



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, February 3, 2023

New York City Man And Alabama Woman Sentenced To 11 And Nine Years In Prison For Attempting To Provide Material Support To ISIS

Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that JAMES BRADLEY, a/k/a "Abdullah," and ARWA MUTHANA were sentenced to 11 and nine years in prison, respectively, for attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham ("ISIS"). BRADLEY pled guilty on September 9, 2022, and MUTHANA pled guilty on September 12, 2022, before United States District Judge Paul A. Engelmayer in Manhattan federal court. Judge Engelmayer sentenced BRADLEY on February 2, 2023, and sentenced MUTHANA earlier today.

U.S. Attorney Damian Williams said: "James Bradley and Arwa Muthana were determined to travel to the Middle East to fight in the name of hate and terror. Even worse, if they failed in making it to the Middle East, Bradley was prepared to carry out an attack on American soil. I commend the FBI New York Joint Terrorism Task Force for investigating and arresting these two individuals before they had the opportunity to wage violence on behalf of a brutal terrorist organization. Bradley and Muthana's sentences reemphasize this Office's determination to thwart those who wish to cause suffering and create destruction through terror."

According to the Complaint, Indictment, and other public documents in the case, as well as statements made during court proceedings:[1]

BRADLEY and MUTHANA are ISIS supporters who attempted to travel to the Middle East to join and fight for ISIS. BRADLEY expressed violent extremist views since at least 2019, including his desire to support ISIS by traveling overseas to join the group or committing a terrorist attack in the United States. In May 2020, BRADLEY stated to an undercover law enforcement officer ("UC-1") that he believed that ISIS may be good for Muslims because ISIS was establishing a caliphate. BRADLEY further expressed his desire to conduct a terrorist attack in the United States and discussed potentially attacking the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York. BRADLEY explained that if he could not leave the United States, he would do "something" in the United States instead, referring to carrying out an attack.

In June 2020, BRADLEY reaffirmed his interest to UC-1 in attacking a military base and that doing so would be his contribution to the cause of jihad. In January 2021, BRADLEY mentioned to UC-1 another university

in New York State where he frequently saw Reserve Officer Training Corps (“ROTC”) cadets training.

BRADLEY stated that he could use his truck in an attack and that he, along with MUTHANA, could take all of the ROTC cadets “out.”

In late January 2021, BRADLEY married MUTHANA in an Islamic marriage ceremony. Beginning before and continuing after their marriage, BRADLEY and MUTHANA discussed, planned, and ultimately attempted to travel to the Middle East together in order to join and fight with ISIS. In or about early March 2021, BRADLEY traveled from New York to Alabama to visit MUTHANA, and BRADLEY and MUTHANA traveled back to New York together in order to travel from New York to join ISIS in the Middle East. Thereafter, BRADLEY raised the possibility of UC-1 helping BRADLEY and MUTHANA get on a cargo ship to travel to the Middle East or Africa for the purpose of ultimately joining and fighting for ISIS. UC-1 subsequently put BRADLEY in contact with a purported associate who could assist BRADLEY in making arrangements for BRADLEY and MUTHANA to travel to the Middle East via cargo ship. In reality, the purported facilitator was a law enforcement officer acting in an undercover capacity (“UC-2”).

Later in March 2021, BRADLEY met with UC-2 and expressed his desire to travel via cargo ship and to “fight among the rank[s] of the Islamic State.” BRADLEY subsequently provided UC-2 \$1,000 in cash as travel costs for BRADLEY and MUTHANA to take a cargo ship to Yemen. BRADLEY told UC-2 that he and MUTHANA both planned to be “fighting” after arriving in the Middle East. BRADLEY also told UC-2 that he had a dream that he had given “bay’ah,” an Arabic term meaning the oath of allegiance, to Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi, the former leader of ISIS.

On March 25, 2021, UC-2 told BRADLEY that the cargo ship would be leaving on March 31 from a seaport in Newark, New Jersey. BRADLEY praised Allah and confirmed he and MUTHANA planned to travel on the ship. On March 31, 2021, BRADLEY and MUTHANA met with UC-2 en route to the seaport. During this meeting, MUTHANA confirmed to UC-2 that she was traveling to the Middle East to fight for ISIS. BRADLEY and MUTHANA were arrested as they walked on a gangplank to board the cargo ship. After MUTHANA was arrested, she waived her *Miranda* rights and stated during an interview that she was willing to fight and kill Americans if it was for Allah. Also on March 31, 2021, in connection with court-authorized searches, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) seized from a bedroom previously used by BRADLEY a hand-drawn image of a jihadi flag commonly used by ISIS and a hand-drawn map of the Pakistan region, and the FBI also recovered a machete from a truck used by BRADLEY.

In the months and years prior to their arrests, BRADLEY and MUTHANA also accessed, posted, and distributed extremist online content, including materials indicative of their support for ISIS. Such material included BRADLEY’s postings of images of ISIS fighters, Usama Bin Laden, and terrorist attacks, and his distribution to UC-1 of videos of ISIS fighters, a 2020 stabbing attack against a New York City Police Department (“NYPD”) officer, and extremists shooting a uniformed soldier. Content on MUTHANA’s cellphone, which was searched pursuant to a court-authorized search warrant, included images of an ISIS flag with Arabic writing, ISIS propaganda, firearms, quotations of the deceased extremist preacher and former al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula member Anwar al-Awlaki, including, for example, a copy of the cover of a book authored by al-Awlaki, titled “44 Ways to Support Jihad,” and a video showing an individual in prisoner garb being chained and then burned alive.

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In addition to the prison term, BRADLEY, 21, of the Bronx, New York, and MUTHANA, 30, of Hoover, Alabama, were each sentenced to 10 years of supervised release.

Mr. Williams praised the outstanding efforts of the FBI New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, which consists of investigators and analysts from the FBI, the NYPD, and over 50 other federal, state, and local agencies.

Mr. Williams also thanked the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice's National Security Division.

The case is being handled by the Office's National Security and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kaylan E. Lasky and Jason A. Richman are in charge of the prosecution, with assistance from Trial Attorney Jennifer Burke of the Counterterrorism Section.

[1] Communications, conversations, and statements discussed and quoted herein are described in substance and in part.

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Contact:

Nicholas Biase
(212) 637-2600

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