

Rochester man charged receipt and possession of firearm silencer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ROCHESTER, N.Y.--U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Mufid A. Elfgeeh, 30, of Rochester, N.Y., has been arrested and charged by criminal complaint with two counts of receipt and possession of an unregistered firearm silencer. The charges carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison for each count.

“In a post 9/11 world, law enforcement takes very seriously any potential threat against the safety and security of our country,” said U.S. Attorney Hochul. “This defendant, on multiple occasions, stated his desire and intention to harm and kill American soldiers as well as his allegiance to terrorist groups whose mission it is to bring devastation upon our country. This defendant will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and so too would any individuals who attempt to inflict an act of terror on the United States or against Americans abroad.”

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brett A. Harvey and Frank H. Sherman, who are handling the case, stated that according to the complaint, Elfgeeh has expressed his support for various terrorist groups, including al-Qa’ida and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and the pursuit of violent jihad. Consistent with this ideology, Elfgeeh has discussed a plan to shoot and kill both members of the United States military returning from Iraq and unidentified Shi’a Muslims in the Western District of New York. As part of that plan, Elfgeeh purchased two handguns equipped with firearm silencers and ammunition from a confidential source. The handguns were made inoperable by the FBI before the confidential source gave them to Elfgeeh.

The complaint further states that Elfgeeh first discussed the idea of shooting United State military members in December 2013, when he told a confidential source that he was thinking about getting a gun and ammunition, putting on a bulletproof vest, and “just go[ing] around and start shooting.” Elfgeeh later suggested that he and the confidential source could do something similar to Mohammed Merah, a French-Algerian man who went on a shooting spree in France in March 2012, killing three French soldiers and seriously injuring another. Elfgeeh’s justification for killing United States soldiers was “kill them as they kill you . . . fight them altogether as they fight you all together” and that “you want to stop the killing machine that is happening [in Iraq and Afghanistan] . . . and the only way is to deter them by any means.” Elfgeeh said that, after doing between five and 20 shootings, they (meaning Elfgeeh and the confidential source) would make a video claiming responsibility for the shootings.

In February 2014, Elfgeeh told the confidential source that he needed a handgun and silencer. Elfgeeh later gave the confidential source \$1,050 in cash to purchase two handguns, two firearm silencers, and ammunition. On May 31, 2014, the confidential source delivered the two handguns, silencers, and ammunition to Elfgeeh. After Elfgeeh took possession of the items, he was arrested by members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force.

The defendant made an initial appearance today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Jonathan W. Feldman. He is being held pending a detention hearing on June 16, 2014.

The Criminal Complaint was the result of an investigation on the part of the Joint Terrorism Task Force of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.