to finalize the kidnapping plot. He was killed December 19, 2003, in an explosion while making a bomb, police said. According to U.S. officials, Ramzi visited Pearl while he was being held.

The Detained and the Missing

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the Al Qaeda mastermind behind 9/11,

confessed under brutal interrogation to murdering Pearl. He also confessed later at a hearing in Guantanamo Bay. He is now incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay, awaiting trial for his role in the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks.

Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, also known as Ammar al-Baluchi, may have been present when Pearl was murdered, according to U.S. and Pakistani officials. He is a nephew of Al Qaeda mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. He married Aafia Siddiqui, a Pakistani who was sentenced in 2010 in U.S. court for attempting to kill two U.S. soldiers in an Afghanistan police station. Ali was arrested and charged for his role in the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, among other terrorist activities. Importantly, the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence accused him of being Richard Reid's facilitator in Karachi, Pakistan. He is now imprisoned at Guantanamo.

Musaad Aruchi, also known as Abdel Karim Yousef, may have been present when Pearl was murdered, according to U.S. and Pakistani officials. He is a nephew of Al Qaeda mastermind Khalid Sheikh

Mohammed, who told FBI agents that his nephew was a facilitator for 9/11. Aruchi was arrested June 12, 2004, in Karachi; his whereabouts are unknown, according to his family members in Karachi and a Human Rights Watch report, “List of Ghost Prisoners Possibly in CIA Custody.”

Faisal Bhatti, one of the logistical deputies, is in jail in Sindh province on charges unrelated to the Pearl case. In 2007, his mother submitted a petition before the High Court of Sindh in Karachi regarding the arrest, disappearance, and presumed detainment of her son. In the petition, she stated that her son had been missing since June 13, 2002.

The Free

Khalid Choudhary, a courier who allegedly delivered the murder video to an FBI agent in Karachi, is believed to be working in that city as a reporter under an alias for Online International News Network. Choudhary told investigators he had gotten the video from guard Fazal Karim. According to a brother, Choudhary told their mother that he didn’t know what was on the video when he delivered it.

Karim gives a different account and said Choudhary knew the contents.

Fazal Karim was allegedly one of the guards during Pearl’s captivity and a witness to the murder. Picked up by police in connection with a May 8, 2002, bombing of the Karachi Sheraton, Karim told Pakistani police where to find Pearl’s remains. He was never charged in connection with the Pearl case and is free.

Siraj ul-Haq, one of Pearl’s alleged guards, was released from jail. A Pakistani police officer tried to make him an informant, but didn’t have much luck. He was present on the day Pearl was murdered, according to police reports. He is currently free, police sources say.

Abdul Hayee, another alleged guard in the kidnapping, was arrested in the city of Multan in May 2003 for allegedly killing six Shia minority sect Muslims. He was acquitted and is living in the Pakistan province of Punjab, according to a police official. An expert in explosives and weapons, he has allegedly been a player in many terrorist-related incidents. According to the Pakistani police official, Hayee was

the “most wanted Lashkar-e-Jhangvi terrorist” who was involved in the planning of Pearl’s kidnapping.

Sajid Jabbar was allegedly designated by Omar Sheikh to meet Pearl at the Village Restaurant and take him to the compound where he would be held, according to Pakistani police files. He was arrested in February 2004 for a parcel bomb attack and acquitted one month later. According to a police source, Jabbar is currently free.

Muhammad Muzzamil, another guard, was allegedly present the day Pearl was murdered, witnessed the interview portion of the murder video, and then helped bind Pearl’s hands and legs, according to Pakistani police records. Before the actual murder, he was told to leave.

Mohammad Hashim Qadir was allegedly the militant facilitator who arranged the meeting between Pearl and Sheikh, who at the time was posing as “Bashir.” He was released from jail, according to a Pakistani police official, who said he was held for alleged ties to bombings.

