

Religious leader says bomb-plot youth quickly became radicalized

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[CBC News](#)



A Muslim religious leader in Toronto who knows some of those charged in a suspected bomb plot says the young men underwent rapid transformations from normal Canadian teenagers to radicalized introverts.

Sayyid Ahmed Amiruddin got to know Saad Khalid, 19, and some of the other alleged conspirators at a local mosque.

Khalid was arrested last Friday at a warehouse, where he and another suspect allegedly took delivery of what they thought was ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer, and the same substance used in the deadly Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.

Fifteen others are also facing charges connected to the alleged plot.

Entered mosque to pray

Amiruddin says Khalid used to come to his mosque to pray, sometimes in the company of Zakaria Amara and Fahim Ahmad, two of the alleged ringleaders.

"They would enter into the mosque to pray, and they would pray in a very aggressive manner, and they would come in military fatigues and military touques and stuff. It looked to me that they were watching a lot of those Chechnyan jihad videos online and stuff."

Amiruddin is a teacher of Sufism, a traditional brand of Islam that rejects the ideology of jihad. Amiruddin says the group was seduced by hardline propaganda financed by the Saudi government and promoting a strict, Wahhabi brand of Islam.

He says the Saudis have flooded Canada with free Qur'ans, laced with jihadist commentary.

"In the back of these Qur'ans that are being published in Saudi Arabia, you have basically essays on the need for offensive jihad and the legitimacy of offensive jihad and things like that. Very alarming stuff," he said.

Amiruddin said many mainstream Muslim organizations in Canada are really part of the problem, standing by as extremist propaganda spreads in the mosques.

Recruiting young teens

Amiruddin says Khalid underwent a rapid transition from a clean-cut Canadian teenager to a long-haired, radicalized introvert.



Alleged bomb-plot suspects in a Brampton courtroom on Tuesday. (John Mantha/CBC)

He says the young men would pray by themselves, and try to recruit younger teens to the fundamentalist Wahhabi view.

Amiruddin says Khalid stopped coming to the mosque after he befriended 43-year-old Qayyum Abdul Jamal, another key suspect, who once preached that Canadian forces were in Afghanistan to rape Muslim women.

Amiruddin also has a theory as to why Khalid may have been open to such influences.

"His mother passed away and let's say within the first month of his mom passing away, his girlfriend, who was not Muslim, dumped him.

"And then from that within a year you have this radical turnaround right? Even Fahim Ahmad, he was in love with a girl who constantly rejected him, right? Maybe he was just looking for love?

"I can't say for certain, but this was something I found common with these young guys."

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/toronto/story/2006/06/09/toterror20060609.html>