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| --- | --- |
| Jihad Report  Mar 25, 2017 - Mar 31, 2017 | |
| Attacks | 39 |
| Killed | 221 |
| Injured | 337 |
| Suicide Blasts | 6 |
| Countries | 10 |

**The Washington DC Crime Syndicate**

US spying is institutionalized – on anyone, anywhere for any reason or none at all.

Invented national security threats, targeting dissent and whistleblowers, along with challenging press freedom undermine fundamental rights.

In Palko v. Connecticut (1937), the Supreme Court called “(f)reedom of thought the matrix, the indispensable condition, of nearly every other form of freedom.”

In Texas v. Johnson (1989), Justice William Brennan, writing for the majority, said “if there is a bedrock principle underlying the First Amendment, it is that government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea offensive or disagreeable.”

“Thomas Jefferson said “(w)hat country can preserve its liberties if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance.” Free speech and other fundamental rights “cannot be limited without being lost.”

Former US Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall stressed “(a)bove all else, the First Amendment means that government has no power to restrict expression (regardless of its) ideas…subject matter (or) content….Our people are guaranteed the right to express any thought, free from government censorship” – along with having all other constitutional protections.

Unaccountable spying on Americans reflects police state rule, operating lawlessly, watching everyone to assure unchallenged control, wanting unacceptable ideas suppressed.

On March 20, intelligence expert [James Bamford](http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/03/20/the-multibillion-dollar-u-s-spy-agency-you-havent-heard-of-trump/) discussed a “multibillion-dollar US spy agency you haven’t heard of,” saying:

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) is located on a “heavily protected military base some 15 miles south of Washington.”

Few Americans know about its “massive headquarters,” larger than the CIA’s or US Capitol.

“Completed in 2011 at a cost of $1.4 billion, the main building measures four football fields long and covers as much ground as two aircraft carriers,” Bamford explained.

“In 2016, the agency purchased 99 acres in St. Louis to construct additional buildings at a cost of $1.75 billion to accommodate the growing workforce, with 3,000 employees already in the city.”

Early in his administration, Obama didn’t know NGA existed. Bamford calls it “by far the most shadowy” of US spy agencies – subverting constitutional protections to keep America safe for privileged interests at the expense of all others.

NGA allegedly confined its spying overseas. According to Bamford, “there’s reason to believe” Trump will expand its mandate to spy as freely domestically as abroad – including secretive overhead surveillance by satellites and drones.

Concern is growing that technology focused on spying abroad “may soon be (used) on (US) citizens,” said Bamford.

As of 2015, no federal statutory limitations existed to control aerial spying domestically. In 2016, Baltimore police began using drones to conduct secretive spy-in-the-sky surveillance of area residents.

America is a total [surveillance society](http://www.thesleuthjournal.com/special-interests/surveillance). Big Brother is no longer fiction. Sophisticated technologies make total monitoring possible, everyone vulnerable, including presidents.

All our moves, transactions and communications can be recorded, compiled and stored for easy access. Anything we say or do can be used against us.

Bill of Rights protections no longer apply. Collecting meta-data communications on Americans is unrelated to national security.

Judicial oversight is absent. Congressional members are told little about what goes on. The CIA, NSA, FBI and other US spy agencies operate ad libitum, doing whatever they wish unaccountably.

Cable and phone companies want online privacy made illegal. They require permission to use personal information about their subscribers.

They want congressional legislation removing this protection. Senator Jeff Flake (R. AZ) and Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R. TN) support the campaign by cable and phone companies to abolish online privacy.

They intend using Congressional Review Act (1996) authority. It lets Congress review, by expedited legislative procedures, federal regulations issued by government agencies.

They can be rescinded by a joint House and Senate resolution. Once repealed, CRA prohibits reissuing the rule in substantially similar form or issuing a new regulation, substantially the same  – “unless the reissued or new rule is specifically authorized by a law enacted after the date of the joint resolution disapproving the original rule.”

Phone and cable companies want online privacy restrictions removed so they can sell consumer information secretly for profit, without requiring permission to do it.

Privacy rights in America are fast disappearing. If phone and cable companies get their way, they’ll be dealt another severe body blow – congressional members serving them at the expense of consumer and constitutional rights

Technology can track everything stationary or moving over an area up to 15-square miles at a time. According to Bamford, two high-tech drones hovering over Manhattan can “observe and follow all outdoor human activity, night and day,” round-the-clock, every day.

Objects “as small as a stick of butter on a plate” can be zoomed in and watched. Technology being developed will “enable drones to remain aloft for years at a time.”

Big Brother-in-the-sky is ominously real, along with its ability to monitor virtually all phone and online communications.

Police states dream of being able to monitor and track everyone in all ways, at all times, giving them control over our lives, freedoms and welfare – in ways Orwell never imagined.

The shocking reality should terrify everyone. Few Americans realize the dangers they face. Public awareness of what’s most important doesn’t exist.

US-style “democracy” serves its privileged class exclusively, at the expense of everyone else, destroying fundamental rights in the process.

**The Russian Leaks About Obama**

The Western media missed an oh-so juicy nugget out Russia recently that should have set off alarm bells in Washington.

Asked about the current state of U.S.-Russia relations, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova gave a long winded answer that can be read below. In her answer, Zakharova suggested Russia may “publish leaks” about “secrets” the Obama administration asked the Russian government to keep private. The shocking statement can be found in the second to last paragraph of Zakharova’s answer highlighted in both bold and italic.  
You could just imagine the headlines this would have made if this was about a Trump administration official.

But because it is about Barack Obama, arguably one of the worst presidents in US history, the liberal mainstream media ignores this completely.

Briefing by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova, Moscow

As per mid.ru:

Question: How do you see the future of Russian-US diplomatic relations in the context of the current atmosphere in Washington? Can you confirm that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson will come to Moscow in April?

Maria Zakharova: Apparently, many volumes have been written about the development of Russian-US relations. I announced the release of the Foreign Ministry’s yearend Diplomatic Bulletin and even showed it at the previous briefing. I believe that about 20 per cent of that bulletin was devoted to Russian-US relations, the way we see them, how we want them to develop, what we expect from Washington, what we are willing to do with the United States, the priority areas of cooperation, areas where our cooperation should be revived without delay and the areas where this can wait, at least for a limited time. This issue has been covered in interviews by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, comments by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov and in numerous statements made at all levels by representatives from various Russian agencies, political analysts and politicians, as well as officials from the legislative and executive authorities. We can talk about bilateral relations with a different degree of mastery, but we would like to start implementing our relationship at long last.

We provided our views on bilateral relations and the reasons for blocking them under President Obama. We said that we were willing to work with the new US administration, under President Trump. I don’t think we need to invent anything in this respect, because so much has been said before. Simply, we should start concrete practical work. We are ready for this.

You know that we always invite our American colleagues and diplomats to join bilateral or multilateral dialogues on issues in which the United States has traditionally played a big and active role, such as Syria, the consultations in Astana and many others. We expect Washington to formulate its foreign policy approaches in the form of a concept. We are ready for pragmatic and specific work on the principles that we have described many times.

As for the visit by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and the information about it, this is what I can say. It’s not a secret that preparations for any visit include the coordination of the time when it can be announced. Visits by foreign ministers are public events that are never kept secret. At least, I don’t know about any secret visits by foreign ministers in Russia or the United States. Preparations for such a visit also include the coordination of the format, agenda and the date it can be announced to the public. It is a matter of propriety and respect for each other’s interests. One side proposes a date, and the other side is expected to accept it. This date should be acceptable to both sides, because the foreign ministers have packed schedules. The issue also concerns the coordination of the agenda by experts. One side informs the other side of the issues it plans to discuss, and the other side needs to respond that the agenda is acceptable. In other words, the sides need to reach agreements on many issues, after which they can announce an upcoming visit. This is how we work with our colleagues.

To tell the truth, over the past few years we’ve seen many strange things happen in Washington in connection with preparations for visits or talks by our foreign ministers. The US Department of State has more than once asked us not to announce planned visits until the last minute. This is not our tradition. We have been operating openly for years, but we have respected the requests we have received from our colleagues in Washington in the past few years. But what happened after that? First, the US Department of State asked us to keep the planned visit quiet and not to announce it until the last possible minute, until we coordinated the date. We did as they asked. But a day or two later the information was leaked by the US State Department and sometimes by the US administration. Frankly, this put Russia and the media in a strange situation, because they didn’t know who to believe – the official agencies or the many leaks.

It is difficult to say if this diplomatic communication is a US tradition or the latest technique. But it definitely doesn’t correspond to our traditions. We believe that everything we coordinate should be made available to the media in accordance with diplomatic procedure. When we coordinate a visit and the date for announcing it, the information should be made public calmly and as agreed. This is what we do in relations with our colleagues from other countries.

As I said, such cases in our relations with the US Department of State have become a bad tradition over the past few years. So, I can say in response to your question that we will make the date and format of contacts between the Russian and US foreign ministers public after we coordinate them. We won’t keep them quiet. At this point, I don’t have any information I can share with you. I can say that this visit and such contacts are possible in principle, but it would be premature to talk about timeframes.

Also, I would like to say that if the practice of leaking information that concerns not just the United States but also Russia, which has become a tradition in Washington in the past few years, continues, there will come a day when the media will publish leaks about the things that Washington asked us to keep secret, for example, things that happened during President Obama’s terms in office. Believe me, this could be very interesting information.  
Our American colleagues must decide if they respect the diplomatic procedure, if they keep their word on the arrangements made between us, primarily arrangements made at their own request, or we create a few very nice surprises for each other.

We can only assume that if Obama loyalists still hiding in the White House continue to leak intel, it’s inevitable that Russia will drop a bomb about Obama.

**In the Shadow of the Shadows**

If you’re one of the countless Americans who was distraught to learn of the revelations made by former National Security Agency (NSA) contractor Edward Snowden, **the mere idea that there might be yet another agency out there - perhaps just as powerful and much more intrusive -  should give you goosebumps.**

Foreign Policy [reports](http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/03/20/the-multibillion-dollar-u-s-spy-agency-you-havent-heard-of-trump/) that the **National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, or NGA, is an obscure spy agency** former President Barack Obama had a hard time wrapping his mind around back in 2009. But as the president grew fond of drone warfare, finding a way to [launch wars without having to go through Congress](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/george-will-obama-needs-congress-to-approve-this-war/2014/09/17/26de9d3e-3dc9-11e4-b0ea-8141703bbf6f_story.html) for the proper authorization, the NGA also became more relevant. Now, President Donald Trump is expected to further explore the multibillion-dollar surveillance network.

Like the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the National Security Agency (NSA), **the NGA is an intelligence agency, but it also serves as a combat support institution that functions under the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD).**

With headquarters bigger than the CIA’s, the building cost $1.4 billion to be completed in 2011. In 2016, the NGA bought an extra 99 acres in St. Louis, building additional structures that cost taxpayers an extra $1.75 billion.

**Enjoying the extra budget Obama threw at them, the NGA became one of the most obscure intelligence agencies precisely because it relies on the work of drones.**

As a body of government that has only one task — to analyze images and videos captured by drones in the Middle East — the NGA is mighty powerful. So why haven’t we heard of it before?

