

THE FEDS NOW COMPLAINING ABOUT THIN TERRORIST INDICTMENTS

Tell me if this sounds familiar: You've got a long undercover investigation of a young Muslim man. It ends in the man acting to get what turns out to be an inert bomb. And there seem to be problems with the undercover work in the investigation.

It sounds like the case of Mohamed Mohamud, right?

Well, in many respects it is just like the case of Mohamed Mohamud. Except, unlike the Mohamud investigation, the FBI suggests this one—of Ahmed Ferhani and Mohamed Mamdouh for allegedly conspiring to target synagogues—is flimsy.

WNYC has learned the lack of Federal participation in the high-profile case of two Queens men allegedly involved in a plot to blow up New York City synagogues and churches was related to concerns it was not a bona fide terrorism case.

Two Federal law enforcement sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly, said the FBI did not take the case of the two alleged Queens terrorists because the undercover operation was problematic and the end result was being over-hyped. They also expressed concern the case would ultimately not hold up in court as terrorism case. "Should guys that want to buy guns be off the street, absolutely," one of the Federal officials said.

[snip]

At the press conference announcing the arrests of Ahmed Ferhani and Mohamed Mamdouh, local officials said the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force had the right of first refusal on all terrorism cases, but had opted out of this one. Officials characterized the case as one involving a "pair of lone wolves" who were not part of a broader global terrorism conspiracy.

This is the same FBI that tried to hide its first contacts with an accused attempted bomber, set up all the details of his alleged plot, and made darn sure he never had a real bomb. In other words, the FBI that insists its Mohamud indictment is completely legitimate. But I guess when you're in a pissing match with the NYPD, standards for serious investigations or not suddenly change?