Attaur Rehman allegedly organized the holding cell and led

kidnappers to the safehouse compound on a motorcycle. Rehman was unofficially in Pakistani custody from 2002 until 2010, according to his relatives who have tried to challenge his detention as illegal. Rehman was officially charged with weapons possession in 2007. According to a Pakistani police official, Rehman was released from jail in July 2010 and is believed to be in Karachi.

Mati-ur Rehman was involved in the planning of the kidnapping, according to a police source. He was arrested in August 2006, but released, according to Pakistani police, who have him on their most wanted list for alleged crimes that include running a terrorist training camp in Waziristan. According to police, he was also involved in attacks on Pakistani leaders Gen. Pervez Musharraf and Shaukat Aziz, as well as the 2002 bombing at the Sheraton in Karachi. He is allegedly making suicide vests that are being used against forces of the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan.

Mohammad Sohail was an associate of militant leaders Amjad Farooqi and Mati-ur Rehman. He was present at meetings related to

the Pearl kidnapping. He was sentenced to death in 2003 for his role in the 2002 Sheraton Karachi Hotel bombing that killed 11 French engineers. Upon appeal, Sohail was acquitted in 2009 and he now is free.

Malik Tassadaq Hussain, another alleged guard, took the photos of Pearl that were placed in the e-mail, U.S. officials say. Pakistani police told journalists in April 2004 that they arrested him, but he was never charged in the Pearl case. He was prosecuted for an attack on a police van. In April 2007, he was acquitted. According to Pakistani police officials, Hussain is free.

Mohammad Akbar Sattar was an English-speaking guard whom Pearl shoved in the bathroom when trying to escape, according to police reports. Sattar did not witness the murder. Sattar's father reportedly filed a petition for his release from prison in November 2003. According to a Pakistani police official, he is out of jail and running a rice business in Karachi and also involved in fundraising for Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.

Muhammad Rasheed was a taxi driver who transported Arab members of Al Qaeda around Karachi,

police officials said. He was present at meetings in which the logistics for Pearl's kidnapping were planned. He is free.

Shaikh Shahid was an associate of Fazal Karim, one of the guards allegedly holding Pearl. He helped Karim deliver the murder video to Khalid Choudhary. Booked on narcotics charges by authorities in the city of Jacobabad, Shahid was acquitted and released, according to Pakistani police.

U.S. and Pakistani Officials

Tarine "Ty" Fairman and **Jay Kanetkar**, FBI special agents who worked the Pearl case, have left the bureau. They both work today as security consultants.

John Mulligan, an FBI agent in the Newark office, who received the videotape documenting Pearl's murder, continues to work for the FBI.

Randall Bennett, the regional security officer at the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, served next in the same position in Baghdad. In June 2007, he jetted to Washington, D.C., where he attended a meeting of

FBI, Defense Department, CIA, and other government officials investigating the alleged involvement of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in Pearl's murder. He returned to Pakistan as regional security officer in Islamabad, and he is currently the regional security officer in Bangkok.

John Bauman, the consul general in Karachi during the Pearl murder, retired from the State Department after a distinguished career.

Mir Zubair Mahmood, the lead investigator in the Pearl case, quietly visited Cannes, France, in May 2007, for the premiere of the movie *A Mighty Heart*. Mahmood slipped into a car in which the Mumbai-based actor playing him, Irfan Khan, sat. He told a movie official that he faced a risk to his personal safety with release of the movie.

Ejaz Shah, the retired army brigadier to whom Omar Sheikh turned himself in, was named by President Musharraf as chief of the Intelligence Bureau, a domestic spy wing of the Interior Department. After returning from exile in October 2007, former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto accused Shah of complicity in a bomb attack on

her welcome parade, which killed bystanders. Shah never responded publicly to the charge and couldn't be reached for comment.

Fayyaz Khan is senior superintendent of police for the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Karachi. In 2002, he arrested Fazal Karim, the guard who led police to Pearl's remains. He has interviewed many of the suspects connected to the Pearl case. He was seriously injured in a parcel bomb blast sent to his office in 2002 by the militant organization, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. The CID office was the target of a suicide bomb attack in November 2010.