## The Shadow Agency That Sees It All

**Prior to Trump’s inauguration, the NGA only targeted the Middle East or whatever spy satellites orbiting the globe captured. As far as most of us knew, the agency refrained from pointing its ultra-high-resolution cameras toward the United States. That alone may be why the NGA has been able to stay out of scandals for the most part.**

But under Trump, things may look much worse — as if spying on countless people abroad weren’t enough.

Recently, for instance, he [gave the CIA](http://thehill.com/policy/defense/323808-trump-gives-cia-power-to-launch-drone-strikes-report) the power to wage covert drone warfare, shielding important information on such operations simply by allowing the agency to carry out missions without first seeking authorization from the Pentagon.

Now, Trump might as well move on to NGA, hoping to boost “national security” by turning the agency’s all seeing eyes toward American soil.

As the president [hopes to get more money for defense](http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/16/politics/donald-trump-defense-budget-blueprint/), many have speculated whether he will [start to use](http://www.syracuse.com/politics/index.ssf/2016/04/trump_tells_syracusecom_us_drones_should_patrol_both_borders_247.html) drones at home, especially since he has already [suggested](http://www.politico.com/story/2013/06/edward-snowden-nsa-leak-donald-trump-093232) he supports agencies like the NSA based on his desire to target “terrorists.” There’s [nothing that implies](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-fisa-idUSKBN16855P) he wants to slow down the surveillance state.  The White House has [expressed](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-fisa-idUSKBN16855P) its desire to renew Obama-era spying powers — even as the president battles critics who deny his claims that his conversations were [intercepted at the same time foreign nationals were under surveillance in 2016](https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/house-intelligence-chair-says-its-possible-trumps-communications-were-intercepted/2017/03/22/f45e18ba-0f2d-11e7-9b0d-d27c98455440_story.html).

A partially redacted March 2016 [report](https://www.scribd.com/document/303431440/Use-of-unmanned-aircraft-systems#fullscreen) released by the Pentagon revealed that drones had already been used domestically on about 20 or fewer occasions between 2006 and 2015. Though some of these operations mostly [involved](https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Web%20site%20UAS%20Tracker.pdf) natural disasters, National Guard training, and search and rescue missions, quotes from an Air Force law [review article](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2379141) found their way into the report. In it, Dawn M. K. Zoldi wrote that technology designed to spy on targets abroad could soon be used against American citizens.

“As the nation winds down these wars,” the report explains, and ”assets become available to support other combatant command (COCOM) or U.S. agencies, the appetite to use them in the domestic environment to collect airborne imagery continues to grow.”

**Up until 2015, oversight was so loose that the capabilities provided by the DOD’s unmanned aircraft system weren’t under scrutiny by any other agency.** Without statutes that specify the rules such federal government agencies should follow, watchdogs find it hard to keep track.

**Attacking Bridges**

A few years ago, I published a paper called *The Attack of the Seven Bridges.*  In this paper, I described a low tech and absolutely unpreventable method of destroying bridges. I then selected 7 critical bridges that are vital to the movement of goods in America that would each take several years to replace. The paper described how these bridges could be destroyed in a matter of a few hours. That is why this story caught my eye.

If you were looking for confirmation that the nation’s infrastructure needs a complete overhaul, ***a collapsing bridge in Atlanta may have provided it in stark imagery.***

Around 6:30 p.m. Thursday night, a fire broke out under a section of the highway bridge on busy I-85 in Atlanta, Georgia. Just thirty minutes later, **a huge section of that bridge burst into flames and completely collapsed.**

Amazingly, no motorists were injured when this happened:

***“This is as serious a transportation crisis as we could have,”*** Mayor Kasim Reed said, noting that he had spoken with the FBI and terrorism was not suspected at this time.

**Authorities still don’t know what exactly caused the fire** as the entire area is still too unsafe for crews to examine, but it is believed that PVC piping stored under the bridge (as shown on a screen capture from Google maps below) caught fire first.

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal has declared a state of emergency, however, as authorities claim the entire transportation network in Atlanta has been significantly impacted, including five different public bus lines. In addition, DeKalb County Schools were canceled Friday, City of Atlanta government offices won’t open until 10 am, and all non-essential DeKalb County government workers will not be required to report in to work.

**City officials have no idea when the bridge in what is otherwise a heavy traffic area will be able to be fixed.**

In other words, traffic is going to be a bitch. This is a simple bridge. Take one out that crosses the Mississippi, or a deep canyon, or a bay, and you have severely curtailed traffic for perhaps two to three years.

Three people were taken into custody in connection with a fire on I-85 that caused a bridge to collapse, according to the state fire marshal's office.

Basil Eleby, 40, was charged with first degree criminal damage to property and criminal trespassing. Authorities have not yet said what led to the charges.

What could cause such a fire? Why would a fire under a concrete and steel bridge be possible? The answer is a substance called Red Mercury. As luck would have it, the same day this strange fire broke out under a bridge in Atlanta, this happened in the same exact city:

Officials are investigating in downtown Atlanta after reports that a man claiming to have red mercury from Africa walked into the Region 2 location of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, police said.

“We received a call regarding a male coming into the facility carrying red mercury from Africa,” Atlanta police Officer Stephanie Brown said. “We are still gathering details on the call.”

Red mercury is reportedly a substance used to create nuclear bombs, but its existence has not been documented.

Brown said Homeland Security is en route to the location.

Parts of Peachtree Street, Peachtree Center Avenue and Courtland Street have been closed and officers are redirecting traffic.

A hazmat team, bomb squad and fire trucks were seen near the investigation.

No other details were released.

It is purported to be mercuric iodide, a poisonous, odorless, tasteless, water-insoluble scarlet-red powder that becomes yellow when heated above 126 °C, due to a [thermochromatic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thermochromism) change in crystalline structure.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-1)[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-2) However, samples of "red mercury" obtained from arrested would-be terrorists invariably consisted of nothing more than various red dyes or powders of little value, which may have been sold as part of a campaign intended to flush out potential nuclear smugglers.

The "red mercury" hoax was first reported in 1979, and was commonly discussed in the media in the 1990s. Prices as high as $1,800,000 per kilogram were reported.

References to red solid mercury first appeared in major Soviet and western media sources in the late 1980s. The articles were never specific as to what exactly red mercury was, but nevertheless claimed it was of great importance in nuclear bombs, or that it was used in the building of [boosted fission weapons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boosted_fission_weapon). Almost as soon as the stories appeared, people started attempting to buy it. At that point the exact nature of the substance started to change, and eventually turned into anything the buyer happened to be interested in. As [*New Scientist*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Scientist) reported in 1992, a [Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_Livermore_National_Laboratory) report outlined that:

When red mercury first appeared on the international black market 15 years ago, the supposedly top secret nuclear material was 'red' because it came from Russia. When it resurfaced last year in the formerly communist states of Eastern Europe it had unaccountably acquired a red colour. But then, as a report from the US Department of Energy reveals, mysterious transformations are red mercury's stock in trade.

The report, compiled by researchers at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, shows that in the hands of hoaxers and conmen, red mercury can do almost anything the aspiring Third World demagogue wants it to. You want a short cut to making an atom bomb? You want the key to Soviet ballistic missile guidance systems? Or perhaps you want the Russian alternative to the anti-radar paint on the [stealth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stealth_technology) bomber? What you need is red mercury.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-4)

A key event in the history of the red mercury story was an article in the daily Russian newspaper [*Pravda*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pravda) in 1993. Claiming to be based on leaked top secret memos, they noted that red mercury was:

[A] super-conductive material used for producing high-precision conventional and nuclear bomb explosives, 'Stealth' surfaces and self-guided warheads. Primary end-users are major aerospace and nuclear-industry companies in the United States and France along with nations aspiring to join the nuclear club, such as South Africa, Israel, Iran, Iraq, and Libya.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-Yelysingate-5)

Two TV documentaries about red mercury were made by [Channel 4](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Channel_4), airing in 1993 and 1994, *Trail of Red Mercury* and *Pocket Neutron*, which claimed to have "startling evidence that Russian scientists have designed a miniature neutron bomb using a mysterious compound called red mercury".[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-doomsday-6)

[Samuel T. Cohen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_T._Cohen), an American physicist who worked on building the atomic bomb, said in his autobiography that red mercury is manufactured by "mixing special nuclear materials in very small amounts into the ordinary compound and then inserting the mixture into a nuclear reactor or bombarding it with a particle-accelerator beam." When detonated, this mixture allegedly becomes "extremely hot, which allows pressures and temperatures to be built up that are capable of igniting the heavy hydrogen and producing a pure-fusion mini neutron bomb."[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-doomsday-6)

Red mercury was offered for sale throughout Europe and the Middle East by Russian businessmen, who found many buyers who would pay almost anything for the substance even though they had no idea what it was. A study for the [*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulletin_of_the_Atomic_Scientists) in 1997 has perhaps the best summary of the topic:

The asking price for red mercury ranged from $100,000 to $300,000 per kilogram. Sometimes the material would be irradiated or shipped in containers with radioactive symbols, perhaps to convince potential buyers of its strategic value. But samples seized by police contained only [mercury(II) oxide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercury%28II%29_oxide), [mercury(II) iodide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercury%28II%29_iodide), or mercury mixed with red dye — hardly materials of interest to weapons-makers.

Following the arrest of several men in Britain in September 2004, on suspicion that they were trying to buy a kilogram of red mercury for £300,000, the [International Atomic Energy Agency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Atomic_Energy_Agency) made a statement dismissing claims that the substance is real. "Red mercury doesn't exist," said the spokesman. "The whole thing is a bunch of [malarkey](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/malarkey)."[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-7) When the case came to trial at the [Old Bailey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Bailey) in April 2006, it became apparent that [*News of the World*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/News_of_the_World)*'*s "fake sheikh" [Mazher Mahmood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazher_Mahmood) had worked with the police to catch the three men, Dominic Martins, Roque Fernandes and Abdurahman Kanyare. They were tried for "trying to set up funding or property for terrorism" and "having an article (a highly dangerous mercury based substance) for terrorism". According to the prosecutor, red mercury was believed to be a material which could cause a large explosion, possibly even a nuclear reaction, but whether or not red mercury actually existed was irrelevant to the prosecution.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-8) All three men were acquitted in July 2006.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-9)

## Analysis

A variety of different items have been chemically analyzed as putative samples of "red mercury" since the substance first came to the attention of the media, but no single substance was found in these items. A sample of radioactive material was seized by German police in May 1994. This consisted of a complex mixture of elements, including about 10% by weight [plutonium](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plutonium), with the remainder consisting of 61% [mercury](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercury_%28element%29), 11% [antimony](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antimony), 6% [oxygen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxygen), 2% [iodine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iodine) and 1.6% [gallium](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallium). A formula reported for the powder component of the mixture was Hg6Sb2O8 ([mercury(II) cyclopyrorthoantimonate](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mercury%28II%29_cyclopyrorthoantimonate&action=edit&redlink=1)), with some of the mercury present in its pure metallic form.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-10) The reason why somebody had assembled this complex mixture of chemicals is unknown; equally puzzling was the presence of fragments of glass and brush bristles, suggesting that someone had dropped a bottle of this substance and then swept it up into a new container.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-11)

In contrast, an analysis reported in 1998 of a different "red mercury" sample concluded that this sample was a non-radioactive mixture of elemental mercury, water and [mercury(II) iodide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercury%28II%29_iodide), which is a red colored chemical.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-Grant-3) Similarly, another analysis of a sample recovered in Zagreb in November 2003 reported that this item contained only mercury.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-Sudac-12) One formula that had been claimed previously for red mercury was Hg2Sb2O7 ([mercury(II) pyroantimonate](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mercury%28II%29_pyroantimonate&action=edit&redlink=1)), but no antimony was detected in this 2003 sample.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-Sudac-12)[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-13)

## Explanations

Red mercury was described by many commentators[*[who?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Words_to_watch" \l "Unsupported_attributions" \o "Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Words to watch)*], and the exact nature of its supposed working mechanism varied widely among them. In general, however, none of these explanations appear to be scientifically or historically supportable.

