

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Norfolk Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	)	
	)	
v.	)	Criminal No. 2:17cr1
	)	
LIONEL NELSON WILLIAMS,	)	
a/k/a "Harun Ash-Shababi,"	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

STATEMENT OF FACTS

By signing below, the parties and their respective counsel agree that if this case had gone to trial, the government’s evidence would have established the following facts beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. On October 15, 2004, the United States Secretary of State designated al-Qa’ida in Iraq (AQI), then known as Jam’at al Tawhid wa’al-Jihad, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224.
2. On or about May 15, 2015, the Secretary of State amended the designation of AQI as an FTO under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist entity under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224 to add the alias Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as its primary name. The Secretary of State also added the following aliases to the FTO listing: the Islamic State of Iraq and al’Sham (ISIS – which is how the FTO will be referenced herein), the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ad-Dawla al’Islamiyya fi al-‘Iraq wa-sh-Sham, Daesh, Dawla al Islamiya, and Al-Furqan Establishment

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for Media Production. On September 21, 2015, the Secretary added the following aliases to the FTO listing: Islamic State, ISIL, and ISIS. To date, ISIS remains a designated FTO.

3. In or about 2014, the defendant, Lionel Williams, began sharing ISIS videos and articles with M.W., who was a classmate of the defendant in high school whom he purportedly had previously married and divorced under Islamic law. In or about September 2015, the defendant was researching and collecting articles and videos related to ISIS. The defendant stored a majority of this information on a MacBook computer that he maintained in his residence, located in the City of Suffolk, in the Eastern District of Virginia.
4. On or about December 3, 2015, the day after the San Bernardino terrorist attack, an attack involving assault rifles and other weapons that left 14 people dead and 22 injured, the defendant ordered an AK-47 assault rifle. He picked up the rifle on December 12, 2015, in Suffolk, Virginia. On or about January 2, 2016, the defendant purchased one 30 round magazine and 140 rounds of ammunition, which included some hollow point ammunition.
5. On or about March 16, 2016, the day before the defendant's birthday, the defendant posted on social media, "It's time for me to take a stand. I stand with #Dawlah. If that means you want nothing to do with me, then fine." "Dawlah" or "Dawla" is another name for ISIS. The defendant continued later in his post, "And its not that I don't have love for humanity, but I have love for Islam more."<sup>1</sup>
6. Around this same time period, a concerned citizen alerted the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) about the defendant's postings. Independently, a confidential human source (CHS)

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<sup>1</sup> All quotations are quoted verbatim, including spelling or punctuation errors contained in the original statements.

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working for the FBI also alerted the FBI that the defendant's postings were cause for concern.

7. On March 20, 2016, the defendant shared a video of a speaker condemning Muslims who sided with Western states and who did not provide support for "the Mujahideen."<sup>2,3</sup> In conjunction with the video, Williams commented, "I love this video. I love the Mujahideen the world over. Youtube/Facebook had the gall to delete it sometime ago, but somehow it's been remade/reuploaded. Allahu Akhbar! Please watch the video they consider to be one of the greatest threats to their hypocritical stability. #Dawlah #TrueIslam."<sup>4</sup> The video contained the watermark of al-Hayat, ISIS's Western-focused official media arm.
8. On or about March 24, 2016, the CHS and the defendant began to electronically communicate about topics that included ISIS. On or about March 28, 2016, the defendant posted on a social media site, in reference to the armed conflict occurring in Iraq and Syria between ISIS and other groups and nations, including the United States:

The so-called #Coalition bombs schools, hospitals, factories, and residential areas – killing men, women, and children in scores, yet #IS / #Dawlah are the terrorists? The so-called Coalition bomb the land of #Khilafah<sup>5</sup> incessantly, fearing for their lives and hoping for a long life, and the #Mujahideen are considered cowards?

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<sup>2</sup> All translations of Arabic words and phrases contained in this memorandum are official translations provided by the FBI.

<sup>3</sup> "Mujahideen" is the plural form of "mujahid" and means "jihadist," *i.e.*, a person who wages jihad.

<sup>4</sup> "Allahu Akhbar" means "God is the Greatest."

<sup>5</sup> The "Khilafah," or "Caliphate," refers to the land ruled by a Caliph or leader. In this case, the defendant used the term to refer to territory under ISIS control or rule.

