

WHY WOULD THE US GOVERNMENT HAVE DECONFLICTION ISSUES WITH MANSSOR ARBABSJAR IN 2010?

Before I look at the other ways Gregory Saathoff's report opining that Manssor Arbabsiar is not manic hurts the government's case, I want to discuss a rather curious citation Saathoff includes.

Troutman, D. (2010, January 13). Email to Virginia Villareal re: Deconfliction (in reference to a national security concern regarding Manssor Arbabsiar), p. 1.

As you'll recall, the government claims that Arbabsiar first came on their radar in May 2011 when a DEA Informant claimed that Arbabsiar contacted him to arrange a kidnapping.

And yet, according to this, someone was emailing Virginia Villareal (there's a Customs and Border Patrol Officer currently in San Antonio by that name) in January 2010 about a national security issue involving Arbabsiar?

Deconfliction is the term used for when agencies with overlapping interests sort out their turf—particularly if the agencies are using weapons or informants. The timing indicates that it came during—and probably was part of—Arbabsiar's naturalization process in 2009-2010.

DHS: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). (2009, June 24). Memorandum subject: IBIS hit resolution for applicant: Manssor Arbabsiar, p. 1.

DHS: USCIS. (2010, April 23). N 652, naturalization interview results, pp.

1-8.

DHS: USCIS. (2010, August 6). N-400, application for naturalization, pp. 1-10.

DHS: USCIS. (2010, August 30). Form N-445, notice of naturalization oath ceremony, pp. 1-2.

And at one level, it's not all that surprising that there would be a national security concern as Arbabsiar applied for citizenship: his cousin is a high ranking Quds Force member. Indeed that—plus Arbabsiar's criminal background—is one of the reasons it's hard to believe he **even got** citizenship, given that equivalent issues can get a Green Card holder deported. And he appears to have done that without paying for an immigration attorney (he complained to Saathoff he had to pay for an attorney for his son during this period, but not an immigration attorney, though they can be inexpensive).

So at the very least, this suggests at least one other agency was aware of Arbabsiar as he went through the immigration process.

But I do find the timing rather interesting given the way Saathoff describes Arbabsiar's actions that year. He was taking many trips to Iran—purportedly to bring cash back from real estate investments there and he was living in Corpus Christi, away from his wife. (Note, IBIS is the database the government uses to check people as they cross borders to make sure they're not terrorists or drug runners, which is presumably why the entry above and a 2012 one were listed as sources.)

In my interviews with Mr. Arbabsiar and in reviewing documents that were not cited by Dr. First at the time of his declaration, Mr. Arbabsiar acknowledged that this was in fact a period of significant international activity. In addition to attaining his United States citizenship, during early 2010 he spent

most of his time apart from his wife living mostly in Corpus Christi or travelling overseas. In 2010, he flew to Iran on four separate occasions in order to secure and bring back rental money from his Iranian property holdings. He estimated that during these trips he brought back up to \$8,000-\$9,000 on each trip.

[snip]

In his August 4, 2012 interview, he recalled a 2009 trip to Iran where he obtained hair transplant surgery in Iran because it was less expensive than in the U.S. With decreasing revenues in the U.S., he made four separate trips to Iran in 2010 in order to bring back funds from his Iranian investment properties.

[snip]

In fact, 2010 was a year of significant international activity for Mr. Arbabsiar with more international air travel for him than was recorded for any other year in the previous decade. He took four separate flights to Iran during 2010 and also attained his U.S. citizenship and passport. In his interviews with me, he reported that he would bring back money from Iranian investments as well as Iranian goods for his wife and son.

Then his business partner died and yet, in spite of the fact he was financially strapped, he dropped (or rather, lost) the car business.

By late 2010, following the death of his business partner in July, he had moved from Corpus Christi to Austin in order to live at home with his wife. In our September 26 interview, he recalled: "After Steve died, my life changed a lot. Up until that point I was spending some time in Austin and some time in

Corpus. But after he died, I didn't want to do the car business [in Corpus Christi] any more.

[snip]

Living in both Austin and Corpus Christi during that year, it was only late in the year and following his friend's death in July that he finally moved to Austin to live with his wife where he engaged in activities including landscaping around the home and planting fruit trees.

His wife described him during as depressed, sitting at home, in this later period.

For this example, he relies on Ms. Arbabsiar's wife's report that "for roughly one year around approximately 2010, Mr. Arbabsiar was severely depressed, isolating himself in his bedroom and rarely getting out of bed except to pace around his bedroom and chain smoke."

It was after that depression and a period when he was in medical treatment in late 2010 that Arbabsiar reached out to his cousin to build an "export business."

My life was going bad – I had lost my friend and my dad – my cousin, he took advantage of me. I hate to say that, and I trusted him – my whole family, they should help me. I wanted to do a good business, an export business.

Remember, in addition to talking to Narc about killing the Saudi Ambassador, Arbabsiar was also talking about dealing drugs.

Again, all of this might suggest nothing more than an appropriate awareness of Arbabsiar's cousin's identity (but even so, that suggests the myth that Arbabsiar approached Narc out of

the blue is just that—a myth).

But Arbabsiar was a very unlikely person to have gotten his citizenship when and how he did, particularly without the apparent assistance of an immigration lawyer. And between the time the government presumably identified Arbabsiar as an Iranian with ties to Quds Force and the time he ultimately got his citizenship, he made a lot of trips to Iran to get cash. Then, once he got citizenship, he lost his business and went into a funk and then—went to, or went back to, his cousin to launch “a good business, an export business,” and once again he returned to the States with thousands of dollars in cash, just like in 2010. During the entire time the FBI was purportedly watching him set up an assassination attempt, according to the Corpus Christi cops, they never once contacted those cops, not even to check the criminal record that their dead tree files showed.

It sure sounds like the government was following Arbabsiar a lot longer than the 18 months they claim.

But then the report also reveals how Arbabsiar first found Narc.

Mr. Arbabsiar stated that the Mexican woman that he contacted to help identify someone to carry out the assassination attempt on the Saudi Ambassador had a younger sister with whom he had a sexual relationship in 1992, while he was married to his third wife.

So maybe his relationship with the DEA goes back to 1992, when he fucked his way into the family?