### Background

Traditional [staged thermonuclear weapons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_weapon_design#Two-stage_thermonuclear_weapons) consist of two parts, a [fission](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_fission) "primary" and a fusion/fission "secondary". The energy released by the primary when it explodes is used to (indirectly) compress the secondary and start a [fusion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_fusion) reaction within it. Conventional explosives are far too weak to provide the level of compression needed.

The primary is generally built as small as possible, due to the fact that the energy released by the secondary is much larger, and thus building a larger primary is generally inefficient. There is a lower limit on the size of the primary that can be built, known as the [critical mass](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_mass). For weapons grade [plutonium](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plutonium), this is around 10 kg. This can be reduced through the use of [neutron reflectors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neutron_reflector) or clever arrangements of explosives to compress the core, but these methods generally add to the size and complexity of the resulting device.

Due to the need for a fission primary, and the difficulty of purifying weapons-grade fissile materials, the majority of [arms control](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms_control) efforts to limit [nuclear proliferation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_proliferation) rely on the detection and control of the fissile material and the equipment needed to obtain it.

### Shortcut to fissionable material

A theory popular in the mid-1990s was that red mercury facilitated the enrichment of uranium to weapons-grade purity. Conventionally, such enrichment is usually done with [Zippe-type centrifuges](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zippe-type_centrifuge), and takes several years. Red mercury was speculated[*[who?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Words_to_watch" \l "Unsupported_attributions" \o "Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Words to watch)*] to eliminate this costly and time-consuming step. Although this would not eliminate the possibility of detecting the material, it could escape detection during enrichment as the facilities hosting centrifuges normally used in this process are very large and require equipment that can be fairly easily tracked internationally. Eliminating such equipment would in theory greatly ease the construction of a clandestine nuclear weapon.

### Shortcut to fusible material

A key part of the secondary in a [fusion bomb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fusion_bomb) is [lithium-6](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isotopes_of_lithium)-deuteride. When irradiated with high-energy [neutrons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neutron), Li-6 creates [tritium](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tritium), which mixes with the deuterium in the same mixture and fuses at a relatively low temperature. Russian weapon designers have reported (1993) that red mercury was the Soviet codename for lithium-6, which has an affinity for mercury and tends to acquire a red colour due to mercuric impurities during its separation process.[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-14)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-15)

### Red mercury as a ballotechnic

[Samuel T. Cohen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_T._Cohen), the "father of the [neutron bomb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neutron_bomb)", claimed for some time that red mercury is a powerful explosive-like chemical known as a [ballotechnic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballotechnics). The energy released during its reaction is allegedly enough to directly compress the secondary without the need for a fission primary in a [thermonuclear weapon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_weapon_design). He claimed that he learned that the Soviet scientists perfected the use of red mercury and used it to produce a number of [softball](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Softball)-sized [pure fusion bombs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pure_fusion_weapon) weighing as little as 10 lb (4.5 kg), which he claimed were made in large numbers.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-fse-16)

He went on to claim that the reason this is not more widely known is that elements within the US power structure are deliberately keeping it "under wraps" due to the frightening implications such a weapon would have on nuclear proliferation. Since a red mercury bomb would require no fissile material, it would seemingly be impossible to protect against its widespread proliferation given current arms control methodologies. Instead of trying to do so, they simply claim it doesn't exist, while acknowledging its existence privately. Cohen also claimed that when President [Boris Yeltsin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boris_Yeltsin) took power, he secretly authorized the sale of red mercury on the international market, and that fake versions of it were sometimes offered to gullible buyers.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-fse-16)

Cohen's claims appear to be difficult to support scientifically. The amount of energy released by the fission primary is thousands of times greater than that released by conventional explosives, and it appears[*[who?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Words_to_watch" \l "Unsupported_attributions" \o "Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Words to watch)*] that the "red mercury" approach would be orders of magnitude smaller than required. Furthermore, ballotechnic materials are those that do *not* explode, so it is difficult to understand how their energy could be used to produce compression at all.[*[original research?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:No_original_research" \o "Wikipedia:No original research)*]

Additionally, it appears there is no independent confirmation of any sort of Cohen's claims to the reality of red mercury. The scientists[*[who?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Words_to_watch" \l "Unsupported_attributions" \o "Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Words to watch)*] in charge of the labs where the material would have been made have publicly dismissed the claims (see below), as have numerous US colleagues, including [Edward Teller](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Teller).

According to Cohen,[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-fse-16) veteran nuclear weapon designer Dr. [Frank Barnaby](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Barnaby) conducted secret interviews with Russian scientists who told him that red mercury was produced by dissolving mercury antimony oxide in mercury, heating and [irradiating](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irradiation) the resultant [amalgam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amalgam_%28chemistry%29), and then removing the elemental mercury through evaporation.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-17) The irradiation was reportedly carried out by placing the substance inside a nuclear reactor.[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-18)

### Stealth paint

As mentioned earlier, one of the origins of the term "red mercury" was in the Russian newspaper [*Pravda*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pravda), which claimed that red mercury was "a super-conductive material used for producing high-precision conventional and nuclear bomb explosives, 'stealth' surfaces and self-guided warheads."[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-Yelysingate-5) Any substance with these sorts of highly differing properties would be suspect to most, but the stealth story continued to have some traction long after most had dismissed the entire story.

### Metallic hydrogen

Given that metallic hydrogen has been discovered (allegedly around 2017) it is possible though unlikely that it may have been discovered earlier through unrelated experimentation. It has been said that one possible way to make it in bulk is to use a hydrogen rich polymer under high pressure and/or pulsed laser irradiation but the sample found so far is actually a shiny red metal. If MH is indeed metastable then it would make a very effective explosive in the right configuration, 38 times more powerful than RDX and ideal for replacing the shaped charges used in a conventional warhead although this is theoretical at the current time. Project Orion may well have used a variant of this had it not been canceled due to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Intriguingly MH is also theorized to be a superconductor well above room temperature so may have found applications in sensors and powerful computers even without the ability to make it in bulk, some reports suggest that the sample obtained shows weak signs of a Meissner effect even at 250K.

### Nuclear "sting" operations

Red mercury is thought by some to be the invention of an intelligence agency or criminal gang for the purpose of deceiving terrorists and rogue states who were trying to acquire nuclear technology on the black market.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_mercury#cite_note-19) One televised report indicated that the [Soviet Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union) encouraged the [KGB](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/KGB) and [GRU](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glavnoye_Razvedyvatel%27noye_Upravleniye) to arrange [sting operations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sting_operation) for the detection of those seeking to deal in nuclear materials.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] The Soviet intelligence services allegedly created a myth of the necessity of "red mercury" for the sorts of nuclear devices that [terrorists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism) and rogue governments might seek. Political entities that already had nuclear weapons did nothing to debunk the myth.

Jane’s Intelligence Review in 1999 suggested that victims of red mercury scams may have included Osama bin Laden

**The Swamp**

The Awan Brothers

3 Awan brothers are named by Webb : Imran, Jamal and Abid. (A 4th brother and wife of one of the Awan’s are also believed to be involved).

Originally installed in congressional positions by Greg Meeks who is widely regarded as the most corrupt member of congress.

I will preface this discussion by stating you will find some variation in the numbers cited. I believe that is because I quoted from stories as the case was developing. The Daily Caller was the primary source for most of the news on the net. I tried to be as accurate as possible with the facts quoting the sources I found. I am posting this because I want answers, it is not a definitive work. I do, however, believe the breach is every bit as consequential as the hillary email server and the CIA Wikileak.

[Why isn’t the MSM interested in the Awan Brothers: the three IT specialists fired for rooting through House Democrats’ sensitive files?](https://spectator.org/the-invisible-awan-brothers-scandal/)

[Who are the Awan IT Staff that hacked House Intelligence Computers? And Why Won’t the Media cover this Evidence-based Story?](https://investmentwatchblog.com/who-are-the-awan-it-staff-that-hacked-house-intelligence-computers-and-why-wont-the-media-cover-this-evidence-based-story-research-node/)

I know a bunch of shills will tear me up screaming, “ya got no proof,” but indulge me in a conspiracy theory. I think the greatest disservice the MSM had managed to perpetuate is the fallacy that other than the obvious connection of all these people there is otherwise no connection between these events.

Let’s assume for the moment that the items described here are patterns of political belief and criminal activity. They aren’t individual acts, but on going criminal conspiracies. Let’s not look at this as an isolated event. While I’m detailing the actions of the Awan brothers. I believe, but can not prove, those action may have been perpetuated in concert with other individuals at work in the under belly of the government. It’s almost as if disparate groups come in contact occasionally when their objectives overlap. As I stated, I have no proof of this, but it stands to reason the flood of cyber attacks and leaks may have overlapped through the individuals linked in the different events. For example, Debbie Wasserman Schultz was an integral player in the DNC Hacks and also introduced the Awan brothers to Congress. Is there a connection? Maybe, maybe not. It is not that far fetched, this has happened before, see the [Silverman group](http://spartacus-educational.com/George_Silverman.htm). Silverman associated with the [CPUSA](http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/printgroupProfile.asp?grpid=7511) and knew [Jarrett’s father, Dr. James Bowman](https://www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/politics/item/21133-valerie-jarretts-communist-ties-confirmed-by-judicial-watch) and through [three degrees of separation](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/07/nsa-admits-it-analyzes-more-peoples-data-previously-revealed/313220/) used by the NSA is directly connected to [Valerie Jerrett](http://www.judicialwatch.org/blog/2015/06/communism-in-jarretts-family/). If it is good enough for the IC to open an inquiry why can’t we indulge in some similar speculation.

• The First anomalous fact is the Media. Why have they largely ignored the issue. Before you cyber trolls jump on me, I would like you to consider two facts. Congress deals with very classified material all the time. The Awan brothers could never have had a secret clearance for any other group than Congress. There is no news story there?

• The Second error is the “smoking gun.” The evidence is always covered up with a coincidence, a cover story if you will. While I believe the politicos in D.C. are pampered rubes, they do have a good support staff, and some have been trained to support clandestine operations. The rest have been hammered with political optics for the entirety of their career in D.C.. They are all trained to control optics and the dissemination of the truth.