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9. By the end of March 2016, the defendant was regularly posting comments, pictures, and articles about ISIS and the “Khilafah” on a public social media site. The defendant also began “tagging” his social media “friends” on ISIS-related postings and forwarding ISIS material to them. The defendant and the CHS began communicating about the defendant’s belief that law enforcement was monitoring the defendant electronically, about social media providers shutting down pages or removing material related to ISIS, and about the defendant’s concern that other users were reporting him to the social media provider. One of the defendant’s primary concerns was that law enforcement employees were electronically posing as ISIS supporters. During one such conversation, the defendant stated in a private message, “Well, I just started really getting into conveying the truth, but I’ve never been deleted or anything. its weird. I must be too soft akhii<sup>6</sup> (sad face emoticon) I want to get reported to..”
10. In or about late March 2016, A.B., one of the defendant’s “friends” on social media who regularly posted extremist content online and who purported to be in ISIS-controlled territory, made the following public post on a social media site: “The lone wolf attacks are more beloved to us than the martyrdom operations... #KillThemWhereverYouFindThem.” In response, the defendant replied with a statement that “the harming of random soft-targets” would not be valid but that “[p]olice offers, military, and armed-civilians” would “of course” be valid targets.
11. In a May 17, 2016, telephone conversation with his then-girlfriend, the defendant expressed his desire for ISIS to take over the United States: “my plan is to see the black flags of ad-

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<sup>6</sup> “Akhii,” or “akhi,” means “my brother.”

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Dawlah hangin' over, you know, the capital of the United States. Literally, one day the Islamic State is gonna take over this whole country. That's my plan! That's what I see in the future." The defendant continued: "if I met American soldiers on the battlefield it would either be them or me. And there's no – I have no qualms about it that ... in truth my American citizen-citizenship is null and void when I became Muslim."

12. After the FBI began to conduct physical surveillance of the defendant, the defendant became aware of the surveillance and discussed it with several people. The defendant talked about killing law enforcement officers he believed were surveilling him. In a telephone conversation with his then-girlfriend on or about June 16, 2016, the defendant stated about the surveillance team, "Anyway I want them to know that if I catch them scopin' my house out again, I'm gonna cut his head off; just so they know."
13. In or about April of 2016, employees of the FBI created an undercover persona called Abu Djlal (AD) for the purpose of interacting with the defendant. On or about April 29, 2016, AD began to interact with the defendant on social media. The defendant and AD began communicating privately through social media in May 2016. On or about May 16, 2016, the defendant wrote to AD, "I can't wait for the day that the black flag of Islam exists all over Maryland, D.C., Virginia, and Chicago." The defendant and AD agreed to meet in person on June 13, 2016, during Ramadan.
14. On June 13, 2016, an undercover agent who adopted the persona of AD met with the defendant at a restaurant in Annandale, Virginia. In the context of discussing the Islamic State, the defendant expressed his desire to "literally go and help the people and if I die that

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way, alhamdulillah.”<sup>7</sup> The defendant also told AD, “I don’t wanna live here, that’s for sure.” The defendant later said that he wanted to live in Jerusalem or Damascus. Toward the end of the meeting, the defendant told AD he initially thought AD might be an “informant.” AD emphasized he/she was not encouraging the defendant to take any sort of action, and that AD was merely checking on the defendant’s well-being because some of the defendant’s social media postings were troubling. The defendant, while disclaiming interest in perpetrating a “lone wolf” attack, offered that if he did “some type of lone stuff,” he would “hit hard targets” such as “policemen, people that can defend themselves and fight back.”

15. In or about early September 2016, the defendant and AD began communicating over a communications application. The defendant introduced the topic of ISIS and stated that “the advent of Dawlah really gave my life a place and a purpose. It’s a home and example for the ummah.”<sup>8</sup>
16. On September 14, 2016, AD asked the defendant to “pray and see if you are able to help our Dawlah brothers. Any amount helps.” The defendant replied “Ok,” and “I’ll spare what I can.” The defendant asked if the money would go to help the poor, homeless, and hungry “brothers” in need of charity. AD replied, “No, akhi. It’s going to the lions<sup>9</sup> in Mosul as they are losing grounds and need all the help they can get.” The defendant and AD agreed to meet again on October 8, 2016.
17. On or about September 17, 2016, the defendant posted the following comment on social media:

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<sup>7</sup> “Allhamdulillah” means “praise God.”

<sup>8</sup> “Ummah” means the entire Muslim community.

<sup>9</sup> “Lions” is a term used by jihadists for fighters to illustrate their purported courage and bravery.

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I just explain the alternate scholarly opinion on that. The difference between suicide and martyrdom operations is intention. That's the basic gist of it.. All actions are based on intentions. If one is overwhelmed with life and kills himself that is suicide, yet if someone is commanded by their amir to detonate a bomb to the tactical advantage of the Muslim army against a more powerfully armed foe, that's considered a martyrdom operation - if within his heart he is solely and sincerely seeking the reward of Allah.

