

Glen Allen Woman Pleads Guilty to Making a False Statement Involving International Terrorism

US Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Virginia
February 2, 2015

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/vae/news/2015/02/20150202coffman.html>

RICHMOND, Va. – Heather Elizabeth Coffman, 29, of Glen Allen, Virginia, pleaded guilty today to the charge of making a false statement involving international terrorism.

Dana J. Boente, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Adam S. Lee, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Richmond Field Office, made the announcement after the plea was accepted by United States District Judge John A. Gibney, Jr.

Coffman pleaded guilty to a one-count criminal information and will be sentenced on May 11, 2015.

In a statement of facts filed with the plea agreement, Coffman admitted that beginning prior to June 2014 and continuing up through November 2014, she used several Facebook accounts under different names showing her support for the ISIS cause. These accounts also revealed the defendant's romantic involvement with an individual referred to as "N.A.," a foreign national living outside of the United States.

In the months leading up to September 2014, Coffman and N.A. conversed almost daily via Facebook and other communications platforms. During their conversations, Coffman and N.A. explored options for N.A. to travel to Syria in order to fight for ISIS and die a "Shaheed," referring to a martyr who dies for "jihad."

According to the plea agreement filed today, Coffman admitted that she lied on November 13, 2014, when she told FBI agents that she had no idea when asked whether an individual referred to as N.A. had talked to anybody else who supported ISIS, and that she did not know anybody he talked to when, as Coffman well knew, she had previously put N.A. in contact with ISIS fighters and N.A., in turn, had communicated with them to facilitate N.A.'s travel to Turkey to join ISIS.

This case was investigated by FBI's Richmond Field Office and the Richmond Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). The JTTF is a collection of state, federal and local law enforcement agencies, dedicated to the mission of proactively keeping communities safe by thwarting national security and terrorism issues before they become a reality. Member agencies of the Richmond JTTF who assisted in this particular investigation include Virginia State Police, Henrico County Police, Chesterfield County Police, Richmond Police, Homeland Security Investigations, United States Secret Service, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives, Department of State Diplomatic Security Service, Transportation Security Administration and Defense Criminal Investigative Service.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michael Gill and Jessica Aber are prosecuting the case on behalf of the United States.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia or on PACER by searching for Case No. 3:15-cr-016.