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**CHICAGO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ATTEMPTED BOMBING ON  
CROWDED CLARK STREET NEAR WRIGLEY FIELD IN SEPTEMBER 2010**

CHICAGO — A Chicago man pleaded guilty today to federal charges for placing a backpack that he thought contained a powerful explosive device into a curbside trash container on a crowded north side street near Wrigley Field in September 2010. The defendant, **Sami Samir Hassoun**, pleaded guilty to one count each of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and attempted use of an explosive device, resolving charges that have been pending since he was arrested during the very early morning on Sept. 19, 2010. The purported bomb was actually an inert device that was provided by undercover FBI agents, who were investigating and monitoring Hassoun's proclaimed determination to commit acts of violence in Chicago for monetary gain and to cause local political instability.

As a result of the undercover investigation, Hassoun never posed any actual imminent danger, but his plea agreement makes clear that he intended to cause mass casualties and had rejected opportunities to walk away from the plot. He chose the particular location, in the 3500 block of North Clark Street, because it presented the opportunity to inflict a greater number of casualties than other locations he considered. There was a concert at Wrigley Field on Saturday night, Sept. 18, 2010, just before he was arrested.

Hassoun, 24, formerly of the city's north side, remains in federal custody while awaiting sentencing, which U.S. District Judge Robert Gettleman scheduled for 10 a.m. on Aug. 15, 2012. Hassoun is a Lebanese citizen and permanent resident alien. Under the plea agreement, the government will recommend a sentence of 30 years in prison, and the Court must impose a sentence of at least 20 years and no more than 30 years, or reject the plea agreement. The agreement also requires Hassoun to cooperate with the government in any matter in which he is called upon to assist.

The guilty plea was announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The investigation was conducted by the Chicago FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, which consists of FBI special agents, Chicago police officers, and representatives from 20 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

According to the plea agreement, Hassoun told a law enforcement cooperating source (CS) in early June 2010 that he wanted to commit acts of violence in Chicago and suggested bombing the commercial area surrounding Wrigley Field as one option. Hassoun said that an attack against such an entertainment center could "paralyze" Chicago commerce. The CS told Hassoun that he/she had friends who might be willing to pay Hassoun to perpetrate such an attack. Hassoun and the CS continued to discuss Hassoun's terrorist attack ideas during the following weeks, and Hassoun indicated that he wanted to meet the CS's contacts and was anxious to act against Chicago.

On July 8, 2010, the CS introduced Hassoun to an undercover FBI task force officer posing as one of the CS's purported contacts, and Hassoun said that he believed that a series of escalating violent acts could be used to undermine the city's political establishment. When asked what he was personally willing to do, Hassoun indicated that he was willing to facilitate a car bombing or the assassination of Chicago police officers. When asked if he was concerned about the victims of such violence, Hassoun said that casualties were the inevitable result of what he termed "revolution."

On July 21, 2010, an undercover FBI agent was introduced to Hassoun as a “good friend” and “brother,” and Hassoun discussed his idea of a series of escalating violent attacks to damage Chicago’s sense of security, its economy, and trust in leadership. He identified Chicago entertainment establishments, civic buildings, commercial high-rises, and transportation infrastructure as potential targets, the plea agreement states.

During this meeting, the undercover agents gave Hassoun a digital camcorder to videotape potential targets. Hassoun traveled to the area around Wrigley Field and filmed potential targets on Aug. 8, 12 and 14, 2010, focusing on the bars, restaurants and potential security in the area. As he filmed, Hassoun commented on the potential tactical advantages and risks of perpetrating an attack at the various locations he observed. Also during the July 21 meeting, Hassoun asked the undercover agents effectively to employ him planning the bombing, and from July 21 to Sept. 18, 2010, they paid Hassoun \$2,700.

On Aug. 16, 2010, Hassoun met with the agents and debriefed them on his reconnaissance efforts. He gave them the camcorder and after reviewing the videos, they all discussed the areas that could be targeted to cause maximum casualties with minimum operational difficulty and risk. On Aug. 31, 2010, Hassoun and the undercover agents traveled to Hassoun’s chosen location, which Hassoun said would be crowded with bar patrons.

At a prearranged meeting on the night of Sept. 18, 2010, at a hotel in Rosemont, the undercover agents provided Hassoun with a shopping bag and a backpack that contained the purported bomb. While driving together to the target area, one of the agents explained to Hassoun that the bomb was surrounded by ball-bearings and that its blast could destroy up to half a city block. As they approached the area, an agent told Hassoun that he was setting the bomb’s timer for 30 minutes, but Hassoun said that was too long. The agent then set the timer for approximately 20 minutes and activated the purported bomb’s arming mechanism in Hassoun’s presence. They arrived

near the target location at approximately 12:10 a.m. on Sunday Sept. 19 and parked about a block away. As planned, Hassoun exited the vehicle with the shopping bag containing the backpack and purported explosive device, walked a short distance, and deposited what he thought was the armed bomb into the trash container on the crowded sidewalk.

The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Joel Hammerman and Tinos Diamantatos.

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