



Department of Justice

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THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2017
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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SECURES THE DENATURALIZATION OF A SENIOR JIHADIST OPERATIVE WHO WAS CONVICTED OF TERRORISM IN EGYPT

WASHINGTON – On April 19, Chief Judge Beryl A. Howell of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia entered an order that revoked the naturalized U.S. citizenship of a confessed al-Qaeda operative, restrained and enjoined him from claiming any rights, privileges, or advantages of U.S. citizenship and ordered him to immediately surrender and deliver his Certificate of Naturalization and any other indicia of U.S. citizenship to federal authorities, the Justice Department announced.

“The Justice Department is committed to protecting our nation’s national security and will aggressively pursue denaturalization of known or suspected terrorists,” said Attorney General Jeff Sessions. “This case demonstrates the Department’s commitment to using all tools at its disposal, both criminally and civilly, to strategically enforce our nation’s immigration laws and to disrupt international terrorism. I congratulate the aggressive and effective investigation and prosecution by the Department of Justice team. We will protect our national security and our borders, and when we identify individuals tied to foreign terrorist organizations who procured their U.S. citizenship by fraud, we will initiate denaturalization proceedings - whether you reside here or abroad - and ensure you are denied entry into the United States.”

Khaled Abu al-Dahab, 57, an Egyptian-born naturalized U.S. citizen and former Silicon Valley car salesman is a confessed member of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) terrorist organization. Al-Dahab admitted to attending a training camp near Jalalabad, Afghanistan, where he received military-style training and taught foreign fighters to fly hang gliders in preparation for terrorist attacks. Moreover, al-Dahab told the FBI that, during the period in which he was supposed to establish the good moral character to naturalize under the Immigration and Nationality Act, he operated a communications hub for EIJ operatives out of his Santa Clara, California apartment. He facilitated the transfer of fraudulent passports, documents, money and other items by, between and among EIJ members, and researched communications devices and helicopter piloting at the direction of EIJ leadership. Al-Dahab’s communication hub materially assisted in the perpetration of terrorist attacks in Egypt and Pakistan.

Additionally, al-Dahab admitted to recruiting Islamic Americans into the al-Qaeda terrorist organization during his 12-year residence in California. Al-Dahab told the investigators that Osama bin Laden was eager to recruit American citizens of Middle Eastern descent because their U.S. passports could be used to facilitate international travel by al Qaeda terrorists, and that bin Laden personally congratulated him for this work. Al-Dahab was naturalized as a U.S.

citizen on Feb. 7, 1997. Upon departing the United States sometime in 1998, al-Dahab was arrested by Egyptian authorities. He was tried, convicted and sentenced to 15 years in prison for terrorism related offenses.

On April 8, 2015, the United States filed a civil action seeking the revocation of al-Dahab's naturalized U.S. citizenship on the grounds that he illegally procured his citizenship on account of his false written statements and testimony during his naturalization proceedings regarding his current and past addresses; employment history; travel outside the United States; marital history; prior false testimony; prior claims of U.S. citizenship; commission of crimes for which he had not been arrested; and membership in or association with EIJ, as well as his affiliation with an organization that advocated terrorism. The United States also alleged al-Dahab should also be denaturalized because he procured his citizenship by concealment of a material fact or by willful misrepresentation due his concealment of these matters. The United States obtained the district court's permission to serve the complaint on al-Dahab in Egypt via Facebook and electronic mail.

"The Department's Office of Immigration Litigation – District Court Section will continue to pursue denaturalization proceedings against known or suspected terrorists who procured their citizenship by fraud," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Chad A. Readler of the Justice Department's Civil Division. "The U.S. government is dedicated to strengthening the security of our nation and preventing the exploitation of our nation's immigration system by those who would do harm to our country."

Under the Immigration and Nationality Act, a naturalized U.S. citizen's citizenship may be revoked, and his certificate of naturalization canceled, if the naturalization was illegally procured or procured by concealment of a material fact or by willful misrepresentation.

This case was investigated by the Civil Division's Office of Immigration Litigation, District Court Section (OIL-DCS) and the FBI. The litigation was handled by Christopher W. Dempsey, Chief of the National Security and Affirmative Litigation Unit within OIL-DCS, with substantial assistance by FBI Special Agent Rami G. Nimri.

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