• The Third falesy is the “bad guy.” Why does everyone think an ongoing criminal conspiracy can be distilled down to a single criminal committing a crime rather than a pattern of criminal behavior with one or more groups profiting off the criminal activities. It is best to think of their actions like organized crime and should be prosecuted like a [RICO](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/part-I/chapter-96) Statute. An on going criminal enterprise.

### The Media

Why hasn’t the media made this the top news story to at least go along with the Russian hack. Let’s face it, the media doesn’t care about the damage to the country, they only care about their partisan agenda. If they didn’t they would cover stories damaging to the DNC.

With a [$600,000,000 CIA contract](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.thenation.com/article/amazon-washington-post-and-600-million-cia-contract/&ved=0ahUKEwig9ou9uuXSAhVIqlQKHRq-B9IQFggaMAA&usg=AFQjCNHV5bq2XmMVImJfxLZwNeg3uzppTQ&sig2=ptiqmz35ckn0791VFSQ-XQ) you would think the Washington Post could afford an investigative journalist or two. Perhaps CNN will take up an interest as this rabbit hole runs deep and wide. Don’t hold your breath.

Snowflakes and “journalists” can call Trump a fascist, but there is nothing connecting an enormous breach of the United States Security Apparatus by as many as 80 Democrat members of Congress (past and present). We rail on about the Russians and Trump, but the media avoids providing nightly updates about these 5 spies that have compromised congress. The answer is simple, the Awan Brothers are Muslim and the “victims” are Dems. Several of the Congressmen involved in the breach have gone so far as to blame the allegations on [Islamophobia](http://www.politico.com/story/2017/03/house-democrats-it-staffers-hina-alvi-imran-awan-235569).

Meeks said he was hesitant to believe the accusations against Alvi, Imran Awan and the three other staffers, saying their background as Muslim Americans, some with ties to Pakistan, could make them easy targets for false charges.

This story damages the narrative that Muslims are benevolent members of the government and Dems care about the country. It really shows the depth of the progressive aims to “[fundamentally transforming the United States of America](http://www.claremont.org/crb/basicpage/transformers/).

This is where the conspiracy theory comes in. Give me a little latitude to connect the dots, and let’s see where this trail goes…

# [An Alleged Muslim Spy Ring – Is This Why Rex Tillerson Cleaned House?](http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-02-11/alleged-muslim-spy-ring-why-rex-tillerson-cleaned-house)

The mainstream media seemed far more interested in obfuscating the details regarding the Tillerson terminations than they were in covering what could be one of the most dangerous intelligence leaks in years, of which there has been but a peep out of any major news outlet. Captain Joseph R. John (Navy-Ret.) has stated that he believes the Muslim Brotherhood “[fifth column” has “infiltrated U.S. Government](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2016/06/30/capt-joseph-john-muslim-brotherhood-fifth-column-infiltrated-u-s-government/),” and if he is correct, the Awan brothers could very well be a part of this infiltration.

The media is [90% Democrat](http://m.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/nov/8/republicans-media-bias-claims-boosted-by-scarcity-/) and I would argue that in recent years the mainline Dems have gone hard left almost Marxist. They have an almost suicidal pact with Islamists. Where does this scandal connect with Middle Eastern Islamists?

One might well look at the set of circumstances laid out above and see in it a scandal that would make Watergate look like a petty break-in. One might then scratch his or her head and wonder — why on earth would the New York Times or the Washington Post, which incidentally just hired John Podesta (speaking of horrendous cybersecurity!) as a columnist, have virtually no interest in the Awans at all?

Do Carlos Slim and Jeff Bezos, one might ask, really believe they can’t sell papers with such a story to tell?

### The Smoking Gun

[EXCLUSIVE: House Intelligence, Foreign Affairs Committee Members Compromised By Rogue IT Staff](http://dailycaller.com/2017/02/04/exclusive-house-intelligence-it-staffers-fired-in-computer-security-probe/)

[Fox News](http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2017/02/03/police-probing-it-contractors-for-house-dems-over-unauthorized-computer-access.html) is told the employees made “unauthorized access” to the House computer system.

Further, there were instances where House information was discovered in an external “cloud” server. The contractors in question reportedly were sending and storing House-related information in that off-site server.

“That violates House rules and it puts the House at risk,” a source familiar with the investigation said.

It is unclear whether the access issues exposed the House’s networks to potential hackers or spying efforts by unfriendly nations or terrorist groups, at a time when Washington is on high alert for such cyber-activity.

Actually the last statement has been refuted. It has been alleged that Imran Awan had achieved a privilege escalation through [Social Engineering](http://dailycaller.com/2017/03/09/suspect-in-house-it-security-probe-also-had-access-to-dnc-emails/). Essentially Imran through the political clout around of the Congressional leaders he worked for and convinced the Capitol Hill IT staff to escalate the Awans to super user privileges to work on the “Congressional Machines”. One device in particular was the Wasserman iPad compromised in the DNC Leak. It has been also alleged they may have had Podesta’s password. Since the Dems approved the privilege escalation it is now forensically difficult to determine if the Russians leaked the emails or the “enormously trustworthy and drunken” Awan brothers sold access to the DNC servers.

[House Hacking Suspects Could Read Every Email Dozens Of Congressmen Sent And Received](http://dailycaller.com/2017/03/13/house-hacking-suspects-could-read-every-email-dozens-of-congressmen-sent-and-received/)

Imran Awan bullied central IT to bend the rules for him so there wouldn’t be a paper trail about the unusually high permissions he was requesting. And their actions were not logged, so members have no way of knowing what information they may have taken, the central IT employee said.

After obtaining access to the Capitol server system, the Awan brothers could control all aspects of a congressman system. They sold and configured the hardware setting permissions and remote access to maintain the devices remotely. Essentially the keys to the kingdom. Through congressional requests they managed to completely compromise the network. They could read email, transfer files, install applications (i.e. key loggers). The latter reports that the systems and network were completely compromised. Beyond that, Imran had bypassed IT key loggers and reporting systems by gaining remote access directly to congressional computers.

[House Hacking Suspects Could Read Every Email Dozens Of Congressmen Sent And Received](http://dailycaller.com/2017/03/13/house-hacking-suspects-could-read-every-email-dozens-of-congressmen-sent-and-received/)

The central IT staffer said any suggestion that the brothers’ access didn’t span the full gamut of congressional intrigue was silly because they were the ones giving out permissions.

The problem is that once they bypassed internal security there was no [logging of their actions](http://dailycaller.com/2017/03/13/house-hacking-suspects-could-read-every-email-dozens-of-congressmen-sent-and-received/). House authorities set their sights on the possibility that a remote server had been used to transfer files off of Congressional members computers. The investigation revealed that Imran had been [stealing money, equipment, and over charging for services](http://dailycaller.com/2017/02/07/congress-it-probe-suspects-had-massive-debts-years-of-suspicious-activity/). In total for almost 10 years and almost 80 Democrat members of Congress were compromised.

This is where things go hinkey. Rather than turning the case over to the FBI the case is turned over to U.S.C. Police. They are investigating the theft, not the data breach.

Let’s state that again…

### The USCP are investigation the theft of Equipment not the Loss Of Congressional Data.

[Congressional IT Staff Under Investigation In Alleged Procurement Scam](https://www.buzzfeed.com/johnstanton/feds-arrest-five-congressional-it-contractors-at-the-capitol?utm_term=.jdKQglv0N#.aodQWknOX)

“At the request of Members of Congress, the United States Capitol Police are investigating the actions of House IT support staff,” Malecki said in a statement. “No Members are being investigated. No arrests have been made. It should be noted that, administratively, House staff were asked to update their security settings as a best practice. We have no further comment on the ongoing investigation at this time.”

### The Bad Guy

### Two of the brothers, Imran and Jamal, have been linked to an emerging security breach

The Awan brothers managed to get access to the Dems committee computers by just asking for the passwords. In addition the Awan brothers sold the congress outrageously priced equipment and broke into members of Congress’ offices to steal equipment and or data.

[House staffers under criminal investigation for alleged equipment theft](http://www.politico.com/story/2017/02/house-staffers-investigation-equipment-234586)

Five House employees are under criminal investigation amid allegations that they stole equipment from more than 20 member offices and accessed House IT systems without lawmakers’ knowledge.

More than 20 members were victimized by the alleged procurement scam and chiefs of staff for the lawmakers were briefed on the matter Thursday.

The former staffer said “Jamal was always there,” but Imran would only work “odd hours.”

And who is investigating this fiasco?

Where is the FBI and why have they left it to the DC police? Is it a “limited hangout” they hope to bury by the promoting the administration’s ties to Boris and Natasha?

D.C. Metro police have been brought into the investigation rather than the F.B.I at the request of the [Congressional members](http://www.politico.com/story/2017/02/house-staffers-investigation-equipment-234586) involved with the Awan Brothers.

A source in the briefing said the Sergeant-at-Arms confirmed the U.S. Capitol Police is conducting an active criminal investigation but said no arrests have been made. The source said the FBI is not involved in the investigation.

“At the request of members of Congress, the United States Capitol Police are investigating the actions of House IT support staff. No members are being investigated. No arrests have been made.

Why aren’t the FBI involved? I can only speculate, but it would mean that a FBI forensic team would have to comb through all of those congressional computers to determine the extent of the security compromise and data lost. The Dems just didn’t seem up for the inconvenience of allowing the FBI investigation to go forward.

The Awan Brothers had the keys to the kingdom. Physical security is paramount to cyber security. If a hacker has Physical access to a machine they own it. It is the simplest hack to conduct. The Awar Bros had Debbie Wasserman Schultz’s machine, along with Schultz, at least 80 other Dems also hired the [Awan Brothers](https://emsnews.wordpress.com/2017/03/14/meet-the-awan-brothers-from-pakistan-they-ran-dnc-congress-computers-committed-treason/) to provide IT support at significantly higher rates than normal IT support.

Jamal, who public records suggest is only 22 years old and first began working in the House when he was 20, was paid nearly $160,000 a year, or three times the average House IT staff salary, according to InsideGov, which tracks congressional salaries. Abid was paid $161,000 and Imran $165,000.

Democrats evidently [paid the Awan brothers over $4 MILLION dollars](http://dailycaller.com/2017/03/01/pakistani-suspects-in-house-it-probe-received-4-million-from-dem-reps/).

Despite the fact that these individuals, reportedly heavily in debt, would have failed security clearances they were able to receive top salary from Dems including members of the intelligence panel and members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs were among the dozens of members who employed the suspects on a shared basis. The two committees deal with many of the nation’s most sensitive issues, information and documents, including those related to the war on terrorism.

[Where’s The Evidence? Hillary’s Henchmen and the Awan Brothers Hack vs. MSM and Pelosi’s Russia, Russia, Russia Meme](https://www.opednews.com/populum/pagem.php?f=Where-s-The-Evidence-Hill-by-Eric-Coble-Conspiracy_Evidence_FBI_Hillary-Clinton-170304-861.html)

Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, who was shamed for the Democratic National Committee conspiracy against Bernie Sanders, recommended the Awan Brothers for their positions and Representative Jackie Speier asked for their [TOP SECRET CLEARANCE](https://fas.org/irp/congress/2016_cr/hpsci-hac.pdf).

