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## From New Citizen to Suspect in a Year

Pakistan-Born Shahzad Faced Foreclosure in Connecticut and Disliked President Bush; an Invisible Man at His University

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Law-enforcement agents remove evidence from a Bridgeport, Conn., house. Neighbors said bomb suspect Faisal Shahzad didn't appear to live there, but came for short visits.

Faisal Shahzad was losing his Connecticut home to foreclosure, disliked President George W. Bush, and was an almost invisible presence at the American university where he earned two degrees.

Mr. Shahzad was born in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, according to Pakistan's U.S. embassy. He worked at a Connecticut marketing firm until 2009, the same year he became a U.S. citizen.

At the time of his arrest, Mr. Shahzad and his wife, Huma Mian, were facing foreclosure on the compact home of gray vinyl shingles they owned on Long Hill Avenue near the center of Shelton, Conn. He is "financially bankrupt," said a high-level official briefed on the investigation.

Neighbors and brokers said Mr. Shahzad and his wife had moved away and abandoned the house months ago. A lockbox with a key was on the front door, and the lawn was being mowed on behalf of the bank, J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., which issued the mortgage when the house was purchased in 2004.

Mr. Shahzad bought his house that July for \$273,000, brokers said, with 20% down and an 80% mortgage with Chase. It was a new house built on a lot in an existing neighborhood. Brokers said he used the proceeds of the sale of a condominium he owned in Norwalk, Conn., to pay for it. He later added his wife to the deed.

Chase Home Finance filed a foreclosure action against the couple last September, and court dockets indicate they didn't show up to defend themselves. They were listed as "non-appearing" parties. The most recent papers were filed in the case on April 23.

Frank DeVecchio, a broker based in Trumbull, Conn., listed the house off and on for Mr. Shahzad starting in 2008. When the listing expired last spring, he said, Mr. Shahzad sent him an email message saying he "had to let the house go to the bank" and was returning to Pakistan to take care of his parents, in particular his ill father.

"He was very disappointed that he wasn't getting his house sold," Mr. DeVecchio said.

Igor Djuric, a broker who showed Mr. Shahzad the 1,356-square-foot home he eventually bought, said he remembered that Mr. Shahzad was quiet about himself, but was openly critical of President Bush in the aftermath of the Iraq war.

"I didn't take it for anything, since a lot of people didn't like Bush," Mr. Djuric said, "but he was a little bit strong about expressing it."

The only thing strange about Mr. Shahzad that next-door neighbor Brenda Thurman could remember was his habit of going jogging at night wearing all black. He told her he didn't like the sunlight, she said.

At home, he sometimes wore ankle-length traditional Muslim garb, said Ms. Thurman, who lived next to Mr. Shahzad for more than three years, but he wore a shirt and tie to work. He would leave the house in the morning in a burgundy car and return in the evening.

Sometimes, relatives would come to visit, she said, driving cars with New York license plates.

Ms. Thurman's daughter occasionally played with his daughter. Then one day last May, Mr. Shahzad disappeared. His wife, two children and his wife's two sisters—who also lived in the house—held a tag sale in July. Ms. Thurman paid \$5 for four pillows—"a steal," she said. Then her neighbors were gone. She didn't know where they went. The house has sat empty since then, she said.

"He was a little weird," she said. "I didn't know he was that damn weird."

Other real-estate brokers and a lawyer who worked with Mr. Shahzad described him as soft-spoken, well-dressed and intelligent, but very reserved.

After leaving his home in Shelton, Mr. Shahzad spent some of his time at a three-story, beige building on Sheridan Street in Bridgeport, Conn. Neighbors said he didn't appear to live there. He didn't stay overnight, but would come for short visits and leave.

"He would come, maybe stay for 20 minutes," said Taquana Staples, 22 years old, who lives a few houses down. "He didn't come around that much. He wasn't suspicious. He kept to himself." She said she hadn't seen him in several weeks.