18. On October 8, 2016, the defendant met with AD face-to-face a second time. The defendant told AD that he (the defendant) had specifically set aside money and was going to give some to AD. AD provided the defendant with contact information for a purported ISIS financier. AD told the defendant, "I don't want to put pressure on you ... you need to eat and you need to take care of your grandmother. But if you want to contribute, reach out and he'll tell you what to do." Before any contributions were made, AD explained to the defendant that the defendant needed to know that the money was "going to the Islamic State. You understand this? It's going to kill. Do you understand? ... We're not feeding people, we're not - you know we're not putting bandages on people, it's specifically for the lions of Mosul." The defendant responded positively to those statements.
19. On or about October 10, 2016, the defendant dressed up in black clothing and a black head scarf, and purchased a \$200 prepaid Visa gift card at a Walgreens store in Suffolk, Virginia. On October 10, the defendant sent the account information for the gift card, with a \$200 balance, to the purported ISIS financier.
20. On October 17, 2016, AD asked the defendant if he wanted to see what his money had helped to purchase, and sent the defendant a picture of a rocket propelled grenade. The

defendant responded, "Alhamdulillah wa Allahu Akhbar,"<sup>10</sup> along with a "smiley face" emoticon. The defendant then wrote, "I'm gonna destroy this message then hit you back."

21. On or about October 19, 2016, the defendant sent the following private message on a social media site to an associate:

I forgot to answer your question about the martyrdom operations. My personal belief is that non-combatants should be spared and only hard targets attempted -- but this is all under the concept, qisas. An eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, life for life and so on. That is a right given to Muslims by Allah, though forgiveness is highly recommended – there is proof within a hadith that I will try to find for you, of night raids being carried out knowing full well there would be indiscriminate casualties because of the close quarters, darkness and chaos. As for what you call 'suicide attacks' I was originally upon that stance myself. But two things you should seek to understand and remember. One, all actions are based on intention and suicide is thus classified as taking your life because you are displeased with Allah's bounties, while martyrdom operations are carried out strictly under the command of an amir, with intent of the Mujahid being to assist a much smaller and more poorly equipped army by sacrificing one's body as a tactical means of inflicting heavy losses on an enemy with the loss of just one Muslim life -- and the INTENTION is to do this in order to please Allah and be rewarded and assist the Muslim army, rather than being dissatisfied with life and attempting to take it before the Decree.

22. On or about October 30, 2016, AD sent the defendant a message stating that AD was in an area controlled by ISIS, and that AD was trying to purchase 10,000 rounds of AK-47 ammunition and 50 AK-47 magazines. The defendant asked how much the ammunition would cost and stated he would try to help.
23. On or about November 3, 2016, the defendant agreed to help purchase ammunition. The defendant, dressed in combat boots, cargo pants, and a head scarf, drove to a Wal-Mart in

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<sup>10</sup> "Alhamdulillah wa Allahu Akhbar" means "thank God and God is great."



Suffolk, Virginia, where he used an electronic transfer service to send \$50.00 to AD. The defendant sent a copy of the digital receipt to AD.

24. In or about the end of November 2016, the defendant began an online relationship with L.A., a Muslim woman living in Brazil. The defendant and L.A. began communicating regularly through both a social media site and a communications application.
25. On or about December 2, 2016, the defendant downloaded an image that included guidelines for carrying out terror operations. The graphic demonstrated what types of knives were most effective for martyrdom operations and where on the human body a knife wound would inflict the most lethal damage.
26. On or about December 6, 2016, the defendant posted on a social media site, “the cops and feds coming either way -- might as well die for something righteous.”
27. On or about December 7, 2016, the defendant posted several status updates on a social media site with quotes from Anwar al-Awlaki:<sup>11</sup>

44 ways to support Jhaad<sup>12</sup> ...Having the right intentions of joining the ranks of the Muhdeen... A sign that an intention of a person is true is whether they are preparing for Jhaad or not.

44 ways to support Jhadd... Praying to Allaah to award you with martyrdom... A person who truly asks for Shahaadah<sup>13</sup> would respond to the call of Jhaad whenever he hears it and would eagerly search for death in the path of Allaah. The reason why the enemies of Allaah succeeded in defeating some Muslims and taking over their land is because they have lost their love for martyrdom... Our culture of martyrdom needs to

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<sup>11</sup> Anwar al-Awlaki was a well-known extremist with ties to terrorist organizations who called for jihad against the United States prior to his death in 2012.

<sup>12</sup> In Arabic, the word “jihad” has more than one meaning. One of them is to struggle with something. Another meaning is a holy war waged on behalf of Islam as a religious duty. In the context here, and as used by the defendant, it has the latter meaning.