[Whatever Happened with the Awan Brothers?](http://subrealism.blogspot.com/2017/02/whatever-happened-with-awan-brothers.html?m=1)

[frontpagemag](http://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/265729/muslim-brotherhood-security-breach-congress-daniel-greenfield) | Last year, eight members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued a demand that their staffers be granted access to top secret classified information.

The [signatories to the letter](https://fas.org/irp/congress/2016_cr/hpsci-hac.pdf) were Andre Carson, Luis Guiterez, Jim Himes, Terri Sewell, Jackie Speier, Mike Quigley, Eric Swalwell and Patrick Murphy. All the signatories were Democrats. Some had a history of attempting to undermine national security.

Beyond the debt, the brothers seemed to have, they had convictions for felony traffic offenses including [DUI](http://dailycaller.com/2017/02/07/congress-it-probe-suspects-had-massive-debts-years-of-suspicious-activity/). Any one of these issues are enough to prevent or revoke a security clearance for normal folks. I guess things just work differently on Capitol Hill. The American military or college grads are denied clearances due similar issues in their record, but not these Pakistani brothers. Any one of these offenses would have caused me to fail my FBI background check at work, but congress can admit anybody. Do you see a problem here? [Valerie Jarrett](http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indid=2418) and [Huma Abedin](http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indid=2556) are perfect examples of the double standard in the government / Congress. Staffers of any background history can get clearances, but Dems seem to be able to prevent Trump’s staff from getting clearance. What is going on here?

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/02/07/congress-it-probe-suspects-had-massive-debts-years-of-suspicious-activity/>

Multiple small businesses and individuals went unpaid as a result of the 2012 bankruptcy. Abid also had an unpaid line of credit of $10,000 with the congressional credit union at the time of bankruptcy.

Abid’s record includes numerous driving- and alcohol-related legal problems, including driving with a suspended or revoked license, court records show. He was found guilty of drunk driving a month before he started at the House, and was arrested for public intoxication a month after his first day.

with possibly opposing goals. A felon normally commits the felony tens of times, maybe hundreds of times before they get caught. How many times does a Coke head commit a felony buying coke before they get caught? If they ever get caught, how many years do they get away with the crimes before they draw the attention of the authorities. The FBI, Congress, whatever never find the full scope of criminal activity. They may just get enough evidence to convict of a crime, but they never convict for all the crimes committed.

What is really becoming obvious is the Democrats have irresponsibly opened our congressional security oversight to Middle Eastern Factions. While the nay sayers claim you can not connect the dots it is obvious that the dots were there for all to see and could have been connected.

**The Democrats Seeking to Overthrow the Government**

Last year, eight members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued a demand that their staffers be granted access to top secret classified information.

The [signatories to the letter](https://fas.org/irp/congress/2016_cr/hpsci-hac.pdf) were Andre Carson, Luis Guiterez, Jim Himes, Terri Sewell, Jackie Speier, Mike Quigley, Eric Swalwell and Patrick Murphy. All the signatories were Democrats. Some had a history of attempting to undermine national security. None of these Democrats ever make a move, public or private, without marching orders from Obama and his senior strongman, Chuck Schumer.

Two of these Democrats have been sloppy, appearing to have no concern whatsoever about the future consequences, because they thought Hillary was going to win the election. In fact, they unanimously believe Hillary did win the election. The efforts appear desperate, nonetheless. Perhaps they really were aware that the Democrats have lost more than 1,100 seats across the nation in the last 8 years as Americans are waking up to the criminal activities being conducted in an organized way nationwide. Well, as organized as functionally illiterate henchmen can be.

The change of leadership in Washington was so sudden and so unexpected, that they have been linked to an emerging security breach.

The office of Andre Carson, the second Muslim in Congress, had employed Imran Awan. As did the offices of Jackie Speier and Debbie Wasserman Schultz; to whom the letter had been addressed.

[Imran Awan](https://www.legistorm.com/person/Imran_Awan/10491.html) and his two brothers, [Jamal](https://www.legistorm.com/person/Jamal_Moiz_Awan/225902.html) and [Abid](https://www.legistorm.com/person/Abid_A_Awan/33149.html), [are at the center of an investigation](http://dailycallernewsfoundation.org/2017/02/04/house-dem-it-staffers-fired-in-computer-security-probe/) that deals with, among other things, allegations of illegal access.  They have been barred from the House of Representatives network.

A member of Congress expressed concern that, “they may have stolen data from us.”

All three of the Pakistani brothers had been employed by Democrats. The offices that employed them included HPSCI minority members Speier, Carson and Joaquín Castro. Congressman Castro, who also sits on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, utilized the services of Jamal Moiz Awan. Speier and Carson’s offices utilized Imran Awan.

Abid A. Awan was employed by Lois Frankel and Ted Lieu: members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Also on the committee is Castro. As is Robin Kelly whose office employed Jamal Awan.  Lieu also sits on the subcommittees on National Security and Information Technology of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Tammy Duckworth’s office had also employed Abid. Before Duckworth successfully played on the sympathy of voters to become Senator Tammy Duckworth, she had been on the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces of the Armed Services Committee.

Gwen Graham, who had also been on the Armed Services Committee and on the Tactical Air and Land Forces subcommittee, had employed Jamal Awan. Jamal was also employed by Cedric Richmond’s office. Richmond sits on the Committee on Homeland Security and on its Terrorism and Cybersecurity subcommittee. He is a ranking member of the latter subcommittee. Also employing Jamal was Mark Takano of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Imran had worked for the office of John Sarbanes who sits on the House Energy and Commerce Committee that oversees, among other things, the nuclear industry. Other members of the Committee employing the brothers included Yvette Clarke, who also sits on the Bipartisan Encryption Working Group, Diana DeGette, Dave Loebsack and Tony Cardenas.

But finally there’s Andre Carson.

Carson is the second Muslim in Congress and the first Muslim on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and, more critically, is the ranking member on its Emerging Threats Subcommittee. He is also a member of the Department of Defense Intelligence and Overhead Architecture Subcommittee.

The Emerging Threats Subcommittee, of which Carson is a ranking member, is responsible for much of counterterrorism oversight. It is the worst possible place for a man with Carson’s credentials.

[Carson had inherited](http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indid=2552) his grandmother’s seat and exploited it to promote a radical Islamist agenda. He has interfaced with a laundry list of Islamist groups from CAIR to [ISNA to ICNA to MPAC](http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indid=2552). Islamists [have funded Carson’s career](http://www.nationalreview.com/article/389811/andr-carson-islamists-choice-house-representatives-daniel-pipes) to the tune of tens of thousands of dollars. The [Center for Security Policy has put together a dossier](http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/2015/02/24/center-releases-dossier-documenting-a-house-intelligence-committee-members-extensive-ties-to-the-muslim-brotherhood/) of Carson’s connections to the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood is the parent organization of many key Islamic terror groups posing a threat to our national security including Al Qaeda and Hamas.

Andre Carson shared the stage at a CAIR banquet with Sirraj Wahaj: an [unindicted co-conspirator in the](http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Andre_Carson_Dossier_02-24-15.pdf) World Trade Center bombing [who had once declared](http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indid=716),” You don’t get involved in politics because it’s the American thing to do. You get involved in politics because politics are a weapon to use in the cause of Islam.” CAIR itself had been [named an unindicted co-conspirator](http://www.investigativeproject.org/1854/doj-cairs-unindicted-co-conspirator-status-legit) in terror finance.

Carson had praised Tariq Ramadan [who had been barred from this](https://www.jihadwatch.org/2010/01/obama-adminstration-removes-ban-on-tariq-ramadan-entering-the-us) country for funding Islamic terrorists.  And the Muslim politician was a co-sponsor of the Free Syria Act which attempted to aid Islamist Jihadists in Syria linked to the Muslim Brotherhood such as the Free Syrian Army.

The presence of Andre Carson on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Emerging Threats Subcommittee has always been extremely controversial. But this latest breach involving Democrats on this committee and on other key national security committees raises serious questions about the scale and magnitude of the real problem caused by a compromised congress.

While Carson and other HPSCI Democrats had been demanding security clearance for their staffers, three Pakistani Muslims working for them appear to have compromised security to an unknown degree.

Why were the Awan brothers, one of [whom had a criminal record](http://dailycallernewsfoundation.org/2017/02/04/house-dem-it-staffers-fired-in-computer-security-probe/), even allowed to work in such a sensitive position? How did the personnel suspected in this case pass background checks? And was any classified information compromised as a result of these alleged breaches?

These questions and more must be asked and answered. But they are only the first of many questions.

When the Democrats are so contemptuous of our national security that they put forward Andre Carson, a politician who has appeared at Islamist events and praised radicals and extremists, to such a sensitive position, it is not surprising that they are equally willing to hire walking security risks.

The most obvious lesson here is that security must be tightened. If Democrats refuse to take their responsibilities seriously, then President Trump must do it for them. Until the Awan case is resolved, those Democrats who employed them must have their access to classified material restricted.

Under no circumstances may the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence members who employed the Awan brothers be permitted to allow their staffers to gain access to classified material.

And Andre Carson must be forced to choose between his Islamist ties and his membership in the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Emerging Threats Subcommittee. No one should be allowed to have a foot in both the pro-terrorist and the counter-terrorist spheres of our society.

Congressional Republicans must take the lead in cleaning house. If they cannot do so, President Trump must step in. At stake are the security of our nation and the safety of our troops. The Democrats may have abandoned their responsibility to our brave men and women, from the battlefield to the VA, but those elected officials who still believe that their sacrifices matter cannot remain silent

**The Iraqi Money**

Rogue congressional staffers took $100,000 from an Iraqi politician while they had administrator-level access to the House of Representatives’ computer network, according to court documents examined by The Daily Caller News Foundation’s Investigative Group.

The money was a loan from Dr. Ali al-Attar, an Iraqi political figure, and was funneled through a company with “impossible”-to-decipher financial transactions that the congressional information technology (IT) staffers controlled.

Imran Awan, ringleader of the group that includes his brothers Abid and Jamal, has provided IT services since 2005 for Florida Democrat Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, the former Democratic National Committee (DNC) chairwoman. The brothers are from Pakistan.

The trio also worked for dozens of other House Democrats, including members of the intelligence, foreign affairs and homeland security committees. Those positions likely gave them access to congressional emails and other sensitive documents.

The brothers, whose access to House IT networks has been terminated, are under [criminal investigation](http://dailycaller.com/2017/02/04/exclusive-house-intelligence-it-staffers-fired-in-computer-security-probe/) by the U.S. Capitol Police.

Wasserman Schultz resigned from her DNC post following a disastrous email hack during the 2016 campaign. Her House spokesman did not respond to TheDCNF’s question Monday about Imran’s employment status. As of Feb. 6, she had [declined to fire](http://www.politico.com/story/2017/02/house-staff-criminal-investigation-234714) Imran.

