

# Outsourcing Jobs Inside U.S. Lets Terrorists Hide In Plain Sight

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Looking at photos of the Madrid passenger train peeled open like a sardine can by terrorist bombs in 2003, it's not hard to imagine a Metro train meeting the same fate. Last week's arrest of Pakistani-born Farooque Ahmed, who is accused of plotting to bomb four Metro stations in Virginia, renewed concerns that terrorists are using the nation's legal immigration system as a conduit into the U.S.

The easiest way to get into the U.S. without attracting undue attention is to apply for a student visa, as Ahmed, 34, apparently did at the City University of New York. After graduation, you can extend your stay for up to 29 months with Optional Professional Training (such as graduate school) without Department of Labor approval.

Ahmed's Oct. 27, 2010, LinkedIn profile said that he enrolled in a master's computer engineering program at CUNY's College of Staten Island, but did not complete a degree due to a "political issue between computer science and engineering department."

After that, an employer-sponsored H-1B visa -- which requires virtually no vetting of applicants -- will keep you in the U.S. for six years or more, with automatic extensions while you wait for a green card making you a permanent resident. With a green card, you can legally stay in the U.S. even if you lose your job. It also opens the last doorway to naturalization.

U.S. employers are required to make a "good faith" effort to find qualified American citizens for any job openings, but few do, since most foreigners are willing to work longer hours for less money to get a foot in the door. Even the Labor Department's 2006-2011 Strategic Plan notes: "H-1B workers may be hired even when a qualified U.S. worker wants the job, and a U.S. worker can be displaced from the job in favor of the foreign worker."

It's sort of like outsourcing jobs right inside the country.

According to the Labor Department, 129,464 H-1Bs were issued in 2008. Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, has been trying to restrict H-1Bs ever since a U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services review that same year discovered that more than 20 percent of the applications included fraudulent documents and forged signatures.

Ahmed, who resides in Ashburn, Va., lists July 2006 as the date he began working for Sprint on a project to deploy wide-area wireless technology in Baltimore, Washington and Chicago. There's a six-month gap in his resume between July 2008 and January 2009, when he says he was hired by Glotel to provide network engineering support to Verizon. There's another six-month gap between that job and his start at Ericsson in Reston last October.

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Data downloaded from the U.S. Department of Labor's Foreign Labor Certification Web site indicates that Sprint filed for an H-1B visa to fill a \$75,000-per-year position as Network Planner II on July 10, 2006 -- the same month Ahmed's profile said he started with the company. But Sprint would neither confirm nor deny that Ahmed was a former employee or that he was working for a Sprint contractor at the time of his arrest.

What we do know is that Ahmed comes from a country with a significant terrorist population. Neighbors say his wife wears a full hijab, possibly indicating Islamic fundamentalism. Yet he was allowed to work in the national security-sensitive telecommunications industry as a network engineer, and only became the object of an undercover FBI sting operation when he presumably tried to purchase explosives to further an alleged terrorist attack.

One of these days, a terrorist now hiding in plain sight will get lucky.

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[http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/Outsourcing-jobs-inside-U\\_S\\_-lets-terrorists-hide-in-plain-sight-1419551-106549953.html](http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/Outsourcing-jobs-inside-U_S_-lets-terrorists-hide-in-plain-sight-1419551-106549953.html)