

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 26, 2007

Rhode Island Man Sentenced to 84 Months in Prison For Threatening a United States District Judge

(More)

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PHILADELPHIA - A Rhode Island man was sentenced to 84 months in federal prison today for threatening to murder a federal judge who sits in Camden, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Paul S. Diamond, of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, who presided over the five-day trial in Camden, also ordered Arthur D'Amario, 54, of Providence, R.I., and Green Valley, Ariz., to serve three years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison sentence. D'Amario has been held in federal detention on this charge since his arrest in February 2006.

On Dec. 15, 2006, after two hours of deliberations, a jury convicted D'Amario on one count of threatening to assault, kidnap, and murder a United States judge, with the intent to impede, intimidate and interfere with a judge engaged in the performance of official duties and with intent to retaliate against such judge on account of the performance of official duties.

During the trial, the jury heard the testimony of six government witnesses and viewed numerous pieces of evidence regarding a threatening document, dated Jan. 13, 2006, that the defendant sent to Senior U.S. District Judge Joseph E. Irenas.

In convicting the defendant, the jury found that after Judge Irenas presided over a trial in which D'Amario was convicted in December 2001 for threatening a federal judge in the District of New Hampshire, D'Amario mailed a legal document that contained threats to the federal Court Clerk's Office in Camden. The jury found that the nature of D'Amario's threat was to murder Judge Irenas, as opposed to threatening to assault him.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Diamond consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, was not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI's Trenton Resident Agency, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Pedro Ruiz, with the investigation.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ronald Chillemi of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Ralph Jacobs, Esq. Haddonfield