<sup>13</sup> “Shahada” or “shahadah” or “shahaadah” is an Arabic term that can be used to mean “martyrdom”

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revived because the enemy of Allaah fears nothing more than our love of death.

44 ways to support Jhaad... Jhaad with your wealth. The financial Jhaad has preceded the physical Jhaad in every verse except one... no money – no Jhaad and Jhaad needs lots of it... the reward for money given as Sadaqah is multiplied by ten, but the reward for money spent in Jhaad is multiplied by 700!

28. On or about December 7, 2016, the defendant posted the following quote in a status update on a social media site: “Submit to Islam and be safe. Or agree to the payment of the Jizya,<sup>14</sup> and you and your people will be under our protection, or else you will have only yourself to blame for the consequences for I bring the men who desire death as ardently as you desire life.”

29. On or about December 7, 2016, the defendant uploaded a so-called “creed of martyrs” to his social media page that stated:

Oh Shaheed<sup>15</sup> - You traded this life with the hereafter, A business which is most beloved to Allah, You ran towards the bullet with no fear, and achieve martyrdom with you to Jannah.<sup>16</sup> Your wife is now a widow and your child has become an orphan, But you worry not because you know Allah is the best Guardian. Before the blood dries and you ascent to the highest Jannah, You are not dead, alive inside the green bird of Jannah, Flying and roaming under the throne of Allah, Earning the reward for being killed for Sabilillah, And even if Allah sends you back to this Dunya, Your concern is not your family nor your wealth, You wish to be killed again in His cause, But we die for only once, So Rejoice your dwelling in Jannah! It breaks my heart when I'm left behind, Whilst everyone else has joined the blessed caravan, With much anxiety and fear if I die not a martyr. May Allah grant me Shahadah so I could join the caravan soon.

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<sup>14</sup> “Jizya” is a yearly tax historically levied by Islamic states on certain non-Muslim subjects permanently residing in Muslim lands. In return for paying this tax, residents were granted protection.

<sup>15</sup> The Arabic word Shaheed translates to a Muslim martyr.

<sup>16</sup> “Jannah” means paradise.

30. On or about December 8, 2016, the defendant posted a comment on a social media site that explained his definition of ISIS. The comment stated, “[I]t’s IS or Dawlah, -- or as it’s enemies call it ‘Daesh’. It can’t be called ISIS anymore because the Caliphate has been established in West Africa, too. And there are formidable branches in Gaza, the Sinai Peninsula, and in other European and Southeast Asian countries.”

31. On or about December 8, 2016, L.A. recorded a series of audio recordings discussing the defendant’s intention to be martyr for ISIS. L.A. stated:

If you want to be a martyr why you want just a short period of happiness, join them now, go now. I thought you were going to Syria to help people there, and do something there, I was wrong .... If I was alone, maybe I would join you for the cause of that you say for the cause of Allah. I can’t leave my kids like that. Their father is the worst kafir.<sup>17</sup> So, I cannot be a martyr and leave my kids with this type of man. All this you told me all this that is in the Koran that we must leave everything and go in the cause of Allah, I agree. If it’s a war clearly for cause of Allah, not a bunch of crazy people .... You want me to be the wife of a martyr?

32. After receiving those audio recordings the defendant viewed on his computer a graphic purporting to show the “total of Martyrdom Ops in November for Syria/Iraq,” and a video entitled “The Impenetrable Fortress,” which is an ISIS propaganda film that shows beheadings.

33. In or about the beginning of December 2016, the defendant began to focus obsessively on the battle between ISIS and its enemies in Aleppo, Syria. On or about December 9, 2016, the defendant posted a status update, “#IS attacks Homs, effectively stopping the #Russian assault on East Aleppo ^\_^No other group has be able to do that. Allah is the Greatest!

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<sup>17</sup> “Kafir” means nonbeliever, and is a term used by Muslims to refer to a non-Muslim. The plural form of “kafir” is “kuffar.”

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Allahu Akhbar!” On or about December 10, 2016, the defendant posted the following status update:

So.. let’s see here. Under siege by 100,000 murderous Coalition forces on one side, taking part in fierce battles and operation on a multitude of different fronts, globally, and they still have they still have the strength and tactical sense to RE-TAKE Palmyra amidst all of this – effectively halting or slowing the murderous siege of East #Aleppo --Who do you think we are? We are the beloved sons and daughters of Adam, blessed with success and understanding by Allah. We love Allah and He loves us, and we do not fear the blame of the blamers. #Alhamdulillah

The defendant then began downloading a substantial number of pictures of dead children photographed in Aleppo, purportedly killed by “coalition forces,” and continued this process on an almost daily basis.

