

Terrorist Left Few Memories at N.C. A&T Study: Aspirin Could Reduce Colon Cancer

Courses might have aided Sept. 11 plan

By GILLIAN BOLSOVER
Staff Writer

N.C. Agricultural & Technical State University officials confirmed Tuesday that the man whom President Bush described as "the man who masterminded the Sept. 11 attacks" was an alumnus of their institution.

Khalid Shaikh Mohammed is described as second only to Osama bin Laden within the al-Qaida network and is linked to the 2002 murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl. Mohammed was arrested Saturday by Pakistani and U.S. security officials.

Campus administrators and faculty expressed regret about the part they played in Mohammed's education but maintain that he did not openly have links to terrorism while at N.C. A&T.

Mohammed, who emigrated from Kuwait to the United States in 1984, was enrolled at Chowan College in Murfreesboro for one semester before transferring to N.C. A&T. He graduated in 1986 with a degree in mechanical

engineering.

David Klett said that as a mechanical engineering professor, undergraduate program coordinator and transfer student adviser, he both advised and taught Mohammed.

But Klett said that like most people at the institution, he doesn't remember Mohammed.

"He must have been very quiet, low-key and subdued," he said. Those who recall him remember him as "a studious and quite religious person," he said.

But they do not think that Mohammed had any radical tendencies at the time, Klett said.

He said Mohammed would have taken his course in thermodynamics, which he could later have applied to his terrorist activities.

"We talk about all types of engines," Klett said. "Jet engines — maybe that helped him, I don't know."

William Craft, a mechanical engineering professor at N.C. A&T, also said the university was not aware that Mohammed might have had links to al-Qaida.

"We had no inclination that (Mohammed) had any of those intentions," Craft said.

But he said the department regrets its

role in educating Mohammed. "We all feel very badly about what happened. ... We certainly don't want a recurrence of that event."

Asked if his mechanical engineering degree from N.C. A&T helped Mohammed orchestrate acts of terror Craft replied, "I don't want to say yes, but I can't say no."

"Any graduate in mechanical engineering receives specialized knowledge. That knowledge can be used for good or evil."

Craft said that in the 1980s there were many students from the Middle East at N.C. A&T but that the number declined rapidly and now there are none.

Suspected terrorist Mazen al-Najjar graduated from N.C. A&T in 1984, two years before Mohammed, with a master's degree in industrial engineering.

He was deported to an unspecified Arab country after spending 3 1/2 years in jail because of undisclosed evidence linking him to terrorist activities.

Cliff Lowery, minority student affairs director at N.C. A&T, said there was surprise rather than concern on campus after the realization that terrorists attended the institution. It was a long time ago, he explained.

"There are some discussions," he said. "People are aware of the news coverage."

M o h a m m e d

was transferred this week by U.S. officials to an undisclosed location for questioning.

The Associated Press reported that federal law enforcement officials found numerous

sources of information during Mohammed's arrest, including computers, computer disks, portable telephones and documents.

According to CNN's Web site, government sources said that though Mohammed has not divulged any useful information, he is beginning to talk.

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

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WILLIAM CRAFT
Mechanical Engineering Professor

Powell Argues for Solidarity Against Iraq

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Colin Powell said Wednesday that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein must not be allowed to split the world's nations into "arguing factions."

Powell showed his concern about the increasingly defiant attitude of the United States' critics on the U.N. Security Council in advance of an expected vote next week on a new resolution to authorize war against Iraq.

Leaders of several nations normally allied with the United States have said more time should be allowed for

weapons inspections before any war, but Powell said the inspections are futile. He contended that Iraq's intelligence agency in late January had taken chemical and biological agents "to areas far away from Baghdad near the Syrian and Turkish borders in order to conceal them."

Powell spoke at the Center for Strategic and International Studies a few hours after the foreign ministers of France, Germany and Russia joined forces in pledging to block the U.S.-backed resolution.

Powell said his problem with the position of France, Germany and Russia is

that they have failed to recognize that Hussein still has not made a decision to comply with Security Council demands.

"He has not made that strategic choice," Powell said. "And I don't think any one of them would argue that he has."

Powell added, "We will see in the next few days whether or not he understands the situation he is in and makes that choice."

A State Department official said Powell was not referring to a military timetable but rather a series of events in the next few days, including the anticipated Security Council vote next week.

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UNC study links aspirin, prevention

By BRIAN HUDSON
Staff Writer

Members of a colon cancer study team announced Wednesday at the UNC School of Medicine the results of a study that showed that taking an aspirin each day reduces the risk of developing colon cancer.

Results of the study were published today in the New England Journal of Medicine.

They showed that people taking 325 milligrams of aspirin each day have a 35 percent lower chance of developing polyps in the large intestine. Polyps are considered precursors to most colorectal cancers.

UNC physician Robert Sandler, the study's principal investigator, said the study originated to prove officially the connection between colon cancer prevention and aspirin.

"(The connection) was first discovered by accident," Sandler said. "This study is built on a large body of evidence. It provides strong evidence that aspirin works."

Sandler is a professor of medicine and epidemiology at UNC's schools of Medicine and Public Health. He also is chief of the division of digestive diseases and nutrition and director of UNC's Center for Gastrointestinal Biology and Disease.

The national study involved more

than 100 medical centers and clinics across the United States working together.

Some of the co-authors of the study were doctors from the Duke University Medical Center and the Wake Forest Medical Center.

The study was funded through the National Cancer Institute.

The study assigned 635 patients who previously suffered from colorectal cancer to two groups, an aspirin treatment group and a placebo group.

The doctors found that among the 517 patients who had at least one recent colonoscopy, 17 percent of those in the aspirin treatment group had one or more polyps, compared to 27 percent of those in the placebo group.

Other studies have shown that aspirin also can improve the chance of surviving a heart attack.

Sandler said he hopes the results of the most recent study will not give people a false hope in aspirin.

"We don't want people to use only aspirin," he said. "Just because aspirin is sold over the counter doesn't mean it is safe. It is still a drug, and it has side effects."

Sandler said he hopes the study will encourage people to pay more attention to their colons.

"I hope the message the study gets out is to increase problem awareness," he said. "The important thing is that people get screened (for polyps in the colon)."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

Campus Calendar

Today

12:30 p.m. — UNC's Center for the Study of the American South is hosting a talk titled "From Ike Through Clinton: 50 Years on the Edge of History."

The talk will be given by Roger Kennedy, historian and adviser to six U.S. presidents.

It will take place in 569 Hamilton

Hall.

Admission is free.

Attendees are invited to bring their own lunches.

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