

NYPD'S COUNTERTERRORISM STRENGTHS: BIGFOOTING, ENTRAPPING, AND OVERSELLING

Justin Elliott takes the debunking I did here one step further: a claim by claim debunking of the NYPD's claims to have thwarted 14 attacks against the city. He helpfully groups his debunkery into three groups:

Real attacks the NYPD had no role in or even undermined but for which they claim credit.

- Faisal Shahzad
- Najibullah Zazi
- Liquids Plot

Those marginally credible plots involving government informants.

- Newburgh Four
- Herald Square
- JFK Airport

Those plots deemed not credible by (usually anonymous) experts or never developed.

- Jose Pimental
- Ahmed Ferhani and Mohamed Mamdouh
- Iyman Faris
- PATH Train
- Subway Cyanide
- NYSE/Citi
- Uzair Paracha
- Bryant Neal Vinas/LIRR

That's it. The "threats" the NYPD is using to justify profiling the city's (and suburbs') Muslims were either missed by the NYPD, created in large by them, or never really developed.

I'd add just two things. First, as I have noted, for two of three actual attacks here, the NYPD actually got close but missed (or even hindered) the developing plots. These near misses suggest the NYPD may well have picked a few worthwhile investigation targets, but its actions are failing to reveal any real, rather than manufactured, threat.

There's one more thing Elliot's piece made me realize. Several of these—including Uzair Paracha, Iyman Faris, and the NYSE/Citi plot—can be traced back to KSM. As Elliott notes—and I've noted before—some of his evidence against Paracha, at least, was collected during his worst period of torture. Not only does that suggest I should add "exploiting torture-induced testimony" to my title.

But it makes me wonder whether one of the problems with trying KSM in NY, for Ray Kelly, was the possibility that KSM would expose the fraud at the heart of Kelly's counterterrorism scam.