34. On or about December 12, 2016, the defendant sent the CHS three videos recorded by Anwar al-Awlaki that advocated jihad and martyrdom. In May, the defendant had described al-Awlaki as follows:

It’s important for you to understand that Imam Anwar Al-Awlaki was a potent threat to America at the time, yet he released A LOT of informative information before his death as a shahid (martyr).

35. On or about December 13, 2016, the defendant posted a series of status updates and comments on social media:

.... It breaks my heart to see people joking and laughing and posting superficial memes right now. As at this very second.. a little boy is likely getting raped by inmates from Iran. And little girls are getting murdered. And the UN does nothing about it, because they're afraid of a little nuclear war. #Push\_the\_button

That’s not my concern whether they block me or not. I need only to convey the message clearly. I leave the rest in the Hands of Allah. Everything is Allah’s Decree. Then unfriend me. Block me. This is the true reality. I will not let you hide from it. We are beyond games and childish play .... From the people of Aleppo,

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from the elderly, from the pure women, from the children of Aleppo. Oh Amir al-Mu'mineen Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, oh lions of the Islamic State. The Rawafidh are threatening to rape our pure Muslim women. We urge you to break the siege on us, And we hope the call reaches Amir al-Mu'mineen Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and he accept it.

At the time of the posting, Amir al-Mu'mineen Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was the self-proclaimed leader of ISIS.

36. On or about December 14, 2016, the defendant sent a message to the CHS and stated:

I really need you to buy some rounds on my behalf and just send to my house. About 640-1000 should do. I need some for target practice, some for home-defense, and a few soft-points possibly for hunting with my rifle, in'shaa'Allah. I've never tried but I know its possible. I only fear that the kuffar will think I'm up to something stupid whilst I only intend good. (smiley emoticon) .... Anyway if you can, just let me know. And if you'd like my wife'll pay you back (Since she's better at managing such things), other I could really use it by the way of sadaqah fisabillillah.<sup>18</sup> Maybe um.. each deer I kill or whatever will be a reward for you? In'shaa'Allah lol. Anyway Jazak'Allah khair in advance.. I could really use the help Fisabillah as soon as possible. I think these red neck hunters are sketching me out. I have some, but I wouldn't mind a few extra. But I always have my sword and my heart if Allah Decrees that be necessary.

In this posting the defendant referred to L.A. as his "wife." The defendant also suggested to the CHS that if he supplied the bullets to the defendant then each "kill" the defendant made might reward the CHS in the afterlife.

37. On or about that same day, the defendant visited a local mosque. After that visit, he recorded an audio file and sent it to L.A. The defendant stated, "I went to the masjid to pray, then actually ah talked to the imam here and I asked him about his aqeedah<sup>19</sup> .... Whether he will

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<sup>18</sup> "Sedekah fi sabilillah" is Arabic for the provision of a gift of money or its equivalent in charity for the sake of Allah.

<sup>19</sup> "Aqeedah" is an Arabic term meaning "creed" or "belief."

admit it or not, he's is a mushrik<sup>20</sup> then. I brought up Aleppo and the people in Syria, and it literally almost brought me to tears how helpless I felt." The defendant then contacted an associate and asked if she would act as a proxy for marriage.

38. On or about December 15, 2016, the defendant again contacted the CHS and stated in several private messages the following information:

Anyway, I want to let you know now. Your codename is Knight.. As in chess. Whenever and however it is presented to you, this is how you know its from me. Just FYI. You can delete that .... I need to move fast, I fear for my life and deer hunting season is almost over .... 500 will do. 7.65x39 I think it is. AK. Um..soft points or hollows and majority of FMJ [*i.e.*, full metal jacket] for target practice [smiling to the point of tears emoticon], But the more the merrier. Soft points are for thick skinned deer FMJ are for possible trees.

39. The CHS then asked the defendant whether he had "practiced." The defendant responded, "Oh I practice but not enough to draw attention I intend to use practice on the deer carcasses with my sword and kbar For the most part," and "Then I shall... I need more ammo. May Allah protect me. I may reduce the quality of you birthday card and go buy a gift for myself [winking emoticon]." In the last statement, the defendant was referring to the fact that he was considering donating less money to the person he believed to be collecting money for ISIS, in order to spend that money on ammunition for his own use.
40. After that conversation, the defendant again contacted the CHS in a private message. The defendant had researched which type of AK-47 ammunition would be most effective and stated:

[Link to online Powerpoint presentation on AK-47 ammunition] The power points JSP seem cool, bu so do the ballistic and fusion types. Just

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<sup>20</sup> "Mushrik" is a term used in Islam to describe an individual who practices shirk, the sin of practicing idolatry or polytheism.

