



Department of Justice

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OHIO MAN SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SOLICITING MURDER OF U.S. MILITARY MEMBERS

WASHINGTON – Terrence J. McNeil, 24, of Akron, Ohio, was sentenced today to 20 years in prison for soliciting the murder of members of the U.S. military. McNeil pleaded guilty earlier this year to five counts of solicitation to commit a crime of violence and five counts of making threatening interstate communications.

Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Dana J. Boente, Acting U.S. Attorney David A. Sierleja and Special Agent in Charge Stephen D. Anthony of the FBI's Cleveland Division made the announcement.

“With this sentence, McNeil is being held accountable for disseminating ISIS’s violent rhetoric, circulating U.S. military personnel information and explicitly calling for the killing of American service members in their homes and communities,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General Boente. “The National Security Division will continue to investigate and prosecute those who use social media to threaten acts of violence against our military members and their families, on behalf of terrorist organizations.”

“This defendant was dedicated to attacking members of the military here in the United States,” Acting U.S. Attorney Sierleja said. “This kind of fanaticism is dangerous and will be aggressively prosecuted.”

“It is reassuring knowing that Terrence McNeil will spend a significant amount of time behind bars for the crimes he committed. The FBI will continue to aggressively defend First Amendment rights, however in this case, McNeil went far beyond free speech by reposting names and addresses of 100 U.S. service members, all with the intent to have them killed,” said Special Agent in Charge Anthony. “The FBI will remain vigilant in our efforts to stop those who wish to support these despicable acts.”

According to documents filed in the case:

McNeil professed his support on social media on numerous occasions for the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, a designated foreign terrorist organization. On or about Sept. 24, 2015, using a Tumblr account, McNeil reblogged a file with the banner “Islamic State Hacking

Division,” followed by “Target: United States Military” and “Leak: Addresses of 100 U.S. Military Personnel.”

The file type is a .gif file, which allows multiple still images to be looped in one file, with a timed delay between each image. The text of the first file reads “O Brothers in America, know that the jihad against the crusaders is not limited to the lands of the Khilafah, it is a world-wide jihad and their war is not just a war against the Islamic State, it is a war against Islam... Know that it is wajib (translated to “necessary”) for you to kill these kuffar! and now we have made it easy for you by giving you addresses, all you need to do is take the final step, so what are you waiting for? Kill them in their own lands, behead them in their own homes, stab them to death as they walk their streets thinking that they are safe...”

The file then loops several dozen photographs, purportedly of U.S. military personnel, along with their respective name, address and military branch. The final image looped is a picture of a handgun and a knife with text that reads “...and kill them wherever you find them...”

The defendant posted multiple other kill lists in late 2015, all of which repeated the same refrain, calling on others to seek out and murder U.S. servicemen and women.

McNeil also researched the price online of firearms for sale and possessed detailed bomb-making instructions, according to court documents.

The FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force in Cleveland investigated this case. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christos Georgalis and Michelle Baepler of the Northern District of Ohio, with assistance from Trial Attorney Jennifer Levy of the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department’s National Security Division.

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