

From **Ian Drury** in London
and **Daniel Bates** in New York

HATE preacher Abu Hamza is expected to die behind bars after he was last night found guilty in the US of a string of terror offences.

The hook-handed Islamist cleric – who for years spouted evil on Britain's streets – was convicted by a New York court of 11 charges after a five-week trial.

The firebrand, 56, had denied helping to organise a hostage-taking in Yemen in 1998 when three Britons were killed. He also denied supporting Al Qaeda in Afghanistan by sending volunteers and money and trying to set up a terrorist training camp Oregon in 1999. But a jury of eight men and four women took 11 hours to reach their guilty verdict.

Hamza was finally brought to justice in the US after thwarting attempts to extradite him from Britain for more than eight years. His trial took place just a few streets from the site of the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, which Hamza gloated was a 'towering day in history'.

The preacher will almost certainly be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole in a grim 'Supermax' jail and held there until he dies.

The jury sitting at Manhattan's Federal Court found Hamza was a 'trainer of terrorists' who recruited and indoctrinated young men at Finsbury Park Mosque, North London, to commit acts of unspeakable violence in the name of jihad, or 'holy war'.

In a damning indictment of UK authorities, prosecutors said the one-eyed extremist – who once described the UK as a 'toilet'

'He called the UK a toilet'

– used the cover of religion to 'hide in plain sight'. During the trial Hamza's lawyers argued the case against him, including videos of his fiery sermons at the mosque, was just 'words, not deeds'.

He claimed he was just a 'mouthpiece' for the Yemeni kidnappers, a role he likened to that of Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams with the terrorist IRA. But Hamza's case was demolished by the crucial evidence of star prosecution witness Mary Quin, a technology tycoon from New Zealand and one of the Yemeni hostages, who had taped Hamza confessing his role in the kidnappings in 2000.

The conviction marks the end of a relentless ten-year mission by the US authorities to bring Hamza to justice.

He cost British taxpayers millions of pounds resisting extradition to America, even taking his unsuccessful fight all the way to the European Court of Human Rights.

He was finally deported in July 2012 after losing the last of his countless appeals.

For more than a decade, he ruthlessly exploited the British legal system and welfare state, treating the British public and authorities with disdain.

The failure of the authorities to take swifter action to stop him spreading his message of Islamist hatred allowed countless terror suspects to be radicalised on the streets of North London.

At least four Al Qaeda-trained terrorists who failed in major plots 'came under Hamza's spell': Brixton shoe-bomber Richard Reid, Gloucester grammar school boy and reluctant shoe-bomber Saajid Badat, police killer and ricin poison plotter Kamel Bourgass and

After years of dodging justice, Hamza will die in jail

Hostage-taking preacher of hate

■ **1998:** Helps organise hostage-taking of 16 mostly British tourists in Yemen. Three Britons and an Australian killed.

■ **1999:** Attempts to set up a terrorist training camp in Oregon, US.

■ **2001:** Speaks in support of Osama bin Laden following 9/11.

■ **2002:** Suspended by the Charity Commission from position at Finsbury Park Mosque over inflammatory speeches.

■ **2003:** Legal moves begin to get Hamza deported to Yemen.

■ **2004:** Hamza arrested on a US extradition warrant over charges of conspiring to take hostages in Yemen.

■ **2006:** Hamza jailed for seven years on 11 of 15 charges under Terrorism Act.

■ **2008:** Home Secretary signs US extradition order, but halted by European Court of Human Rights

■ **2012:** High Court rules that Hamza can be extradited to the US.

■ **2014:** Hamza convicted of all 11 terror charges at Manhattan's Federal Court.

the '20th' September 11 hijacker, Zacarias Moussaoui.

Hamza came to the UK on a student visa to escape military service in Egypt in the 1980s and studied engineering at Brunel and Brighton universities.

He worked as a strip club owner in Soho before marrying a British woman and converting to Islam.

The hate preacher claimed he lost both arms and an eye in an explosives accident in

