



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on June 3, 2016

Smuggling Network Brings Aliens With Terrorist Ties Across U.S. Border

Government documents obtained by Representative Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.) have revealed that a lengthy route extending from Brazil to the U.S.-Mexican border has been used to transport at least a dozen Middle Eastern aliens into the United States. An Afghan man with links to the Taliban was discovered among these aliens when he was captured in Arizona 15 miles north of the Mexican border.



Hunter provided documentation to the *Washington Times*, which broke the story.

The illegal aliens who were smuggled into the United States via the network included Palestinians, Pakistanis, and the Afghan man. Homeland Security officials have said the man has family ties to the Taliban and was “involved in a plot to conduct an attack in the U.S. and/or Canada.” The *Times* has honored law-enforcement authorities’ request not to release the man’s name.

The group of Middle Eastern aliens was guided to the border by two Mexicans employed by the smuggling network, and crawled under the border fence in Arizona late last year before traveling about 15 miles into Arizona and being detected by border surveillance.

The illegal aliens were smuggled into the United States by means of an elaborate network based in Brazil, which helped them transit to South America from the Middle East. Once there, they were taken on a long, convoluted route going through Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico. The roundabout route obviously is meant to make detection of the smuggled aliens by authorities as difficult as possible.

Upon receiving the information about the smuggling network, Hunter sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson stating his dissatisfaction with how long it took for border and immigration officials to discover the man’s terrorist connections. The group of aliens reportedly crossed the border late last year.

This intelligence failure was documented in a report from Fox News’ Phoenix TV station, KSAZ, which reported last November 19 that Border Patrol agents said they had apprehended five Pakistani Nationals and one Afghan National trying to sneak into Arizona across the Mexico-U.S. border. Border Patrol agents said they were alerted to the presence of the men via a sensor near Sonoita, Arizona.

The illegal aliens were being escorted by two smugglers when agents tracked them down. After the six aliens were processed, the agents issued the following statement:

As a standard procedure, agents processed the six individuals and checked their identities against numerous law enforcement and national security related databases. Records checks revealed no derogatory information about the individuals.

It has not been made public exactly when the Afghan man’s family ties to the Taliban were discovered, but since this fact is definitely “derogatory information,” missing it was obviously a major flaw in our



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security system.

We reported in [another article last January](#) that two Pakistani nationals who had been linked to terrorism were apprehended by U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) agents south of San Diego and just north of the Mexican border last September. However, details of their capture and interrogation were only made public months later.

The two detainees were named as Muhammad Azeem and Mukhtar Ahmad, both from Gujrat, Pakistan. After they were arrested by agents on September 20, USBP agents searched agency databases and got hits on both men, with Ahmad being identified as an associate of a known terrorist.

The *Washington Times* broke the story on December 30, reporting that Azeem's data file "had been shared by a foreign government for intelligence purposes."

Both men had been questioned by immigration officials in Panama two months before being apprehended in the United States. However, Panamanian officials typically do not deport illegal aliens that they arrest if they are in transit and do not intend to stay in Panama.

The report quoted from a letter that Representative Hunter wrote to Homeland Security Secretary Johnson in December demanding to know how many people listed in the FBI's terrorist screening database have been apprehended at the border. Duncan wrote:

The southern land border remains vulnerable to intrusion and exists as a point of extreme vulnerability.

Evidently there are criminal organizations and individuals with the networks and know-how to facilitate illegal entry into the United States without regard for one's intentions or status on a terrorist watch list. The detention of the two Pakistani nationals underscores the fact that any serious effort to secure our homeland must include effective border security and immigration enforcement.

One lesson that can be learned from the ease with which the two Pakistani men crossed our border into California — and also how easily the Palestinians, Pakistanis, and the Afghan man crossed into Arizona — is that adequate border security does not exist. If we cannot police our borders, then our ability to protect ourselves from terrorists attacks is also non-existent.

The bombings that killed 34 people in Brussels on March 22 and the bombings and shootings that killed 130 people in Paris last November should serve to warn Americans about the potential effects of allowing terrorists to enter a country. If we do not correct the obvious holes in our border security, it will be only a matter of time before tragic episodes such as occurred in Paris and Brussels take place on our soil.

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