



TRIPLE CROSS

How Bin Laden's Master Spy Penetrated the CIA, the Green Berets and the FBI—
And Why Patrick Fitzgerald Failed to Stop Him

By Peter Lance

In *TRIPLE CROSS*, five-time Emmy-award winning investigative reporter Peter Lance reveals how U.S. attorney Patrick Fitzgerald and the FBI's elite bin Laden squad failed to stop Ali Mohamed, al Qaeda's master spy, in the years leading up to the 9/11 attacks. Recruited as an FBI informant as early as 1992, Mohamed—an intimate of Osama bin Laden—was allowed to remain free for years, planning and executing multiple acts of terror, including the 1998 African embassy bombings that killed 224 and injured 4000—while Fitzgerald and key FBI agents did little to stop him.

Mohamed had been on the FBI's radar since 1989, when the FBI's Special Operations Group photographed a cell of his trainees firing AK-47s at a Long Island shooting range. Yet despite their prior knowledge of this New York cell, the Bureau ended its investigation, paving the way for multiple acts of terror in the years that followed.

Of the Islamic radicals trained by Ali Mohamed and photographed by the FBI: one went on to kill Rabbi Meier Kahane in 1990, three were convicted in the World Trade Center bombing in 1993 and another American Muslim was convicted by Patrick Fitzgerald in 1995 in a plot to blow up the bridge and tunnels into Manhattan. Mohamed himself was opened as a Bureau informant on the West Coast in 1992 – a year before the WTC bombing. Worse, he continued to snooker Fitzgerald and other FBI and Justice Department officials for years as he learned the FBI's playbook on al Qaeda.

After a five-year investigation into FBI negligence on the road to 9/11, Lance reveals:

How Assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, who was directing the FBI's elite bin Laden squad (I-49), allowed Ali Mohamed to remain an active al Qaeda agent despite the fact that the FBI knew he had sworn allegiance to bin Laden as early as 1993. Mohamed moved the Saudi billionaire from Afghanistan to Sudan, trained his personal bodyguard, set up al Qaeda terror camps in Khartoum, and trained the terrorists responsible for the 1993 WTC bombing and Day of Terror plots.

How Fitzgerald and other top officials buried a treasure trove of al Qaeda-related evidence in 1996—including proof of a liquid-based airliner bomb plot that was a precursor to the August 2006 plot revealed by U.K. authorities. The evidence included proof of an active al Qaeda cell operating in NYC five years before 9/11.

How Mohamed twice smuggled al Qaeda's second-in-command, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, into the U.S. in the 1990s to raise half a million dollars for the Jihad—and left his post at Fort Bragg, against orders, to hunt down Soviet Spetsnaz commandos in Afghanistan in the midst of America's covert war.

How Mohamed stole TOP SECRET memos and other classified intelligence from Fort Bragg and passed it onto the al Qaeda leadership: including memos to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the positions of all Special Forces units worldwide. Copies of that intelligence, with Mohamed's notes in Arabic, are part of more than 30 pages of declassified or formerly SECRET documents included as appendices to the book.

How, after meeting Mohamed face-to-face in 1997, Fitzgerald called him "the most dangerous man I have ever met," and vowed, "We cannot let this man out on the street." Yet for another ten months he allowed Mohamed to remain free, while the al Qaeda spy continued to support the African embassy bombing plot he had set in motion in 1993—after being freed from custody on the word of his FBI control agent.

How Mohamed had told Fitzgerald that he had "hundreds" of al Qaeda sleepers ready to go "operational" at any time—and yet to this day the FBI has failed to detect them. Mohamed, who wasn't even arrested until a month after the 1998 embassy bombings, remained in U.S. custody for three full years before 9/11. But even after cutting a deal that allowed him to escape the death penalty and enter witness protection, Fitzgerald failed to extract the 9/11 planes-as-missiles plot from Mohamed.

How as early as 1991 the FBI was aware of a New Jersey mail box store directly linked to al Qaeda, but failed to monitor the location. Fitzgerald himself had named the store owner as an unindicted coconspirator in the 1995 Day of Terror case. Six years later, in July 2001, the FBI blew an extraordinary chance to interdict the 9/11 plot when two of the 9/11 hijackers got their fake IDs *at the very same store*. "All the FBI had to do was monitor that location, the way they sat on John Gotti's Ravenite Social Club," says Lance, "and they would have been in the middle of the 9/11 plot."

PETER LANCE's first two FBI investigative books, *1000 Years for Revenge* and *Cover Up*, were national bestsellers. Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) called *1000 Years* "A must read for the FBI, the 9/11 Commission, Congress and anyone whose job it is to protect national security." Kristen Breitweiser, one of the "Jersey Girls" called it "a 500 page smoking gun." Lance testified before the 9/11 Commission in 2004.

His investigation of former FBI agent R. Lindley DeVecchio, reported in *Cover Up*, led to DeVecchio's indictment on four counts of second degree murder in March 2006.

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