

Seattle Man Sentenced to 18 Years in Prison for Plot to Attack Seattle Military Processing Center

Plotted to Attack Center When Maximum Number of High School Age Recruits and Their Families were Inside

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SEATTLE—A Seattle man was sentenced today to 18 years in prison in connection with the June 2011 plot to attack a military installation in Seattle, U.S. Attorney Jenny A. Durkan announced. Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif, aka Joseph Anthony Davis, 34, pleaded guilty in December 2012 to conspiracy to murder officers and agents of the United States and conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction. Abdul-Latif planned to use grenades and machine guns to attack recruits at the Military Entrance Processing Center in a federal office complex in south Seattle. U.S. District Judge James L. Robart imposed 10 years of supervised release, saying this plot “could have done incredible harm if it had gone forward.”

“This defendant planned to attack a military center when there would be the largest possible gathering of new recruits and their families. He targeted young men and women solely because they wanted to serve our country. His goal: to inspire others with a message of hate,” said U.S. Attorney Durkan. “His plot was disrupted by vigilance in our community and good work by law enforcement. I commend the Seattle Police and the FBI for their work and thank the leaders of our Muslim communities who work tirelessly to ensure the acts of extremists are not used to condemn their faith.”

“Countless innocent people targeted by Mr. Abdul-Latif are safe thanks to the vigilance of Seattle's Muslim community and the dedicated work of law enforcement partners,” said Laura M. Laughlin, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Seattle Office. “The plot may have been thwarted, but its mere existence and the extremist thinking behind it are despicable. I hope that Mr. Abdul-Latif uses his years in prison to reflect on what it means to be a true member of an American community, built on respect for all.”

“I am pleased with the outcome of this very important joint agency investigation. With support from the Muslim community and the diligent work of Seattle Police detectives and our federal partners, a dangerous man will spend a long time behind bars and our community will be safer for it,” said Seattle Police Chief John Diaz.

The other defendant in the case, Walli Mujahidh, 33, of Los Angeles, is scheduled for sentencing on April 8, 2013.

Law enforcement first became aware of the plot when a citizen alerted them that he/she had been approached by Abdul-Latif about participating in the attack and supplying firearms to the conspirators. The person then agreed to work with law enforcement, which began monitoring Abdul-Latif and Mujahidh. Beginning in early June 2011, the conspirators were captured on audio and videotape discussing a violent assault on the Military Entrance Processing Station

(MEPS). The MEPS is where each branch of the military screens and processes enlistees. In addition to housing many civilian and military employees, the building houses a federal daycare center.

In his plea agreement, Abdul-Latif admits that he agreed to carry out the planned attack and that he made plans for Mujahidh to travel to Seattle from Los Angeles to participate in the attack. Mujahidh arrived in Seattle on June 21, 2011. On that same day, during a meeting between Abdul-Latif, Mujahidh, and a person who was working with law enforcement, Abdul-Latif outlined the plan of attacking the MEPS with machine guns and grenades and took steps to purchase weapons and further the plot. In accordance with the defendants' plan, the next day the person working with police brought three machine guns to a meeting with Abdul-Latif and Mujahidh. The men were arrested after they took possession of the weapons, which had been rendered inoperable by law enforcement.

Prosecutors noted that a lengthy term was necessary to protect the public and urged future monitoring by Federal Probation. "Abdul-Latif undertook his plot in furtherance of his long-standing and deeply felt radical beliefs. To this day, he has not disavowed the radical ideology that inspired his attack plot, nor has he expressed any meaningful remorse for his conduct," prosecutors wrote in their sentencing memo.

The case was prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington, with assistance from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division. The investigation is being conducted by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, which has investigators from federal, state, and local law enforcement, and the Seattle Police Department. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) contributed significant expertise to this investigation.