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thought I'd shared. Whatever is easiest. Whatever Allah Wills.  
Jazak'Allah Khair ..... Let Abu Dijlah [*i.e.*, AD] know that his codename  
is Marquess. Which, I believe, is french for Rook. I will let the Queen  
know that as well, and I may change her codename to a different language.

41. On or about December 16, 2016, the defendant began to search the internet for rifle slings that would allow the defendant to carry his AK-47 assault rifle hands-free. He also searched for magazines for a Lionheart handgun and different types of ammunition. The defendant also searched for information on how to delete a computer hard drive.
42. The defendant began referring to himself as if he would die in the near future. In a conversation with a different Muslim woman he spoke to over social media, the defendant stated, "That said do you understand better now why I intend to go forth? Stuff like Syria will never stop unless we do." The woman then asked him, "Where are you going?" and the defendant responded, "To Allah little Sis, I thought you understood. This is no joke. Aleppo is no joke. The Ummah is getting slaughtered on every front ...."
43. In or about mid-December, the defendant and L.A. were in frequent contact with each other on both a social media site and a communications application. On or about December 16, 2016, L.A. sent the defendant multiple audio recordings using the application in which she stated:

At least so far you have told me everything, but once again, I don't know them, I don't know what's going on but one thing I guarantee you I don't support this. I don't support why, because those okay military police they do this and that, but killing a father a husband a brother, ok, will do what? Will prove what? You don't know if those people that you are chasing are responsible for evil actions and I am truly afraid that you end up cast the hellfire ... You want to go through it, it's ok .... I wish you all the best and you have my word, I'll not mention this to anybody, nobody knows, nobody will know, I'll keep to myself.

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44. On or about December 17, 2016, the defendant sent L.A. a series of private messages on social media:

You left with a pure heart and semi-complete knowledge... I will search for you if I am given a choice... I have no doubt in your sincerity and know that I wouldn't have gone down this path if it wasn't absolutely necessary. My death, and the war,th of my sweet heart, in'shaa'Allah, will reach many people. I just wish to see you in the end... The world is not what it used to be.. I am not brainwashed, this is psychologically sound -- a shockwave in preparation

I only wished to be able to intercede for you and your children by way of marriage... that was mthe greatest Mahr<sup>21</sup> I could offer. -- My intercession on the Day of Judgement, which his 50,000 years long.

If Allah wills it, we will be together, in this life, or the next,  
In'shaa'Allah.<sup>22</sup>

The defendant, consistently to several different associates, expressed a belief that if he died as a martyr his wife and family would receive benefits in "Jannah."

45. Later that same day, the defendant sent L.A. another series of private messages on social media:

I will never forget you

I really wanted to make sure you all would be well.. to do something important with my life.

But my life is not my own. I am just a slave to the Will of Allah...

you must\*

But I did understand the potential and possibility of living a full, fruitful life -- and that was only possible by envisioning it with you.

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<sup>21</sup> "Mahr" is a mandatory payment paid or promised to be paid by the groom to the bride. "Mahr" is typically specified in the marriage contract signed during an Islamic marriage.

<sup>22</sup> "In'shaa'Allah" or "insha'a'allahuta'ala" or "inshallah" means "God willing."



IT purified my intention and made it shuhadah,<sup>23</sup> rather than suicide.

And in that, you will need to research and understand deeply

All actions are based on intention

The defendant previously discussed in multiple social media postings his belief that the difference between suicide and a lawful martyrdom was determined by the intention of the person committing the act. The defendant's distinction relied on whether the individual was pure and happy with his life – in which case the act was committed “for Allah,” and was a lawful martyrdom – or whether the individual was dissatisfied with his life and “Allah's bounties,” which made an operation ending in death suicide rather than martyrdom. During this time period, the defendant referred to his belief that a proper Islamic marriage would purify his intentions such that an “operation” would end in martyrdom rather than suicide.

46. The defendant asked associates and AD to arrange a proxy marriage to L.A. that would allow the defendant to marry L.A. without her traveling to the United States. When L.A. initially disagreed with the defendant's decision to seek martyrdom, the defendant sent her a series of private messages on social media that stated, “You don't understand the need of this Ummah. I never intended to throw my life away... This came at a time when I never considered it.”