Investigators found that congressional information was being copied to an off-site server and they suspect the brothers of improperly accessing information and stealing congressional property. Chiefs of staff for the employing Democrats were notified Feb. 2.

Soon after Imran began working for members of Congress, Imran’s and Abid’s wives — Hina Alvi and Natalia Sova — also began receiving congressional paychecks, TheDCNF found. Imran’s employers included two members of the intelligence committee, Indiana Democrat Rep. Andre Carson and California Democrat Rep. Jackie Speier.

By 2009, the family was simultaneously managing a full-time car dealership in Virginia, with Abid running day-to-day operations after contributing $250,000 in startup cash. It was called Cars International A, LLC, referred to as “CIA” in court documents.

Imran boasted unusual clout among House Democrats, and was even pictured conversing with former President Bill Clinton. After Rao Abbas, who was owed money by the dealership, threatened to sue amid allegations of deception and theft, Abbas appeared on the congressional payroll and received $250,000 in taxpayer payments.

Abid had “100% control” of the dealership, a one-time business partner said in court documents, in addition to his $165,000-a-year job working full-time for multiple representatives, including Ohio Democrat Tim Ryan and California Democrat Jim Costa.

“He had the dealer license and sole responsibility of running it. Abid would put cars on the lot, take them in consignment, sell them, do all the title work and get money from the retail sale,” according to court documents. Multiple emails show the Awan brothers conducting business such as attending car auctions on weekdays.

“Imram later acted as owner since CIA was considered family business by the Awans,” Abid’s one-time business partner, Nasir Khattak, said in court documents. The car dealership’s finances consisted of byzantine transfers in which staff and cars were often swapped between it and a dealership next door, Khattak said.

Despite numerous family members making $160,000 congressional salaries, debts went unpaid by the brothers, including to the Congressional Federal Credit Union.

“It was very bad record-keeping in Cars International … it is close to impossible to make any sense out of all the transactions that happened,” Khattak said in court documents.

The $100,000 loan came as the dealership continued to rack up debt, court records show.

“Ali Al-Attar was out of the country as he was involved in politics and the formation of the Iraqi government,” Khattak said in court documents.

In addition to his other jobs, Imran is a real estate agent, and Khattak is also a realtor who obtained the cash from Al-Attar and passed it through bank accounts used for real estate deals in Fairfax County, Va.

“Having lost my and Abid’s collective investment of $500k due to Awan’s mismanagement, [CIA] was further in debt $400k to other creditors,” Khattak said in a lawsuit.

Khattak said Imran masterminded the family’s finances and by late 2010, Imran “was running the business in full control” and “instructed Abid not to even speak to anyone.”

The Iraqi cash disappeared amid a dispute between Khattak and the Awans. Khattak said defaulting on the loan meant Al-Attar now owned the business, but the Awans refused to relinquish control.

In 2012, Abid declared personal bankruptcy [listing more than $1 million in liabilities](http://dailycaller.com/2017/02/07/congress-it-probe-suspects-had-massive-debts-years-of-suspicious-activity/). While debts to others went unpaid, he kept ownership of two houses, and Imran kept his own substantial property, despite his admitted role in the failed business.

Bankruptcy documents listed Abbas as a creditor and said he might sue Abid, but Abbas later took the brothers’ side in a lawsuit against Khattak, who said that the Awans had somehow manipulated him to do so. Not long after, Abbas appeared for the first time on the congressional payroll, and collected $250,000 from taxpayers through the end of last year.

Four out of the six Democrats he worked for also employed Imran. His employers included a member of the intelligence committee, Patrick Murphy of Florida; a member of the foreign affairs committee, Theodore Deutch of Florida; and Brad Ashford of Nebraska, who is on the armed services committee.

Abbas’ congressional email was cut off in early February, around the time the Capitol Police revealed that they had uncovered a scheme involving a network of IT aides. The Awans’ access has also been cut off. Reached at a personal email address, Abbas did not respond to repeated questions from TheDCNF.

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Abid claimed the Iraqi doctor may never have existed. “If as suspected, all of this is a charade, particularly if it is learned the mysterious Dr. Al-Attar doesn’t exist or didn’t sign the documents, then the whole matter rises to a higher level,” he said in court documents.

The youngest Awan brother, Jamal, was also placed on the House payroll at 20 years of age and makes $160,000, far higher than others in similar jobs.

**The Iranian Cash Money Trail**

Congressional investigators trying to uncover the trail of $1.3 billion in payments to Iran might want to focus on 13 large, identical sums that Treasury paid to the State Department under the generic heading of settling “Foreign Claims.”

The 13 payments when added to the $400 million that the administration now concedes it shipped to the Iranian regime in foreign cash would bring the payout to the $1.7 billion that President Obama and Secretary Kerry announced on January 17. That total was to settle a dispute pending for decades before the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal in at The Hague.

Mr. Kerry told the press at the time that the settlement included $400 million that Iran under the Shah had paid into a U.S. trust fund for an arms deal that collapsed after Iran’s 1979 Islamic revolution. Plus, said Kerry, the U.S. had agreed to pay “a roughly $1.3 billion compromise on the interest.”

The Wall Street Journal’s Jay Solomon and Carole E. Lee broke earlier this month the news that on the same day that Mr. Obama announced the settlement, his administration secretly sent Iran the $400 million payment in cash. Last week, the State Department finally confirmed that the January 17 cash shipment was used as “leverage” to ensure Iran’s release that same day of four American prisoners — fueling questions about whether the Obama administration, despite its denials, had paid ransom.

Yet more questions surround the administration’s handling of the remaining $1.3 billion. Could this have been drawn from a fund bankrolled by American taxpayers and housed at Treasury, called the Judgment Fund? And why were the 13 payments in amounts of one cent less than $100,000,000?

The Judgment Fund has long been a controversial vehicle for federal agencies to detour past one of the most pointed prohibitions in the Constitution: “No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law.”

The Judgment Fund, according to a Treasury Department Web site, is “a permanent, indefinite appropriation” used to pay monetary awards against U.S. government agencies in cases “where funds are not legally available to pay the award from the agency’s own appropriations.”

In March, in letters responding to questions about the Iran settlement sent weeks earlier by Representatives Edward Royce and Mike Pompeo, the State Department confirmed that the $1.3 billion “interest” portion of the Iran settlement had been paid out of the Judgment Fund. But State gave no information on the logistics.

The 13 payments that may explain what happened are found in an online database maintained by the Judgment Fund. A search for “Iran” since the beginning of this year turns up nothing. But a search for claims in which the defendant is the State Department turns up 13 payments for $99,999,999.99.

They were all made on the same day, all sharing the same file and control reference numbers, all certified by the U.S. Attorney General, but each assigned a different identification number. They add up to $1,299,999,999.87, or 13 cents less than the $1.3 billion Messrs. Obama and Kerry announced in January.

Together with a 14th payment of just over $10 million, the grand total paid out by Treasury from the Judgment Fund on that single day, January 19, for claims pertaining to the State Department, comes to roughly $1.31 billion.

Treasury has provided no answers to my queries about whether these specific payments were for the Iran settlement. Nor why these transfers comprised 13 payments, each of which was a cent under $100,000,000. Nor whether the $10 million related to the same matter.

The Judgment Fund database contains over the past year no other payouts pertaining to State that come anywhere near the scale of $1.3 billion of the announced with Iran. And it contains no details on what the State Department might have done with the $1.3 billion.

It does say, as a general matter, that “Defendant Agency Name is the same as the Responsible Agency Name.” It leaves open the question of whether it was State rather than Treasury that determined by what route and in what form the funds would reach their final destination.

State has refused to disclose even such basic information as the date on which Iran took receipt of the $1.3 billion. As recently as August 4, a State spokesman told the press: “I don’t have a date of when that took place.”

Nor has the administration answered whether the $1.3 billion was transferred to Iran via the banking system, or, like the $400 million, in cash. According to the Judgment Fund web site, the “preferred method” for payments is “by electronic fund transfer,” approved by the relevant government agency, to the party receiving the award.

But, the Weekly Standard noted last week, President Obama recently defended his $400 million cash shipment to Iran on the grounds that “We don’t have a banking relationship with Iran... We could not wire the money.”

The Judgment Fund’s public database provides no information about where precisely the $1.31 billion in January payments went, or how. The Fund’s web site does provide blank “Voucher for Payment” forms, requiring administration officials to provide such details, and sign off on them.

In an ongoing, but admittedly crippled audit, the Trump Administration is trying to track the Iranian money. Why? There is increasing suspicion that the fanatical Muslim Brotherhood dominating the top offices in Iran were working very closely with Iranian-born Valerie Jarrett, a longtime crime syndicate using Barack Obama as its American face. He was untouchable by his enemies, because he is black. He is never, and I do mean, never investigated by the 6 major media conglomerates that own every national TV and radio source for news.

Evidence is beginning to surface the DC swamp, as the trump Administration started draining it, that a large chunk of the pallets of loose cash that was secretly flown to Iran has made its way mysteriously back into Obama’s anti-American compound all the way back in Washington DC just a few blocks away from the White House. The numbers are lining up. There are many lowered heads in Congress trying to escape the call for a Grand Jury and subpoenas. It is shaping up to be the largest criminal probe in world history.

**The Real Space Race**

All heads were facing a small, floating launch pad in the Atlantic this week as the SpaceX rocket lifted off for the second time, the world’s first recycled launch engine, and then landed 7 minutes after reentering the atmosphere. Perfect.

ELON MUSK LINK

**Between the Earth and Mars, adventures to the Moon and building the habitats necessary for future astronauts are reshaping access to the stars**

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SpaceX’s announcement that they will launch two tourists on a trip around the moon has captured imaginations with renewed speculation about the future of space travel and accessibility to the beyond.

“We are excited to announce that SpaceX has been approached to fly two private citizens on a trip around the moon late next year. They have already paid a significant deposit to do a moon mission,” Musk wrote in their [announcement](http://www.spacex.com/news/2017/02/27/spacex-send-privately-crewed-dragon-spacecraft-beyond-moon-next-year). “Like the Apollo astronauts before them, these individuals will travel into space carrying the hopes and dreams of all humankind, driven by the universal human spirit of exploration.”

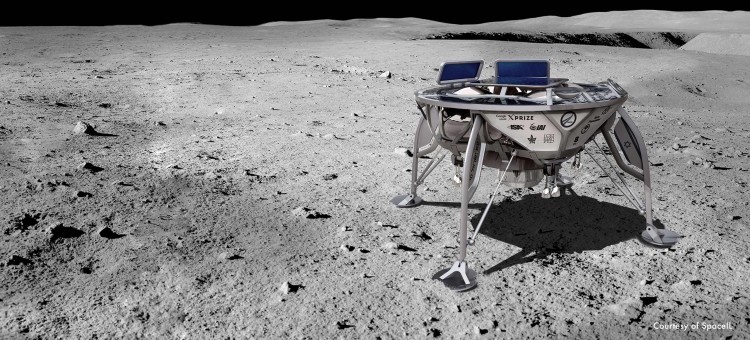
However, it really is not fair to a number of other companies that are revolutionizing space travel all the same but don’t have the substantial resources or notoriety of Elon Musk’s gargantuan company. Musk’s celebrity status makes his every tweet a news story (not totally unlike, but in many ways extremely unlike, the newest US president). With that sort of figure, it is hard to capture people’s attention if you are running one of SpaceX’s “pretenders” and competitors. The Hawthorne, Cali company not only operates its own mission services using rockets it built itself, but also sells those rockets to other launch providers.