Some neighbors said they were evacuated by the FBI Monday night and only able to return Tuesday morning. The apartment had a for-rent sign posted in the front yard.

Ms. Staples said the materials that authorities hauled out of the apartment made it seem like a storage space. "It's very scary to see what they brought out of the house," she said, referring to wires.

Mr. Shahzad received two degrees from the University of Bridgeport—a B.A. in 2000 in computer science and engineering, and an M.B.A. in 2005. Professors there said they had been discussing Mr. Shahzad for much of Tuesday morning, trying to recall what he was like, yet few were able to remember.

Prof. Robert Todd said his records showed that Mr. Shahzad was in at least one of his classes, but "I don't remember the kid," Mr. Todd said. "He was not obviously outstanding or horrible."

Ward Thrasher, director of the M.B.A. program, said he only remembered Mr. Shahzad's name, and that Mr. Shahzad took longer than most to complete his degree, because he was taking only one or two classes a semester.

"There are kids who over the years make an impression on faculty and advisers," Mr. Thrasher said. "This kid doesn't appear to have impressed anyone, favorably or unfavorably."

Mr. Shahzad is the son of retired Air Vice Marshall Baharul Haq, a former top Pakistani air force officer and deputy director general of the civil aviation authority, according to Kifyat Ali, a cousin of Mr. Shahzad's father. Mr. Ali, who spoke to the Associated Press, said Mr. Shahzad "was never linked to any political or religious party here" in Peshawar.

Law-enforcement officers were seen at a Bridgeport mosque Tuesday morning, but so far authorities have revealed no evidence that religious extremism motivated Mr. Shahzad, nor have acquaintances recalled him voicing extremist views.

**Mr. Shahzad initially lived in the U.S. under visas designed to facilitate his education and employment. In December 1998, he was granted an F-1 student visa.** Immigration officials noted then there was "no derogatory information" on him in any database, a law enforcement official said.

He first attended Southeastern University in Washington, D.C., a small school that lost its accreditation last year. In 2000, Mr. Shahzad transferred to the University of Bridgeport.

**In April 2002, he was granted an H1-B visa for skilled workers; he stayed in the U.S. for three years on that visa, gaining his M.B.A. It is not clear what company sponsored the visa, which is used to attract workers with a "specialty occupation," such as information technology.**

Mr. Shahzad worked in Norwalk, Conn., for international marketing firm Affinion Group from 2006 to June 2009, according to Affinion spokesman James Hart, and left the firm "of his own accord." He was a junior financial analyst, Mr. Hart said, one of 50 such analysts at the 3,500-employee firm that helps larger companies offer royalty point programs and runs a leisure travel agency.

"He definitely was very regimented and cared very much about what he did," said Timothy Dileo, 43, of Norwalk, who said he worked with Mr. Shahzad at Affinion for a year and a half until January 2009. "He was always a very nice person," Mr. Dileo added, but never talked about his personal life.

"We've reached out to the federal government and are providing all of the assistance they need," Mr. Hart said, adding that government investigators have begun interviewing employees who knew Mr. Shahzad.

On Oct. 20, 2008, Mr. Shahzad reported his marriage to a woman he identified as Huma Asif Mian, a U.S. citizen. He became naturalized as a U.S. citizen on April 17, 2009.

On her social networking page, his wife listed her languages as English, Pashto, Urdu and French, her religion as Muslim and her political views as "nonpolitical," according to AP. Her favorite television shows were "Everybody Loves Raymond" and "Friends."

While law enforcement officials don't have exhaustive details of his travels after he was naturalized, one trip in particular stands out: He left New York on June 2, 2009, on an Emirates flight to Dubai. He stayed overseas for eight months, including in Pakistan, and returned on Feb. 3, 2010, on another Emirates flight from Dubai.

Mr. Shahzad was arrested late Monday on board an Emirates flight from New York City to Dubai. He was bound for Islamabad, according to people with knowledge of the situation.

—Keith Johnson, Siobhan Gorman and Amir Efrati contributed to this article.

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