47. The defendant continued to attempt to gain L.A.'s support for his intended operation. He sent the following series of private messages to L.A. on a social media site: “Please don't leave me... Be the coolest water of my eternal life in Jannah... Please?” The defendant also attempted to have L.A. switch to the communications application so they could speak more openly, and he then sent her a series of private messages on social media that stated,

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<sup>23</sup> As noted above, “shahadah” mean martyrdom.

AD  
KCK  
LYY

“Doesn’t matter anyway. If this convo gets out, they’re coming for me.lol... I’ll scream Allahu Akhbar and empty the clip.” Later that night the defendant posted the following status update on a social media site: “O Kuffar, sleep well. We are coming for you, in’shaa’allah ta’ala.”

48. On or about December 18, 2016, the defendant changed his status update on social media to: “...The time for talk is nearly done. Do not die with a single dirham<sup>24</sup> in your pockets.” The defendant began emptying his bank account by sending money to various people until he only had \$57 dollars left. On the same day, the defendant also attempted to buy another handgun. On the same day, the defendant researched and installed an application on his smartphone that would mask his internet activity.

49. On December 19, 2016, AD reengaged the defendant electronically. The defendant sent messages over the communications application to AD stating:

you have been gone a long time, I am in the process of getting married, would you or your wife be the proxy?

After the sister desired to marry me. It made my life worth living.. So I was able to safely make the intention in my heart to go forth. I’shaa’Allah it will be very soon I’ve been preparing. I need to be married first. I have some video lectures for you. You Hold on.

The defendant then sent AD the same jihadist videos he had previously sent to the CHS, including a video entitled “Virtues of Martyrs.” The defendant then sent several messages to AD:

I’ll be going forth in’shaa’Allah, with or without. I will need you and [CHS] to look after my wife and her three daughters when I am gone.

I have created codenames for all three of you to use in communications between us

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<sup>24</sup> Dirham was—and in some cases still is—a unit of currency in several Berber and Arab states.

KUK  
AD  
LW

Anyway. secondly Her name is [L.A.], but her codename is Regina, which is Queen (as in chess) in Latin. And yours is Marquess, which is French for Rook.

You can present these names however you see fit. In letters mail whatever. To make it known that thing comes from you

Allah that you messaged me today as you did...LoL happiness.

A longing to lingerback and raise a family. Which means I actually have something to sacrifice. It would not be suicide. It would be Martyrdom fisabillah.<sup>25</sup>

I have the most beautiful woamn who wants to amrry me. Mind body and soul. I have waited a lifetime

In Jannah we will consummate our marriage in'shaa'Allah. Alhamdulillah. I will find a imam to officiate the marriage. Let me tell her you'll contact her

50. AD continued the string of electronic communications with the defendant. The defendant stated that "The next time I see her will be in Jannah, in'shaa'Allah." AD attempted to determine the location of the defendant's martyrdom operation. He/she asked the defendant whether his "plan is for local," and whether the plan was for something "Basically in dar Al-kuffr" *i.e.*, "the land of the unbeliever" (which was a reference to the United States). The defendant confirmed, "Mhm, the only way," and asked AD to find a way to get the defendant married to L.A. in an Islamic marriage by proxy.

51. After this conversation, the defendant began watching graphic videos and looking at graphic pictures related to the conflict in Syria, many of which portrayed dead infants or children. The defendant then contacted L.A. and sent her the following messages in a communications application:

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<sup>25</sup> "Fisabillah" means for the sake of God.

KLK  
AD  
LW

I have a feeling something I said in the images I showed you disturbed you a great deal. If so, I'd like to talk about it .... I see these images now days.. not to say I'm desensitized, because that'd be far from the truth.. but I don't feel helpless anymore. Before I thought I'd go insane knowing what I knew and being unable to act. Now I feel apart of something greater. I am a solider, finally. And the thing is.. I always wanted to be, since I was 17-18 .. but [I could not] enter the US military, though I wanted to be an infantryman in the Marines.

ALLAH kept me out.. and then I became Muslim, And long story short, everything I have ever desired is finally within my grasp.

But I feel that I'm sometimes insensitive to your plight.. because you presently feel trapped, I believe. You would to act, but currently cannot. So please, Habiba, tell me how you really feel and what I can do to help.

52. L.A. replied, via recorded audio files in which she reconsidered her opposition to martyrdom attacks and expressed support for the defendant:

Hum, yes first I felt very sad for everything, and all the deaths, both sides. Then during the shower I thought about all I've learned in Islam, the rules for war, etc. I've got myself in conflict and didn't want to put things in my mind as if I'm a kufr.

Then I felt better, ahh ... I felt like yeah, maybe it's right, because we've been executed every day, so and the world is so upside down, so why Muslims have to die and the kufr are still there.