SpaceX is playing with an optimistic clock in terms of travel to Mars. Whether or not they do make it, and there is no reason to doubt they can’t beat the likes of NASA to the Martian surface, there is still a lot of ground to cover to ensure a sustainable space industry for the United States and beyond.

This year’s Lunar XPRIZE contest sponsored by Google will likely kick off a new era in space-bound venture capital and entrepreneurship as a flock of phoenixes rise from the sands of 2017’s moonshots. But plenty of other companies not looking to land rovers on nearby celestial bodies (sometimes more distant ones, or none at all) will also likely benefit from a sector that is overdue for an investment boom, including a growing number of firms building their own rockets with sleeker and more compact designs than the SpaceX Falcon 9.

This is a non-exhaustive list of 10 companies mirroring, challenging, or augmenting the work SpaceX is doing by following through on the next steps to getting humanity into space on a more regular basis:

## 1. SpaceIL (Israel)



SpaceIL’s resdesigned lunar probe, which may make Israel only the 4th country to land a rover on the moon (SpaceIL)

SpaceIL is also worth mentioning here, but not for the same reasons as Moon Express. They are also part of the [Google Lunar XPrize contest](http://www.geektime.com/2015/10/07/spaceil-announced-2017-launch-date-for-israeli-moon-probe/), but whether or not they win they will have enabled a team of some 250 people to get stronger in skill sets that will likely serve as the base of an entirely new ecosystem for space-faring technology. Being located in Israel and with enormous notoriety, it’s a foregone conclusion that simply being associated with this team will pay dividends for SpaceIL veterans.

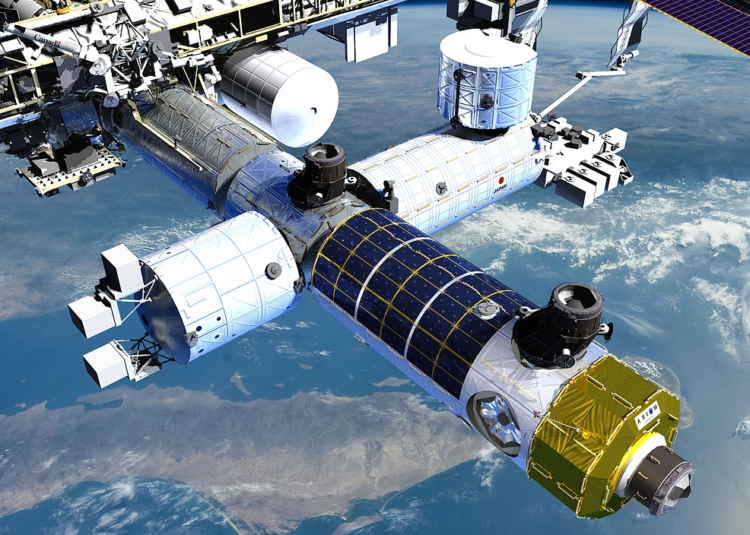
They will also have major connections to the local startup ecosystem’s most influential leaders and top investors, eager to underwrite any entrepreneurship coming from the team. Expect that the end of the decade will see as many if not more space ventures come from Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa as you will see from San Mateo, Palo Alto, and Menlo Park.



SpaceIL shows off their latest and greatest model for their lunar lander, scheduled to go up in 2017 with SpaceX (image: Geektime/Gedalyah Reback)

With those kinds of networks in hand and numerous well-connected government connections the team has made since launching the project, there’s a good chance this team will spawn a new sub-sector of the space startup scene: landers and probes. For the foreseeable remainder of 2017, nanosatellites will remain the booming sector for space, but talk of new missions across the solar system in addition to efforts to reach the moon will propel competition in the rover industry.

## 2. Axiom Space



The first Axiom Module (lower right, with body-mounted solar panels) to join the International Space Station (rendering by Axiom).

Founded by CEO and President Michael T. Suffredini, former manager of the International Space Station for 10 years and instrumental in the ISS’s development, Axiom is developing the first private version of an ISS, which will become extremely important when the ISS is retired in the next few years.

Axiom’s plan is to attach the basis of the new station to the old ISS, making it independent when the original station is decommissioned. Once operating, the station will host 60-day-long astronautical missions, 7-to-10-day space tourist trips, on-orbit research and manufacturing (microgravity is ideal for production of bacteria for example, according to startup [SpacePharma](http://www.geektime.com/2015/10/25/want-to-test-stuff-out-in-space-with-swiss-israeli-spacepharma-you-can/)), and “exploration systems testing” with eyes on customers like Moon Express or SpaceX, which are considering plans for manned missions to the surfaces of the Moon and Mars.



Axiom Space concept for private ISS (rendering by Axiom)

It sports a stacked team with BizDev run by space shuttle mission specialist Michael Lopez-Alegria, Intuitive Machines CEO and Deputy Director of NASA Johnson Space Center Stephen Altemus, and Space Angels Network Managing Director Amir Blachman running strategic development.

Axiom’s missions are tentatively scheduled to begin by 2019.

## 3. Space Nation (Finland)



Screenshot of the Space Nation app against a backdrop of an astronaut (courtesy)

Launching a contest to go on a space vacation is the stuff of Total Recall, but the first true iteration of it is coming out of Finland this year. The effort is backed by a consortium of companies that includes the aforementioned Axiom Space. Equal partners include “space media company” Cohu Experience, “new Space” and education company Edge of Space, and Finnish education company Fun Academy.

The year-plus-long contest to recruit a new astronaut is itself a long-term test of brains, brawn and fortitude that begins with the release of a free-to-download app in the fall of 2017. After several months of open competition with brain games and challenges through the app, 130 semi-finalists will be invited for a two-week intensive course at a yet-to-be-chosen location. After that, 12 finalists will face off in a three-month-long battle to win the world’s first astronautical prize. The trip won’t be a vacation, as the winner — be he or she a scientist or not — will be trained to do experiments aboard the International Space Station. From there, one would presume the world is the winner’s oyster and a budding number of career opportunities will come their way.



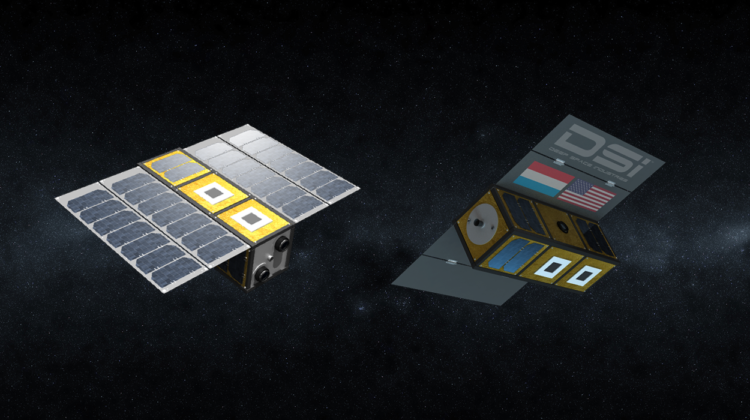
Kalle Vähä-Jaakkola, CEO of the Cohu Experience and Space Nation. Photo credit: Courtesy

“Back in the ’90s I began to wonder, ‘Why aren’t we on Mars? Why aren’t we back to the Moon?” Cohu Experience Founder and CEO [Kalle Vähä-Jaakkola told Geektime](http://www.geektime.com/2017/02/09/meet-the-finn-whose-company-is-trying-to-find-the-worlds-next-astronaut/" \o "Meet the Finn whose ‘Space Nation’ is running a global contest to find the world’s next astronaut" \t "_blank) recently. The golden age of startups has spurred his childhood dreams and an opportunity for a yet-to-be-found rookie astronaut. “We wouldn’t have founded this company and this venture, without this empowerment and all that entrepreneurial movement that anything is possible.”

## 4. Deep Space Industries

DSI is the only team on this list that is dead set on mining asteroids. Asteroid composition varies for a number of reasons and contain untold quantities of chemical and metallic resources from sulfur to gold. They are planning to reach so-called Near Earth Asteroids (NEAs) before daring to venture further out to the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. The company explains many NEAs are smaller in mass, meaning their gravity will not be an obstacle to reaching the rocks and extracting resources.

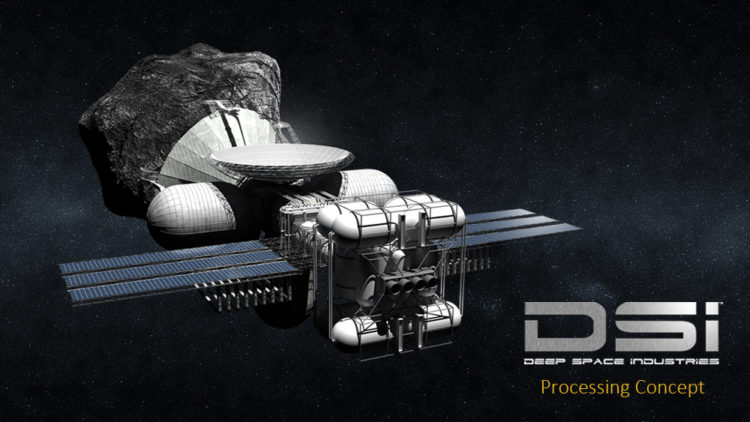
Of course like any mining operation there will be a timeline. Probes would have to conduct prospecting, then harvest ore and process it. That’s without the task of returning the extracted material to Earth. Those initial prospecting missions are supposed to start soon with the launch of small probes like the Prospector-X, which will be tested in LEO with the co-sponsorship of the government of Luxembourg. Following what they hope are successful tests, a suped-up probe called [Prospector-1](https://deepspaceindustries.com/prospector-1/#video) will be deployed to an NEA.



Prospector-X, a joint project with Luxembourg (DSI)

“DSI is developing Prospector-1 both for its own asteroid mining ambitions, as well as to bring an extremely low-cost, yet high-performance exploration capability to the market,” Grant Bonin, chief engineer at Deep Space Industries, explains on the company website. “We hope to enable both existing and new public and private organizations to explore the inner solar system using this affordable platform.”

But the most innovative idea here might not be in plans to dig up gold, platinum, or perhaps Rare Earth metals like lithium. They are targeting water-and-ice-rich asteroids first, which they claim will be in abundance among NEAs. The reason is simple: water will be the engine propellant the probes will use, thus initial missions will also save precious mass by refueling via its resource-extraction tests.



Concept of Deep Space Industries’ asteroid capture plan (DSI)

That plan resolves issues of feasibility. If their probes can successfully collect a resource and deploy it on the same trip, that would lend credence to ideas of using similar concepts with liquid methane lakes on the surface of Saturn’s moon Titan or processing metals on site to construct replacement pieces for on-board computer hardware. It’s a robotic and engineering challenge that could pay bigger dividends for DSI than even the resources themselves.

