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"[Data analyst J.D. [James D. Smith]] found [Mohamed Atta] by linkages not to immigration issues but to the mosque system," he said. "Basically [Atta] was associating with known radical clerics."

Full Text (189 words)*(Copyright 2005, The New York Post. All Rights Reserved)*

WASHINGTON - A Pentagon secret intelligence team identified 9/11 leader Mohamed Atta through a probe of blind Sheik Omar Abdel- Rahman - the mastermind of the first attempt to destroy the World Trade Center, it was revealed yesterday.

An outside contractor to the intelligence unit, code named Able Danger, has told congressional staffers Atta's name was discovered by a computer data-mining search of connections to Abdel-Rahman, the Muslim cleric in prison for inspiring the 1993 trade center bombing and a plot to blow up New York landmarks.

Contractor James D. Smith testified that a California researcher was later able to purchase Atta's photograph from an Islamic Web site, officials confirmed.

Smith could not be reached for comment.

Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer - the Able Danger liaison who first went public - yesterday told The Post Atta popped up on the radar screen because his links to the blind sheik paralleled those of the 1993 trade center bombers.

"[Data analyst J.D. Smith] found Atta by linkages not to immigration issues but to the mosque system," he said. "Basically [Atta] was associating with known radical clerics."

Additional reporting by Deborah Orin

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People: Atta, Mohamed, Abdel-Rahman, Omar, Smith, James

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