

ESSEX COUNTY PROSECUTORS OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE



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Subject: Ali Muhammad Brown Enters Guilty Plea to Murder and Terrorism
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Defendant(s): Ali Muhammad Brown

March 6, 2018

Ali Muhammad Brown Enters Guilty Plea to Murder and Terrorism

Newark – Acting Essex County Prosecutor Robert D. Laurino announced that Ali Muhammad Brown, 34, of Seattle pleaded guilty today to killing Brendan Tevlin, 19, of West Orange before the Honorable Ronald D. Wigler, Judge of the Superior Court.

Jury selection was underway in the case but yesterday Brown indicated he was willing to plead guilty to all the charges in the indictment.

Prosecutors had refused to agree to a plea bargain. This morning Brown admitted killing Tevlin on June 25, 2014. And, without prompting, he also admitted to committing three other homicides in Washington State just weeks before coming to New Jersey. In one incident involving two victims he said he killed them because he believed they were homosexual. The other homicide was a road rage incident.

In his statement to the court today Brown admitted that the killings were a part of what he described as a “Jihad.”

In addition to first degree murder, Brown pled guilty to first degree terrorism, first-degree felony murder, first-degree carjacking, first-degree robbery, unlawful possession of a handgun, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose.

This is the first time the New Jersey terrorism statute has been used in connection a homicide. When he is sentenced on May 1, by Judge Wigler, Brown faces a mandatory life sentence under the terrorism statute alone.

“We did not negotiate with this defendant. From the beginning, our position has been that he had to plead to all the charges or we would go to trial and let the jury decide. Today, this defendant, in open court, admitted to the heinous acts he committed the night he took Brendan Tevlin’s life. Because of his admission, we expect that when he is sentenced on May 1, it will mean that he will never be a free man again,” said Acting Prosecutor Laurino.

Brown is already serving a 35-year sentence in New Jersey state prison for an armed robbery he committed in West Orange prior to killing Tevlin.

In addition to the West Orange armed robbery, Brown was previously convicted by federal authorities of bank fraud. In Washington State, he was convicted of sexual contact and

aggravated assault. He has an open robbery case in Ocean County and the three homicides in Washington State, which have not been tried. Those are accusations. He remains innocent of those charges until he is convicted in a court of law or enters a guilty plea.

Assistant Prosecutor/Director Jamel Semper, who was trying the case with Assistant Prosecutor Purva Deshpande, said, "Ali Muhammad Brown randomly targeted and executed an innocent defenseless teenager, and admitted in open court to doing the same to three other young men in Washington. He grievously harmed families and terrorized entire communities across the country. This defendant is no martyr, he's just an admitted terrorist who will now spend the rest of his life in prison. Our thoughts and prayers remain with the Tevlin family, and all those affected."

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