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# D.A. Vance, Commissioner Shea: Designated Global Terrorist Shaikh Faisal Arraigned on Conspiracy and Terrorism Charges Following Extradition from Jamaica

AUGUST 14, 2020

Manhattan District Attorney Cy Vance, Jr., and New York City Police Commissioner Dermot Shea today announced the extradition from Jamaica and arraignment of TREVOR WILLIAM FORREST, a/k/a “SHAIKH ABDULLAH FAISAL,” a/k/a “SHAIKH FAISAL,” 56, a citizen of Jamaica, for using his public profile and personal network to recruit and provide support to those seeking to commit acts of violence and terrorism against others. FAISAL, who in 2017 was named a “Specially Designated Global Terrorist” by the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control, was previously convicted in the United Kingdom of crimes related to inciting murder and using racially charged, hateful rhetoric in furtherance of terrorist ideologies. FAISAL has publicly supported the terrorist organization known as the Islamic State, a/k/a “ISIS” or “ISIL,” and called for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate through violent acts encouraged by the defendant’s online lectures and militant propaganda. FAISAL is charged in a New York State Supreme Court indictment with Soliciting or Providing Support for an Act of Terrorism in the First Degree as a Crime of Terrorism, among other charges.

“The indictment and arrest of Shaikh Faisal nearly three years ago put a stop to the prolific, radical Islamic propaganda and terror recruitment

alleged in this case – delivering a major blow to ISIS’ overall recruitment capabilities,” said District Attorney Vance. “Now, Shaikh Faisal has finally appeared in a Manhattan courtroom to face justice under due process for the crimes of terrorism he is charged with in our indictment. In addition to shutting down Faisal’s dangerous rhetoric and his recruitment of new terrorists, the effects of his arrest have been felt across the counterterrorism community worldwide, which has gained actionable intelligence thanks to our seizure of numerous electronics from his home.

“I thank the prosecutors in my Office’s Counter Terrorism Program and our NYPD partners – especially Deputy Commissioner of Intelligence and Counterterrorism John Miller, Chief of Intelligence Thomas Galati, and undercover personnel – whose hard work, courageous operation, and seamless collaboration with our Office made this indictment possible. I also thank the Justice Department’s Office of International Affairs for their diligent work in support of this extradition. Our city, nation, and world are safer with this terrorist behind bars.”

Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said: “Abdullah El Faisal has spent two decades inspiring the terrorists behind plots and attacks in London, New York, and onboard airplanes in flight. As outlined in these charges, Faisal actively encouraged and facilitated the recruitment of an NYPD undercover officer into ISIS, a terrorist organization behind murder and bloodshed in this city. I want to thank District Attorney Cy Vance and his team for their relentless support of this case and the prosecution of Sheikh Faisal.”

On August 25, 2017, FAISAL was arrested outside his home in St. James Jamaica by Jamaican authorities based on a provisional arrest warrant issued at the request of the United States. Arresting officers seized numerous cell phones, laptops, thumb drives, external hard drives, cameras, and other electronics from his home during the arrest. Officers also recovered \$524,000 in Jamaican currency (approximately \$3,500 USD) and £1,850 pounds (approximately \$2,400 USD) from the defendant’s home. On August 13, 2020 FAISAL was extradited from Jamaica to New York City and he was arraigned on August 14, 2020.

#### *Prior Anti-Terror Prosecutions*

The Manhattan District Attorney’s Office has successfully prosecuted terrorists under New York State’s anti-terror laws, which were enacted following the attacks on September 11, 2001.

In 2019, James Jackson was sentenced to life without parole for murdering Timothy Caughman to incite a “race war.” The defendant’s guilty plea marked the first-ever conviction in New York State for Murder in the First Degree in Furtherance of an Act of Terrorism, as well as Murder in the Second Degree as a Crime of Terrorism.

In 2014, Jose Pimentel was sentenced to 16 years in state prison for constructing improvised explosive devices to detonate in Manhattan. Pimentel, who viewed FAISAL’s videos, participated in the defendant’s online chat forum, and cited the defendant as one of his primary inspirations, was convicted of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the First Degree as a Crime of Terrorism.

In 2013, Ahmed Ferhani was sentenced to 10 years in state prison after the defendant pleaded guilty to terror-related charges, including Attempted Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the First Degree as a Crime of Terrorism, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree as a Crime of Terrorism, and Criminal Sale of a Firearm in the Third Degree as a Crime of Terrorism, among other charges, for plotting to bomb synagogues in Manhattan.

Assistant D.A.s Gary J. Galperin (Senior Investigative Counsel), David Sturges (in-charge of the Counter Terrorism Program), and Kenneth Moore are handling the prosecution of the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Michael Ohm, Deputy Chief of the Rackets Bureau, Assistant District Attorney Judy Salwen, Principal Deputy Chief of the Rackets Bureau, Assistant District Attorney Jodie Kane, Chief of the Rackets Bureau; and Executive Assistant District Attorney Christopher Conroy, Chief of the Investigation Division. Former Assistant D.A. Deborah Hickey, Deputy Chief of Intelligence Kevin Branzetti, Senior Investigator Michael O’Brien, Assistant Chief Rackets Investigator Michael Wigdor, Chief Investigator Walter Alexander, Counterterrorism Supervisor Ryan Rittenberg and Legal Fellow Tyler Keefe assisted with the case. Supervising Computer Forensic Analyst Douglas Daus, under the supervision of David Chan, Deputy Director of the High Tech Analysis Unit and Steven Moran, Director of the High Tech Analysis Unit, as well as, Assistant D.A.’s Shannon Goldberg (Unit Chief) and Caroline Serino, and Data Specialist Olivia Savell of the Litigation Support Unit, also assisted with the investigation.

District Attorney Vance thanked the following individuals and agencies for

their assistance with the investigation: the NYPD, and in particular, Deputy Commissioner of Intelligence and Counterterrorism John Miller, Chief of Intelligence Thomas Galati, Assistant Commissioner of Intelligence Analysis Rebecca Weiner, Inspector Robert Rios, Deputy Chief Paul Cior, Inspector Paul Mauro, Deputy Inspector Joseph Seminara, Lieutenant Robert Nicholson, Sergeant Kevin Thacke, Detective Sherif Moussa, Detective Newaz Mohammad, Deputy Director of Intelligence Analysis F. Satkalmi, Intelligence Research Specialist Krisztina Johnson, and former Intelligence Research Specialist Jacques Singer-Emery; the U.S. Department of Justice Office of International Affairs, Criminal Division; the United States Marshals Service in particular, Henry Geberth and Christopher Felix; and the Jamaica Constabulary Force.

#### Defendant Information:

TREVOR WILLIAM FORREST, a/k/a “SHAIKH ABDULLAH FAISAL”, a/k/a “SHAIKH FAISAL”, D.O.B. 9/10/1963

St. James, Jamaica

#### Charged:

- Soliciting or Providing Support for an Act of Terrorism in the First Degree as a Crime of Terrorism, a class B violent felony, 1 count
- Soliciting or Providing Support for an Act of Terrorism in the First Degree, a class B violent felony, 1 count
- Attempted Soliciting or Providing Support for an Act of Terrorism in the First Degree as a Crime of Terrorism, a class C violent felony, 1 count
- Conspiracy in the Fourth Degree as a Crime of Terrorism, a class D violent felony, 1 count
- Attempted Soliciting or Providing Support for an Act of Terrorism in the First Degree, a class D violent felony, 1 count



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