Final Practical Assignment – Solve The Crime

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Author Note

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To start off this investigation I opened the forensic image file in Autopsy so that I could analyze the files embedded within. I was able to locate some interesting files. I navigated to the File Views section of Autopsy and navigated down the tree until I was able to search by file type. Here I found a manifesto that had been written, as well as a PowerPoint called “Operation 2nd Hand Smoke” that were both very interesting.

Upon reading through the manifesto that I found we can infer that this person is an advocate of gun rights in the US and wants to fight against the government to protect their gun rights. The manifesto is full of pictures depicting propaganda for anti-gun rights, followed by an explanation of why the author disagrees. At the end of the manifesto, we can see that the author has included some propaganda that supports gun rights in the US, followed by reasons as to why the author agrees with this propaganda and how it helps their cause.

The next piece of information that I analyzed was the “Operation 2nd Hand Smoke” PowerPoint that I found. From this PowerPoint we can put together a bit of a narrative. The first slide we see is an ad for a public meeting. It includes the address, and times as well as what it’s about. Of course, the topic in discussion is political, and mainly revolving around gun violence. The author of this PowerPoint also made sure to add the time on the side in 24 hour or military time and below put the word “flight” below. The next slide is a screenshot from Google maps of the same address as the last slide with a big red circle around the library of the building, where this meeting is going to be held. The slide after that shows an aerial view of the surrounding area with some markings on it making it appear to be a map. There is a red box around the same building where this public meeting is being held. Then there is a yellow box with the word “park” inside of it. There are two lines leading to the “park” box from the town hall building. One appears to be the primary route, and another appears to be a secondary. From the parking lot there is another line leading out to the street with a route mapped out as well. The screenshot cuts off this route so we can’t see where it goes from this view. However, the next slide has the entire route mapped out, as well as a few alternate routes and step by step instructions on how to get there. From this slide we can see that the destination in mind is the Dulles International Airport. The slide that follows this one shows a flight that departs the US at 1:20 PM local time on the same day as the meeting, not too long after the meeting starts, and lands in Seoul at 4:50 PM local time, the following day. Then there is another flight from Seoul to Denpasar that goes from 6:05 PM local time to 12:10 AM local time the next morning. Finally, the last slide we see shows a hotel called “Sea Breeze Candidasa” which is in Indonesia. The screenshot shows it as being reserved from April 8th to April 20th. This would be the day that the flight from the last slide lands to 2 weeks later. We can also see that it’s only booked for 1 room for 1 adult.

Based off all this information in the PowerPoint we can infer that this person is planning to go to the meeting about gun laws in the US. Then they’ll need a quick exit from there with multiple routes, and to quickly get on a plane out of the country, where they will stay for a while. This leads me to believe that this person is planning some sort of attack on the meeting that is happening in that library and this is their plan of escape after.

From another document found on the drive there is more information on the Airport. The author states that “Ronald Reagan has best record of on-time departures” meaning that this flight is expected to leave on time. We also can see the note they included that states the airport is 22 minutes away from where the meeting will be held.

I was also able to locate a couple more documents on this drive. One of them is titled “Planning” so I knew I had to read into this more. The first part of the plan is labeled as   
“Target”. The steps listed are to have a good escape route that is preferably near the airport and must be a “gun free zone”. The next part is a supplies list. The author has two guns listed on this list as being purchased from the black market. We can also see addresses of where these are expected to be purchased from. Next up is ammo for the guns. There are two different kinds of 9mm listed with the prices next to them. The other items listed on this list are latex gloves, cash, and Velcro tear away clothing. The next section on the list is titled “Escape”. The biggest part of this and the first item listed is that the escape can’t be to an extradition country. Two options are listed, those being Indonesia and Vietnam. According to the document, the plan here it to purchase the tickets the same day as the flight, leave the suitcase in the car, and preferably get a direct flight. The final section on this list is called “release”. The author of this document plans to keep all their thoughts down, and save them to multiple locations for redundancy, as well as saving items to the cloud for remote access. To go along with that I was able to find some files that had “dropbox” listed in the title of them, so we know these were saved to DropBox. The final part of this plan is to have a press release “once home free”.

The final bit of information I found that seemed to carry a lot of significance was a document titled “Cloudy thoughts (4apr)”. This appears to be something like a journal or diary entry. The author stating that there are some complications with the original plan. Despite these problems they insist on still following through with the plan but the possibility of a flight delay or cancellation due to snow could ruin the escape. The author also states that the weight and responsibility of leaving so much is a lot to handle but that they must carry the plan out anyway. Death isn’t even scaring this person off, and they are willing to die for the cause. “Even if I’m killed at the site, I know that what im doing is just and right. Freedom requires sacrifice. If I must be that lamb, then I walk to my slaughter freely of my own accord,” (Cloudy Thoughts (4apr)). In the next paragraph we read again that everything will be saved to the cloud on several accounts for all this information to be readily available after the plan is carried out. The reason behind this as put by the author is to ensure that their family knows why they did it and thinks they wouldn’t turn this person in. This other person Paul seems to be the person that the author plans to give all the passwords to as they state, “The only record will remain in the cloud and Paul will have the only other keys,” (Cloudy Thoughts (4apr)).

From all this evidence that I was able to gather from this forensic image file I think it’s safe to say that this person plans on attacking the meeting at the library by starting a shooting there. Then plans to escape first to Seoul where there will be a layover and then escape further to Indonesia where they plan to stay for a few weeks until they feel safe enough to come back home.

References

Sign In. (2021). Retrieved 16 December 2021, from https://synchronic.uat.edu/courses/4355/assignments/157150?module\_item\_id=402110