Dost Ali Baloch is senior superintendent of police for the Special Branch unit in Karachi. He was called to investigate Pearl's disappearance on January 24, 2002 and was one of the two lead detectives on the case, together with Mir Zubair Mahmood. He is currently in Karachi working for the police.

Jameel Yusuf was one of the last people to see Pearl alive. In 2002, he was chief of the Citizen-Police Liaison Committee, a group he formed in 1989 after a wave of kidnappings

hit Karachi. He helped with the effort to find Pearl. He is now in private business in Karachi.

The Pearl Family and Pearl Legacy

Mariane Pearl, Danny's widow, lives in Europe with their son, Adam. Mariane is a journalist, author, and activist. Adam will turn nine years old in 2011.

Judea and Ruth Pearl, Danny's parents, still live in Encino, California, where he and his two sisters were raised. The entire family is committed to exploring and understanding the root causes of Pearl's murder by promoting, through his example, "cross-cultural understanding through journalism, music and innovative communication," a goal they actively pursue through the Daniel Pearl Foundation.

During the Pearl Project, Judea Pearl wrote to an NBC producer who was doing a piece on the Pearl Project that the students' investigation offers "an effective deterrence against future harming of journalists. Terrorists should know that a journalist cannot be harmed with impunity and that, no matter how many years it takes, the perpetrators will be hunted down by the

journalistic community, exposed and brought to justice."

On May 17, 2010, eight years to the day that Pakistani police dug up the butchered remains of Pearl, President Barack Obama signed into law the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act, strengthening U.S. State Department reporting on attacks against the news media. The Pearl family stood at his side. "All around the world there are enormously courageous journalists and bloggers who, at great risk to themselves, are trying to shine a light on the critical issues that the people of their country face; who are the frontlines against tyranny and oppression," Obama said at the ceremony. "And obviously the loss of Daniel Pearl was one of those moments that captured the world's imagination because it reminded us of how valuable a free press is, and it reminded us that there are those who would go to any length in order to silence journalists around the world."

Meanwhile, despite the Freedom of Information Act lawsuit filed by the Pearl Project, the Obama administration hasn't opened the government's files on the Pearl case. ■

About This Project

THE PEARL PROJECT began in September 2007 as a journalism class at Georgetown University, taught by Asra Nomani, Daniel Pearl's colleague at The Wall Street Journal, and Barbara Feinman Todd, Georgetown University Journalism Director. With support from the Oklahoma City-based Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, Nomani and Feinman Todd ran a seminar over the course of two semesters in which students dug into the facts surrounding the murder of Pearl by militants in Pakistan during 2002.

Ultimately, the classes involved 32 student-journalists in the investigation during the 2007-2008 academic year. Upon the course's conclusion, a small group of students continued to work with the co-directors as the Pearl Project moved from Georgetown University to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists at the Center for Public Integrity. After almost three-and-a-half years of work, the project has completed hundreds of

interviews, scoured thousands of documents, and filed one lawsuit against eight government agencies, Feinman vs. CIA et. al.

Interviews included Pakistani police investigators, FBI agents, diplomatic staff, journalists, and others with first-hand knowledge of the case. In addition, the investigation relied on court documents from the Pakistan trial of those indicted for Pearl's murder, as well as internal Pakistan police records, FBI interview reports, and State Department cables.

The project was an experiment in investigative journalism 2.0 with the use of a wiki that allowed students to collaborate in a virtual electronic newsroom. A chronology was built of the events involving Pearl's kidnapping, murder, and police investigation, and analysis was done using link analysis software from Palantir Technologies and i2.

Good journalism is by necessity a collaborative effort; it takes reporters, editors, copy editors, fact-checkers, lawyers, and publishers.