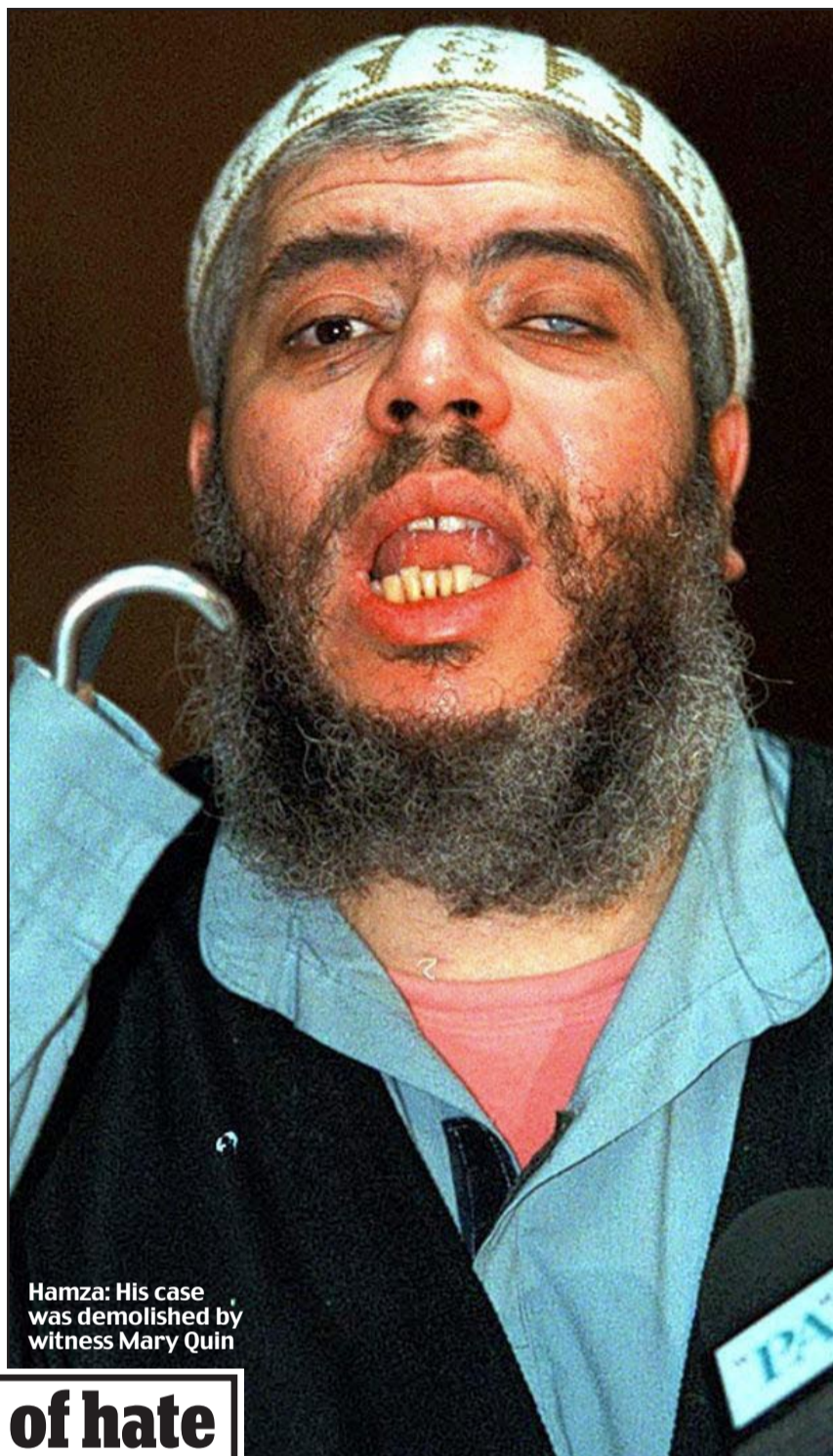
Pakistan and returned to the UK to recover. It was in London that Hamza, who has been married three times and is the father of eight children, became a focus point for hate-mongering after his take-over of the Finsbury Park Mosque.

He is said to have had meetings with MI5 and Special Branch but, astonishingly, the police and security services turned a blind eye to the fanatic's activities. Frustrated by

the failure to act against Hamza, the US first requested his extradition in May 2004. But he was eventually put on trial in this country for incitement to murder and jailed for seven years in 2006.

Home Secretary Theresa May said yesterday: 'I am pleased that Abu Hamza has finally faced justice. He used every opportunity, over many years, to frustrate and delay the extradition process.'

Hamza: His case was demolished by witness Mary Quin



Storms sweep aside the heatwave

THUNDER and heavy showers are expected to bring the heatwave to an abrupt end today.

Following the hottest day of the year so far yesterday, storms are predicted to spread across the country from the west, bringing cooler weather.

Yesterday, Heathrow had Britain's highest recorded temperature – 26.3C (79F) – warmer than Tenerife, which was 23C (73F), Crete at 22C (72F), and Athens, 21C (70F).

Rachel Vince, forecaster with Meteo-Group, said: 'Thunderstorms are due to spread across the country during Tuesday from the west, reaching south eastern parts by the afternoon. There is a

By **Richard Marsden**

risk of up to 15 to 20 millimetres of rain as the showers pass through, so people who have become used to carrying sunscreen would be advised to carry an umbrella.

'Temperatures are due to be closer to the average of late teens to early 20s during the rest of the week and into the bank holiday weekend.'

The variable weather has thrown many gardeners' spring plans into disarray.

'There doesn't seem to be such a thing as a usual year any more,' said Nick Bailey, head gardener at the Physic Garden in Chelsea – England's second oldest botanical garden. Flowers have been

blooming early, while pests such as aphids have appeared sooner than usual, but the warm weather has also meant tropical plants have been brought out from greenhouses earlier, he added.

Mr Bailey said: 'Our key difficulties have been with plants like tulips, of which we have about 30 varieties of different colours normally flowering one after another. This year, they have all bloomed at once leaving areas of the garden bare.'

Despite the cooler weather, bookmakers have slashed odds that the highest temperature ever recorded in Britain in May – 32.8C (91F), set 60 years ago – will be broken. Ladbrokes was offering odds of 5/1 last night.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ASBESTOS EXPOSURE

Have you ever worked near to or with Asbestos related products?

Compensation could be available to you.

Have you, or anyone you know, been diagnosed with any of the following in the last 3 years:
Asbestosis, Mesothelioma, Pleural Thickening, Lung Cancer?

Do you suffer from shortness of breath coughing, wheezing and have been diagnosed with **Pleural Plaques?** We still may be able to help.

Have worked with asbestos between 1950 and 2000?

Has a loved one passed away from an asbestos disease in the last 3 years?

It does not matter if the company you worked for no longer exists.

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THIS SERVICE

Call for free confidential legal advice on

0800 088 7396

Lines open 8am-8pm, Mon-Fri

www.asbestosadvicehelpline.com

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