## 5. Bigelow Aerospace

[Bigelow Aerospace](https://bigelowaerospace.com/) is one of the companies making strides building portable habitats for astronauts. Their first model, BEAM, was successfully attached to the International Space Station in spring 2016. The inflatable room was put together in seven hours by NASA astronaut Jeff Williams. At 13 feet long and 10.5 feet wide (4 x 3.2 meters), it’s definitely small, but this is just the company’s first deployment since receiving a $17.8 million contract from NASA back in 2013 to design and deploy an inflatable habitat.

“It sounds sort of like popcorn in a frying pan starts up,” Williams said at the time, reflecting the immediate effect pumped air had in the vacuum of space when BEAM was deployed. The goal is ultimately to extend these sorts of dwellings to locations beyond the ISS with the surfaces of the Moon and Mars first and foremost in the minds of the company’s executives and engineers.

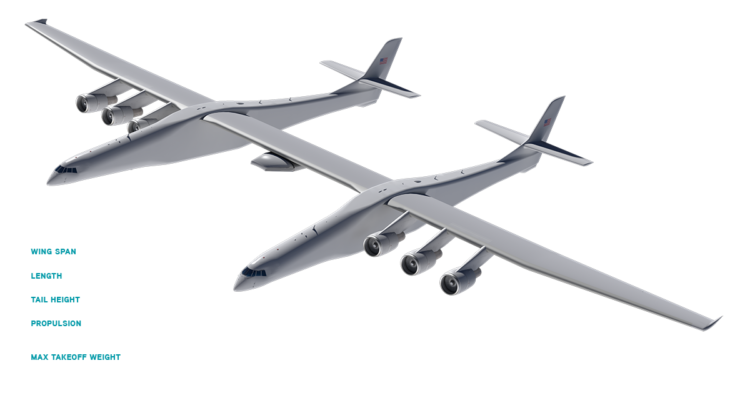
“Expandable habitats significantly decrease the amount of transport volume for future space missions,” said NASA’s BEAM project manager, Rajib Dasgupta, said last year. “These expandables take up less room on a rocket, but once set up, provide greater volume for living and working. After thorough testing, we believe crews traveling to the Moon, Mars, asteroids or other destinations could use them as habitable structures or as labs or work areas.”

Creating a puncture-proof habitat would be critical for emergencies. Presumably, a long-term surface habitat would not be made only of inflatables, but these would serve astronauts in the field exploring Mars away from home base or as temporary fixes for fully-fledged and more complex astronaut homes in the future.

## 6. Vulcan Aerospace

Founded by Paul G. Allen in 2011, Vulcan’s subsidiary Stratolaunch Systems has been pushing for a more flexible and more cost-effective model for orbital launches that relies on using specially-designed high-atmospheric planes to deploy small payloads into low-Earth orbit (LEO). Deploying payloads by plane in theory will grant a lot of flexibility in terms of launch location and launch windows.

Without getting specific about the materials used to design their plane, Vulcan has commissioned Scaled Composites to build it. It will be 238 feet long and have a wing span of 385 feet, propelled by 6X Pratt & Whitney PW4056 engines with a maximum takeoff weight of 1.3 million pounds.



The stratolaunch plane design (Vulcan Aerospace)

They also reached a multi-year agreement in October 2016 with public aerospace and defense company Orbital ATK to use the latter’s Pegasus XL “air-launch vehicles” attached to Vulcan’s space-ward planes.

Orbital ATK President Scott Lehr said at the time, “The combination of our extensive air-launch experience and the Stratolaunch aircraft has the potential to provide innovative and cost-effective options for commercial launch customers.”



Vulcan stratospheric launches concept (Vulcan)

Their investment arm Vulcan Capital also took part in a $20 million Series B funding round for Spaceflight Industries back in March 2015.

While their concept is not new, it remains more logistically familiar than using rockets. Rocket reusability is also a novel and still unperfected concept. The durability and multi-usability of planes makes this an attractive option.

## 7. Odyne Space (Portland, Oregon)

Named after the Greek goddess of pain, Odyne is trying to make it cheaper to get nanosatellites into space by continuously working on more efficient rockets for smaller amounts of cargo. They certainly have the minds to meet needs for mettle. The company was founded by mechanical engineer and systems architect Eric Ward of MIT, who is also a co-founder of the MIT New Space Age Conference.

He will work in tandem with embedded systems expert and entrepreneur Andrew Greenberg, whose other companies have dealt with medical devices. He’s also the founder of the Portland State Aerospace Society (PSAS), whose acronym must be an allusion to the pizzazz the two hope to bring to the industrial space ecosystem.

“Space is Hard, but we won’t make it harder. We consider ourselves ‘Rocket Engineers’ not Rocket Scientists,” Odyne’s website explains. “Humans have been launching liquid-fueled rockets for almost a century, and the foundational science has already been done. We combine this science and knowledge into simple, effective and reliable rockets, to launch micro- and nano-satellites to orbit.”

They’re advised by Accion Systems Co-Founder and CEO Natalya Brikner as well as MIT School of Management lecturer Shari Loessberg.

The more the merrier when it comes to new rocket concepts. The talent behind this project is what gets it on the list, as there has been no proof of concept or even a design provided yet by Odyne. Ward is a prime example of the new kind of entrepreneur hitting the skies, as seen in this feature by [Fast Company](https://www.fastcompany.com/3058795/the-next-frontier-for-ambitious-entrepreneurs-space).

## 8. Rocket Lab (New Zealand)

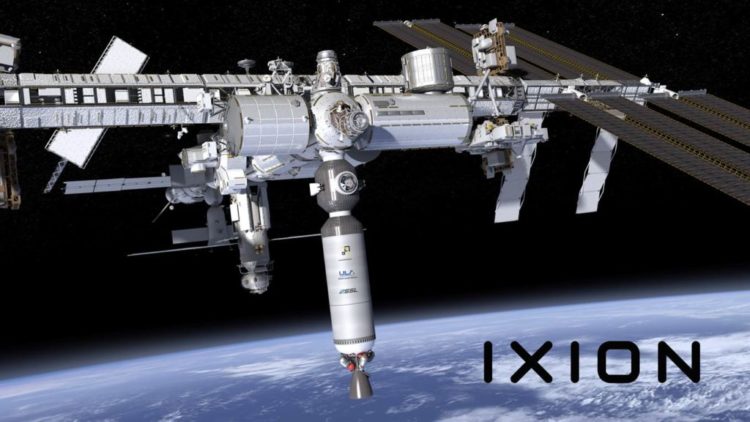
An American-Kiwi company, [Rocket Lab](http://www.rocketlabusa.com/) is the brainchild of New Zealander Peter Beck and just recently sent its Electron rocket for testing in February 2017 to its own launching station. They’ve developed their own engine, the 4,600lbf (pound force inch), turbo-pumped LOX/RP-1 Rutherford. Their first rocket, dubbed somewhat lazily “It’s a Test,” should get the all-clear to go to space later in 2017.

“It’s an important milestone for our team and for the space industry,” Beck said about the final pre-launch testing. “In the past, it’s been countries that go to space, not companies. Through the innovative use of new technologies our team has created a launch vehicle designed for manufacture at scale. Our ultimate goal is to change our ability to access space.”

They’ve raised an undisclosed amount of investments from Bessemer Venture Partners, K1W1, Khosla Ventures and even Lockheed Martin. Where those investors are excited is the service of selling the rockets themselves, which were projected back in 2015 to have an eventual price tag of a mere $4.9 million each. That’s about a tenth the price of a SpaceX Falcon 9. Their limit comes in the lighter payload.

You can infer that they have raised in the tens of millions of dollars at least, since New Zealand’s government will provide up to $5 million in matching investments for R&D with hi-tech businesses through the [Callaghan Innovation Growth Grants program](http://www.callaghaninnovation.govt.nz/news-events/140m-rd-grants-business-growth) that Rocket Lab benefited from in 2014.

## 9. Ixion (Texas)



Ixion concept attached to the ISS (bottom) (image via Ixion Initiative)

Not to be confused with the design-similar Axiom, Ixion is another joint effort making the list and yet another new venture that has already secured a deal with NASA. Backed by NanoRacks, Space Systems Loral (SSL) and the United Launch Alliance, Ixion will endeavor to figure out the best way to convert the upper stages of rockets into long-term habitats. That would circumvent the issue of throwing a habitat into a cargo hold or building one from scratch using 3D-printing-like machines on the surface of the Moon or Mars.

Ixion will enter the Next Space Technologies for Exploration Partnerships-2 (NextSTEP-2) program and start by testing their projects in LEO. They will try to demonstrate its proof of concept by converting a Centaur rocket’s upper stage, then attaching it to the International Space Station. Like Bigelow, they have their eyes set on the surfaces of not-so-distant moons and the rest of the Sun’s planets.

“Our plan is to dramatically lower the proposed costs for habitats to allow for the largest customer base, both commercial and government,” says NanoRacks CEO Jeffrey Manber. “With Loral and NanoRacks working together, we have the knowledge base to assure a solid commercial use of tomorrow’s habitats via re-purposed ULA Centaur platforms.”

The ISS will support three of the companies on this list in the near future, illustrating how important Axiom’s private space station project will be for future habitability tests and support. Expect more companies to enter that fray eventually as it becomes one the one hand more feasible to build alternative private space stations and more experts from agencies like NASA with ISS experience enter the business world.

## 10. Firefly Space

a href=”http://www.fireflyspace.com”>Firefly wants to make space launches ubiquitous, and they see that happening through their proprietary light rocket design. They’re looking to capitalize on projected, meteoric growth in the small satellites industry that has seen companies like [Planet launch massive (88-strong) constellations](http://www.geektime.com/2017/02/05/how-planets-acquisition-of-terra-bella-helps-google-maps-with-advanced-satellite-imagery/) as recently as February 2017. That launch included other projects though from [small nanosat companies and even universities](http://www.geektime.com/2017/02/13/israels-ben-gurion-university-uaes-american-university-of-sharjah-to-launch-school-owned-nanosatellites-on-same-indian-rocket/). With demand expected to grow and payloads regularly hosting more than 100 nanosatellites at a time, there will be a race to provide fast and efficient service. This rocket is thin. Stage 1 (the bottom part) is only 6 feet in diameter while Stage 2 (the top part) is 5 feet in diameter.

It can hold a 200 kg payload and uses an “aerospike” booster, which the company says is “more efficient across the range of pressures in rocket flight” than traditional bell nozzles.They recently announced [$300 million worth of preliminary orders](http://www.fireflyspace.com/news/ournews/customers-rally-in-support-of-firefly-space-systems) (which they refer to as letters of intent/LOI) from prospective customers that would fill their launch schedule through 2021.

That would include 42 launches, with another 35 launches worth $280 million anticipated between 2022 and 2025.With a NASA deal in hand, expect their first NASA launch to take place in March 2018.

Teams like Firefly will continue to make the rocket race interesting. They are behind similarly sleek designs like Electron from Rocket Lab, but that should be neither here nor there