Inspired by the Arizona Project, an investigative reporting project into the 1976 murder of Arizona Republic reporter Don Bolles, the Pearl Project sought to foster a spirit of collaboration and teach students how to work as a team. The Pearl Project's main participants were student journalists, aided by professional journalists who acted as mentors, sounding boards, and sometimes sources. Though journalism attracts individuals who are by nature intensely competitive, many professional journalists opened their hearts and their notebooks to this project. That is the sort of journalist and man that Danny was. Once, writing about a colleague he admired, Danny wrote: "I wish I could be so dedicated and generous." In fact, he was. But, in the true nature of humility, he never acknowledged it. Pearl Project students and those who assisted them in the pursuit of the truth helped to keep Danny's spirit alive.

In addition to those connected to the journalism profession, many people from other walks of life helped as well, some of whom are named, and others for whom association with this story could be risky — either professionally or personally. To those who remain

unnamed, please know your identity remains protected but your contribution will never be forgotten.

Finally, Pearl Project directors salute Daniel Pearl: "We had 32 students. Danny was the 33rd member of our Pearl Project team. Through his emails, his last interviews, and the details that emerged from his last days, he was our guide, shining a light into a dark abyss of militancy, extremism, and terrorism. This is his last story."

The Pearl Project Team

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Senior Student Reporters

Kira Zalan Katie Balestra

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Funding

Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation**The Fund for Investigative Journalism**

The Pearl Project also wishes to thank **Palantir Technologies** of Palo Alto, California, which provided generous in-kind support through its network analysis software and video production.

In addition, the Center for Public Integrity is generously supported by grants from Addesium Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Omidyar Network, the Ford Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the McCormick Foundation, the Park Foundation, the Popplestone Foundation, Public Welfare Foundation, and the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation.

Acknowledgments

Institutional Support

Three entities were our main supporters: Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, the Center for Public Integrity, and Georgetown University.

EEJF financed this project from beginning to end. They cheered us on and believed in what we were doing. Non-profit funding is the new model for supporting investigative reporting endeavors and every investigative reporter should be lucky enough to have in her corner EEJF's president, Robert Ross; advisory committee member, Marian Cromley; senior program officer, Nancy Hodgkinson; and Sue Hale.

When the Pearl Project needed a new home, the Center for Public Integrity's International Consortium of Investigative Journalists housed the project after the class ended. Executive Director Bill Buzenberg and ICIJ Director David Kaplan believed in this effort and made sure the project had what was necessary to succeed; Terry Atlas, editor extraordinaire, wrestled the first unwieldy 70,000 word manuscript down to the ground and helped resurrect it as a 30,000-

word series. CPI Chief Operating Officer Ellen McPeake managed the money and offered support and understanding; Peter Smith, the best fact-checker in Washington, saved the Pearl Project from mistakes and redundancies; attorney Marc Miller of McLeod, Watkinson & Miller made the lawyering process fun; Julie Vorman provided editorial and logistical support at a time when it was badly needed; Regina Russell made the Project feel at home; and Francesca Craig offered enthusiasm and support.

Georgetown University

Because of its Jesuit identity, Georgetown University has a tradition of encouraging its community members to public service and dedicating themselves to social justice, as well as to interfaith understanding. In that light, it is fitting for this project to have been undertaken by a Muslim and a Jew at a Catholic University. The Pearl Project appreciates Georgetown taking a chance on a different style of pedagogy and allowing an unconventional class to conduct an investigation. The project appreciated those colleagues and administrators who had the vision to support it along the way. In particular thanks go to Penn Szitty, Kathy Temple, Paul Greco, Robert Manuel, Leona Fisher, Jackie Buchy, Neris

Fleming, Gerard Walker, Donna Even-Kesef, and Caitlin Tyler-Richards.

The Pearl Family

The Pearl Project would like thank Ruth Pearl, Judea Pearl, Tamara Pearl, Michelle Pearl, and Mariane Pearl for their support. Ruth Pearl said, “I miss Danny every minute of my life.”