Yes, but now my heart is calm ... Why Allah you know led me to you, see the truth or is a misguidance what is that? So ahh ... I don't feel anything bad about you or what you believe, I don't feel that bad by the way, I truly think that you're correct, so it's okay. I'm cool, no problem.

You are a gift from Allah, that opened my eyes, making me see the truth and the right path, right direction to follow.

53. L.A. continued her electronic conversation with the defendant and left another audio message for the defendant in which she stated, "I know it is hard for you, it's hard for me, but for you even more, because you are going to fight, and I'll be waiting for you. I don't know

AD KCK  
LUR

how long but, I know you are straight and pure, and I feel so blessed by knowing you and so blessed that you wish to marry me and meet me for the first time in the gardens of Allah.”

54. Later that evening the defendant contacted L.A. via the communications application and wrote, “But about Marquess [*i.e.*, AD], unlike knight and I He raises money for the Mujahideen doing Jihad He travels to different places, the the Islamic state outposts in Jordan He’s very welll connected. He’s truly a secret agent. Haha. He travels the country and collects money from the brothers.” Afterwards, the defendant watched an instructional video about shooting and ended his electronic communications with L.A. by writing, “Alright. Might wanna delete all that soon tho hah, just in case. But please remember.”
55. In or about the early morning hours of December 20, 2016, the defendant began downloading numerous graphic videos and pictures related to ISIS and dead children. The defendant then reengaged AD and discussed logistics for the proxy marriage to L.A. That same evening the defendant was involved in a physical fight with his best friend. At that time, the defendant told his friend that he (the friend) needed to care for the defendant’s father because something was going to happen.
56. During the third week of December 2016, the defendant was regularly armed with a semi-automatic pistol and would walk around the property where he lived while carrying the gun in his hand. On at least one occasion, he opened the door to a deliveryman while similarly armed.
57. The defendant was arrested by the FBI on December 21, 2016, in Suffolk Virginia. Agents found a loaded AK-47 and a loaded semi-automatic hand gun in the defendant’s bedroom.

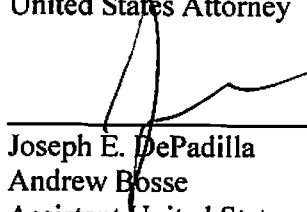
AD  
KCK  
CW

58. In a post-*Miranda* statement, the defendant reiterated that he stood with ISIS and stated his belief that he was part of a “holy war.” The defendant claimed that the United States was guilty of terrorism because of its actions in both Iraq and Syria. The defendant told agents it was a good thing they had arrested him outside his residence, and implied that if they had tried to come inside the defendant would have shot them. When asked what would have happened to his grandmother, the defendant told agents that “she knows when to duck.”
59. L.A. was interviewed in Brazil and claimed she did not know the exact details of the operation the defendant was going to execute. L.A. stated that the defendant told her he would go at the police with a gun and that he would die as martyr in the process. L.A. explained that the operation the defendant was planning involved causing an incident with the police that would be so serious it would draw in the military to help.
60. The acts taken by the defendant in furtherance of the offenses charged in this case, including the acts described above, were done willfully and knowingly with the specific intent to violate the law. The defendant acknowledges that the foregoing statement of facts does not describe all of the defendant’s conduct relating to the offenses charged in this case.

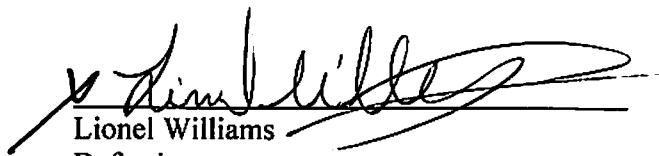
Respectfully submitted,

Dana J. Boente  
United States Attorney

By:

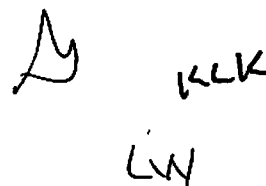
  
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Joseph E. DePadilla  
Andrew Bosse  
Assistant United States Attorneys  
Alicia Cook  
Special Assitant United States Attorney

Defendant's signature: After consulting with my attorney and pursuant to the plea agreement entered into this day between the defendant, Lionel Williams, and the United States, I hereby stipulate that the above Statement of Facts is true and accurate, and that had the matter proceeded to trial, the United States would have proved the same beyond a reasonable doubt.

  
Lionel Williams  
Defendant

Defense attorney's signature: I am the attorney for defendant, Lionel Williams. I have carefully reviewed the above Statement of Facts with him. His decision to enter into this factual stipulation is knowing, intelligent, and voluntary.

  
Keith Kimball, Esq.  
Counsel for Defendant

  
LW  
KCK