

old student killed 32 people.

Willing to die

"Sacrifice is necessary in order to achieve success in anything in life, and sometimes it requires us to die," said Abdul-Latif in a website comment he left on Voice of America about the death of bin Laden.

In tape-recorded comments to an FBI informant, Abdul-Latif and his alleged co-conspirator, Walli Mujahidh, formerly known as Frederick Domingue Jr., indicated that they both expected to die in the attack on the recruiting center. They hoped their efforts would inspire other Muslims to strike such recruiting centers.

In recent years, terrorism analysts have spent a lot of time trying to better understand how people reach a point that they are willing to take such extreme action.

A 2007 New York Police Department study on home-grown terrorism found that the majority of people involved in these plots began as "unremarkable," and their shift in self-identification occurred when they were shaken by some event in their lives.

They then "gradually gravitate away from their old identity" and move into a more violent phase when they designate themselves as holy warriors.

Abdul-Latif seems to fit this pattern. He led a troubled life that included two suicide attempts and serving two years in prison for robbing the 7-Eleven, according to court documents. Either during or after his incarceration, he converted to Islam.

In recent months, as his efforts to run a cleaning-detail-



A firefighter passes damaged vehicles near the Oklahoma City federal building's ruins.

JIM ARGO / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 1995

are initially detected by local residents or police. Local, state and federal law-enforcement officers share information through 70 "fusion centers," including one in the Seattle FBI office.

"The good news is that they work," said William Bratton, a former Los Angeles police chief who serves as vice chairman of an advisory committee for Homeland Security.

The alleged Seattle conspirators were exposed by an informant who went to the Seattle police. The informant posed as a third conspirator, helping secure weapons that had been rendered inoperative by law-enforcement officials.

Many of these post-9/11 Islamic terrorism cases have been unraveled by informants or undercover opera-

In Portland, for example, Mohamed Osman Mohamud, a 19-year-old from Corvallis, Ore., was caught in an FBI sting operation that supplied him with a van packed with dummy explosives, which allegedly were intended to detonate at a Christmas-tree lighting ceremony last November.

Bratton said some terrorist planners have failed because the plotters were "not the brightest bulbs in the circuit."

At the same time, he said, it only takes one disturbed individual to create tremendous havoc.

In Seattle in 2006, Naveed Hag, a Tri-Cities man with a history of mental illness, attacked the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, making anti-Semitic statements before killing one woman and

Right-wing radicals

The threat of violence from right-wing extremists has also surged during the past several years, according to Gid, the head of the Oklahoma terrorism-prevention institute. He says the current threat level is similar to the months before the 1995 Oklahoma City federal building bombing by Timothy McVeigh, which killed 168 people, including 19 children.

"We are seeing the rhetoric on the webpages become more pointed... and we are concerned," said Gid, a former FBI agent who assisted in the investigation of the Oklahoma City bombing.

In 2010, the Southern Poverty Law Center identified 824 militia groups, a big spike from the 149 counted

tion of the biracial President Obama has also played to their fears, as well as the tidal wave of foreclosures that have snatched away people's homes during the recession, he says.

Within the past two years, the Southern Poverty Law Center has tracked more than 20 right-wing terrorist plots and incidents.

Those include the arrest in Michigan of nine militia members who allegedly sought to kill a Michigan police officer and then use bombs and homemade missiles to kill other officers attending the funeral.

This year, a man with ties to a neo-Nazi group was arrested in Arizona for allegedly building homemade grenades and pipe bombs for supply to groups patrolling the Mexico border. In March, six people with a cache of weapons that included grenades and grenade launchers were charged with plotting to kill or kidnap Alaska state troopers and a Fairbanks judge.

In one peculiar terrorism case pursued in Asotin County, Joseph Jeffrey Brice, 21, opened email and PayPal accounts using the name of McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber, yet he is accused of posting bomb-making tips and videos on a jihadi website.

In May, Brice was indicted by a Spokane grand jury for manufacturing a powerful improvised explosive device, which detonated prematurely in 2010 and caused him severe injury.

"It gets to the point that ideology is less important than action," said Gomez, the FBI assistant special agent in charge in Seattle.

FBI says terrorism cases on upswing

SEATTLE ARRESTS A SIGN OF HOMEGROWN THREATS

Bin Laden death a factor, but extremists vary widely

BY HAL BERNTON,
MIKE CARTER
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Seattle Times staff reporters

In 2002, Joseph Anthony Davis held up a 7-Eleven in Bremerton with two plastic toy guns.

Nine years later, he sat on the floor of his SeaTac apartment to plan a terrorist attack with machine guns and grenades against a Seattle military recruiting station, according to tape-recordings made by an informant.

Federal officials last week arrested Davis, now known as Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif, as they once again unraveled an alleged plot developed not in some distant al-Qaida haven

“Just with the number of cases we've had in the past six months, I'm going to be asking for a 10 to 20 percent increase in our current (budget) numbers.”

DAVID GOMEZ
FBI Seattle office

but by what appear to be home-grown radicals embracing a militant Islamic doctrine.

Terrorism analysts say such individuals have been involved in many

Terminology