Legal Support

The Pearl Project is grateful to a professional thorn in the side of the government, attorney Mark S. Zaid, and his young, hard-working associate, Bradley P. Moss, for fighting the good fight for us, handling our FOIA lawsuit against eight government agencies.

Technical Support

Thanks also to Palantir Technologies for providing the analytical software platform for the Pearl Project.

Additionally, Elijah White, formerly of i2 Inc., spent many after-work hours helping the Pearl Project sort endless amounts of data into attractive and intelligible network charts.

Pearl Project Journalist Fellows

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The Pearl Project would also like to thank The Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma and its Executive Director Bruce Shapiro; The Fund for Investigative Journalism; and Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc. and its former executive director Brant Houston.

Finally, because every good Washington investigative story is made better by a Watergate angle, the project thanks Dr. Donald Kreuzer, whose pro bono contribution came in the form of emergency dental care at his office at the Watergate, where decades ago a bungled break-in led to the birth of modern day investigative journalism. He came to the rescue early one weekend morning, opening his office after hours to two strangers with an out of town “guest” suffering from an agonizing dental problem. He asked no questions and stopped the pain so the Pearl Project’s work could continue.

Biographies of Georgetown University Faculty and Students Involved with the Project

The Faculty

Asra Nomani, co-director of the Pearl Project, is a former Wall Street Journal reporter and was a friend of Daniel Pearl. She teaches journalism at Georgetown University. She has written *Standing Alone: An American Woman's Struggle for the Soul of Islam*. She contributes to *The Daily Beast*.

Barbara Feinman Todd, co-director of the Pearl Project, is the journalism director in Georgetown University's English Department. She is a former ghostwriter who has worked on the memoirs of several high-profile politicians and journalists.

Pearl Project Graduate Students

Adil Awadh, a native of Iraq, is an award-winning journalist in the Washington, D.C., area. In 2007, he

received two international awards for media excellence while working as a senior editor at Radio Sawa, a congressionally funded Arabic radio station that broadcasts to the Middle East. The Association for International Broadcasting called Awadh a "heavyweight presenter" who brought Radio Sawa "a level of credibility." In Iraq, he practiced medicine before leaving in 1996. Awadh earned a master's degree in journalism from Georgetown University in 2010. He is fluent in Arabic and English. He covered media issues for the Pearl Project.

Katie Balestra received her undergraduate degree in journalism from Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio. She earned a master's degree in journalism from Georgetown in 2010 and was the recipient of the Tropaia Award in 2010 for the Master of Professional

Studies program in journalism. She lives in Washington, D.C., and has done freelance writing for publications including the Washington Post and Sojourners magazine. She was a Pearl Project fellow at the Center for Public Integrity. She wrote about human rights issues for the Pearl Project.

Shilpika Das, a native of Mumbai, India, is currently working as a communications specialist for a multinational firm in Mumbai. Her journalism work has been published in The Times of India, The Indian Express, The Statesman, the Eastern Times, and several other publications. While studying at the University of Maryland, she was awarded a Reuters Fellowship and worked as a commodities reporter for the Reuters D.C. bureau. She also worked as an international communications associate with the American Red Cross in Washington, D.C. She holds a post-graduate diploma from the Indian Institute of Mass Communication in New Delhi and a master's degree in journalism from Georgetown University. She did translations and covered the Pakistani militancy for the Pearl Project.

JP Finlay, a Washington, D.C., native, graduated in 2009 with a master's degree in journalism from Georgetown University. After graduating, he worked as a sports

reporter for Roll Call and a blogger for The Washington Post. Finlay is a staff writer at the Greater Wilmington Business Journal in Wilmington, N.C., covering the banking, finance, and energy sectors in southeastern North Carolina. He contributes to sports and political media websites. He covered Pakistani intelligence for the Pearl Project.

John Gregory earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Arizona in 2006 and his master's in journalism from Georgetown University in 2009. He worked as an online producer at the Billings Gazette and Washington Times before a layoff brought an untimely end to that stage in his career. He lives in Tucson and is in his first year at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law. He covered Pakistani police for the Pearl Project.

Rochelle S. Hall is a Washington, D.C., attorney who has specialized in securities enforcement and litigation for more than 25 years. In 2007, she retired from law to pursue journalism at Georgetown University. After working on the Pearl Project for nearly a year, she decided that investigative journalism is a more grueling career than law. She is a hearing officer for the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, which regulates the securities industry. She adjudicates disciplinary cases against brokerage

firms and stockbrokers accused of violating securities laws. Hall received her undergraduate degree in psychology from Boston College and her law degree from Harvard Law School. Hall covered the Pakistani judicial system for the Pearl Project.

Karina Hurley, a native of Lima, Peru, is a broadcast journalist in Washington, D.C., currently working as a Spanish language web producer, freelance writer, and reporter at various Hispanic media outlets. A former television reporter and radio producer, Hurley specializes in mass media communications targeting the Latino population living in the United States. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Lima in 2001 and a master's degree in journalism from Georgetown University in 2009. She covered forensics for the Pearl Project

Sakshi Jain was born and raised in Canada, earning a bachelor of science degree in psychology with a minor in English from the University of Toronto in 1998. She completed her graduate studies in journalism and corporate communications at Georgetown University in 2009. She is currently a proposal manager and communications consultant and writer in the Washington, D.C., area. She translated and edited for the Pearl Project.

Douglas J. Lane, a native of Catskill, N.Y., grew up in a law enforcement and judicial family. His father served as a trooper in the New York State Police for 22 years, while his mother was the Catskill village court clerk for more than two decades. He earned a bachelor's degree in English with a specialization in creative writing from Binghamton University in 1990. He resides in Houston, Tex., where he works as a marketing project manager and writer. He is currently researching and writing a memoir about his aunt, a Korean War nurse. Lane earned a master's degree in journalism from Georgetown University in December 2009. He covered the FBI and Pakistani militants for the Pearl Project.

Katherine Major completed a master's degree in journalism at Georgetown University in 2010. She earned a bachelor's degree in creative writing from the University of Arizona. Major began her career at The Washington Post as a copy aide and editorial assistant in the Style section. Later, she was a researcher on former Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee's book, "A Good Life: Newspapering and Other Adventures." She has nearly 15 years of experience in fundraising and communications for non-profit organizations, and is a partner in a writing, editing, and research company based in Washington, D.C. She covered

the Pakistani judicial system for the Pearl Project.

Afgan Niftiyev, a native of Azerbaijan, graduated with a bachelor's degree in communications from Ege University, Turkey. After working briefly as a news correspondent in Istanbul, he pursued graduate education in journalism and received a master's degree from Georgetown University. After graduating from Georgetown, he worked as a program associate for a congressional study group on Turkey in the U.S. Congress. He is currently a graduate student at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University. He covered Pakistani intelligence for the Pearl Project.

Jill Phaneuf, a native of Fort Myers, Fla., graduated summa cum laude from Florida State University with a bachelor of science degree in international economics and a minor in business. In 2010, she graduated with a master's degree in journalism from Georgetown University. She is currently the director of Georgetown University's real estate graduate program, and she is a certified yoga instructor. She plans to attend law school. She covered the FBI for the Pearl Project.

Bonnie Rollins graduated from Indiana University in the turbulent Vietnam War era and was news director of a public

radio station during the Watergate hearings. She was named an AP Radio news editor in Washington, D.C., in 1979 days before 52 Americans were taken hostage in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. She has been a producer at NBC News for over 20 years. Rollins completed her master's degree in journalism at Georgetown University in the summer of 2010. She covered the State Department for the Pearl Project.

Kira Zalan, born in Minsk, Belarus, was managing editor of the Pearl Project and covered U.S. intelligence. She was a Pearl Project fellow at the Center for Public Integrity. She holds a graduate degree in journalism from Georgetown University, a master's degree in Russian and post-Soviet studies from the London School of Economics, and a double bachelor's degree in politics and legal studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz. She grew up in California and is currently a freelance writer based in Washington, D.C.

Undergraduate Students

Haya Al-Noaimi graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service campus in Doha, Qatar, in 2009. At her home campus, she majored in international politics. Originally from Bahrain, Al-Noaimi

interned as a paralegal at a law firm in Doha after graduation and now works as a teaching assistant in a gender and the law class in the international relations department at Qatar University. At the Pearl Project, she investigated websites that hosted the propaganda murder video.

Fatima Bahja was an exchange student from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Services in Qatar. She spent one semester enrolled at Georgetown's main campus in Washington, D.C. Fatima graduated in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in international politics. She is currently a protocol and invitational executive at the Qatar Foundation, a non-profit organization in Doha. She edited for the Pearl Project.

Claire Callagy graduated from Georgetown University in May 2010 with a double major in English and photography. An avid photojournalist, Claire shot photos during her undergraduate years in Ghana and Chile, publishing images in *Transparent Magazine*. She has done commercial photography in New York and was also the Pearl Project photographer. She is currently pursuing her master's degree in childhood education at Fordham University in New York City and continues to work as a freelance photographer.

Mary Cirincione, a native of Schenectady, N.Y., graduated with a bachelor's degree in foreign service from Georgetown University in May 2008. She is currently employed as a consultant at BAE Systems where she works on a federal contract supporting Customs and Border Protection. While at Georgetown, Cirincione was as an analyst for a special intelligence research unit at the New York State Office of Homeland Security where she contributed to a special report assessing the U.S.-Canadian border situation and the specific security threats posed to New York State. She reported on "shoebomber" Richard Reid for the Pearl Project.

Rachel Claytor is currently a reporter-producer at news station WCAV CBS19 in Charlottesville, Virginia. She graduated with a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University in 2009. Originally from Oxford, Ohio, Claytor played on Georgetown's varsity field hockey team before graduating with dual majors in English and cultural anthropology in 2008. In Washington, she interned with the public relations departments of the Washington Redskins and Washington Wizards and with the sports department at WTTG FoxDC. She covered the Pakistani judicial system for the Pearl Project.

Erin Delmore is a booking producer for MSNBC's "Hardball with Chris Matthews." After graduating from Georgetown in 2008, she joined "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" as a desk assistant, then spent nearly two years at Washingtonian magazine, first as a researcher, then as an assistant editor. She reported and wrote an article, "Leaving It All Behind," about five young men who went to Pakistan from northern Virginia to join the militancy. At Georgetown, she contributed news and entertainment articles to the student newspaper, The Hoya, and interned with Rolling Stone magazine, NBC's Investigative Unit and 1010WINS news radio in her native New York City. She has worked as a researcher for ABC reporter Claire Shipman, BBC reporter Katty Kay, CBS producer Rich Bonin and Washingtonian Editor Garrett Graff on their nonfiction books. She covered Pakistani law enforcement at the Pearl Project. Hammad Hammad, a Palestinian-American immigrant to the United States, is pursuing a graduate degree in law and diplomacy at the Fletcher School at Tufts University. He is a Rangel Fellow and will be pursuing a career in the U.S. Foreign Service after graduation. He completed a major in international politics focusing on trans-state actors in world affairs with a certificate in Arab studies from

Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in 2008. Hammad was a teen columnist at the Contra Costa Times newspaper in the San Francisco Bay area and also served as a study abroad columnist for the Hoya, the Georgetown University student newspaper. He is a blogger at The Huffington Post. He also co-founded Inspire Dreams, a non-profit group that works with Palestinian refugee youth. He is fluent in Arabic and English. He edited for the Pearl Project.

Margo Humphries, a native of Bozeman, Mont., is a paralegal at the law firm of Angel, Coil & Bartlett in Bozeman. She is an active volunteer with Special Olympics, coaching skiing and basketball. During the winter, she teaches children how to ski at Big Sky Resort. She graduated from Georgetown in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in government and an English minor. She plans to enroll in law school in the fall of 2011. She was the associate editor of a wiki, the Pearlpedia, at the Pearl Project, and covered the Wall Street Journal. Dmitri Ivashchenko graduated from Georgetown in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in government and began working for a local consulting company. He now works on education projects in Africa for AED, a nonprofit international development organization. He also created an international real

estate consulting startup in 2010. At the Pearl Project, Ivashchenko investigated whether the Pearl murder video could be studied more carefully through digital forensics. He discovered that that files had been encrypted.

Alex Joseph graduated from Georgetown University with a bachelor's degree in culture and politics from the School of Foreign Service. He interned at Slate.com and was a staff writer and editor for the arts and entertainment section of The Hoya, Georgetown University's school paper. He currently lives in San Francisco, Calif. He edited narratives and reported on Pakistani police for the Pearl Project.

Caitlin McDevitt graduated from Georgetown in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in English and a double minor in government and Spanish. While at Georgetown, she wrote for the student newspaper, The Hoya, and interned at Washingtonpost.com on the metro desk. Following graduation, she worked as an editorial intern at Newsweek in the Boston bureau and as an editorial assistant for Slate's business site, The Big Money. She is currently the deputy style and gossip editor at POLITICO. At the Pearl Project, McDevitt reported on the identities, life stories, and movements of many of the men involved in the kidnapping of Daniel Pearl.

Sean Patrick Murphy graduated in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in culture and politics from Georgetown's School of Foreign Service and a minor certificate program in justice and peace studies. Murphy interned with OneWorld US, a non-profit group, and ABC News. He is currently a paralegal at Baker & McKenzie in New York and plans to enroll in law school in the fall 2011. He covered the U.S. Treasury Department for the Pearl Project.

Phil Perry, the Pearl Project's videographer, graduated from Georgetown University in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in American studies. He is currently an editor at Comcast SportsNet New England's website, csnn.com, and he is a high school sports reporter for the Boston Globe. Perry has worked as a news aide for The Washington Post, interned at NBC's headquarters in Boston, and edited The Georgetown Voice, the University's weekly newsmagazine. He is also a musician. He videotaped hundreds of hours of classroom discussion, interviews, and aha moments in the Pearl Project.

Jessica Rettig is a politics and policy reporter at the U.S. News & World Report. She graduated in 2009 from Georgetown University with a bachelor's degree in English, a minor in Spanish,

and a certificate in Latin American Studies. At the Pearl Project, she reported on the courier who delivered the Daniel Pearl murder video to the FBI.

Amanda Silverman is an analyst at the political polling and strategy firm, Benenson Strategy Group. She was previously a reporter-researcher at The New Republic, and before that, an intern at Salon, Rolling Stone, and Capitol File magazine. She graduated from Georgetown University in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in English and history with a minor in Spanish. She covered the Pearl family for the Pearl Project.

Rebecca Tapscott graduated from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in international politics and a certificate in social and political thought. She is currently pursuing a master's degree at Tuft's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. She recently spent six months working in

Senegal, West Africa, as the assistant to the national coordinator at Tostan, a community development non-profit organization. She was a senior reporter at the Pearl Project, covering the decision by Bush administration officials to publically disclose Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's confession.

Clara Zabłudowsky graduated in May 2010 from Georgetown University with a double major in English and government and a minor in Chinese. She was born in Mexico City and grew up in Mexico, Belgium, and Washington, D.C. While at Georgetown, she co-produced Faith Complex, an online talk show on the entanglement of religion, politics, and art. It aired weekly on the Washington Post website. She currently works at Booz Allen Hamilton in its diplomacy and international development team. At the Pearl Project, Zabłudowsky reported on Omar Sheikh's family and its connections to the government of Pakistan.