



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
OCTOBER 18, 2010

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
ELLEN DAVIS, YUSILL SCRIBNER  
EDELI RIVERA, JESSIE ERWIN  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
(212) 637-2600

**FOUR MEN FOUND GUILTY IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT  
OF PLOTTING TO BOMB SYNAGOGUE AND JEWISH COMMUNITY  
CENTER AND TO SHOOT MILITARY PLANES  
WITH STINGER MISSILES**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that JAMES CROMITIE, a/k/a "Abdul Rahman," a/k/a "Abdul Rehman," DAVID WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Daoud," a/k/a "DL," ONTA WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Hamza," and LAGUERRE PAYEN, a/k/a "Amin," a/k/a "Almondo," were found guilty today after a jury trial that started on August 23, 2010, of plotting to detonate explosives near a synagogue and Jewish community center in the Riverdale section of Bronx, New York, and to shoot military planes located at the New York Air National Guard Base at Stewart Airport in Newburgh, New York, with Stinger surface-to-air guided missiles. The four men were arrested on May 20, 2009, in Bronx, New York, after planting what they believed were live explosives at various target locations.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "Homegrown terrorism is a serious threat, and today's convictions affirm our commitment to do everything we can to protect against it. The defendants in this case agreed to plant bombs and use missiles they thought were very real weapons of terrorism. We are safer today as a result of these convictions. We thank the members of the jury for their time and diligent service. We also commend the extraordinary work of the prosecutors, agents, and detectives who demonstrated unyielding dedication during the investigation and prosecution of this case."

According to the Complaint, Indictment, and the evidence presented at trial before U.S. District Judge COLLEEN McMAHON:

In June 2008, an informant working with the FBI was approached by CROMITIE in Newburgh, New York. CROMITIE explained to the informant that his parents had lived in Afghanistan and

that he was upset about the war there. CROMITIE expressed interest in returning to Afghanistan and said that if he were to die a martyr, he would go to "paradise." CROMITIE also expressed an interest in doing "something to America." The following month, CROMITIE and the informant discussed Jaish-e-Mohammed, a Pakistan-based designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, with which the informant claimed to be involved, and CROMITIE stated that he would be interested in joining the organization to "do *jihad*."

During further meetings with the informant, CROMITIE, DAVID WILLIAMS, ONTA WILLIAMS, and PAYEN discussed their desire to attack certain targets in New York, including a synagogue in the Bronx and military aircraft located at the Air National Guard Base. CROMITIE asked the informant to supply surface-to-air guided missiles and explosives for the planned operations. The informant responded that he could provide CROMITIE with C-4 plastic explosives.

After CROMITIE, DAVID WILLIAMS, ONTA WILLIAMS, and PAYEN selected the synagogue and Jewish community center they intended to target and conducted surveillance of military planes at the Air National Guard Base, CROMITIE, DAVID WILLIAMS, and PAYEN drove with the informant toward Stamford, Connecticut, to obtain what the defendants were told would be a surface-to-air guided missile system and three improvised explosive devices ("IEDs") containing C-4 plastic explosive material. The informant provided the defendants with a Stinger surface-to-air guided missile provided by the FBI that was not capable of being fired, telling the defendants that he had obtained it from Jaish-e-Mohammed. The informant also provided three IEDs that each contained over 30 pounds of inert C-4 plastic explosives, again telling the defendants that he had obtained them from Jaish-e-Mohammed. CROMITIE, DAVID WILLIAMS, and PAYEN transported these weapons back to Newburgh. Two days later, CROMITIE, DAVID WILLIAMS, ONTA WILLIAMS, and PAYEN met to inspect the "missile system" and the "explosive devices" and to further discuss the logistics of the operation.

The four men were arrested on May 20, 2009, in Bronx, New York, on the basis of charges set forth in a sworn criminal Complaint, and were subsequently indicted on June 2, 2009.

\* \* \*

CROMITIE, 44, DAVID WILLIAMS, 29, ONTA WILLIAMS, 34, and PAYEN, 29, were found guilty of Counts One through Seven in the Indictment. CROMITIE and DAVID WILLIAMS were also found guilty of Count 8 in the Indictment. The charges and maximum penalties are described in the chart below.

Count	Charge	Maximum Prison Term
1	Conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction within the United States	Life
2	Attempt to use weapons of mass destruction within the United States	Life
3	Attempt to use weapons of mass destruction within the United States	Life
4	Attempt to use weapons of mass destruction within the United States	Life
5	Conspiracy to acquire and use anti-aircraft missiles	Life*
6	Attempt to acquire and use anti-aircraft missiles	Life*
7	Conspiracy to kill officers and employees of the United States	Life
8	Attempt to kill officers and employees of the United States	20 years

\*Counts Five and Six also carry mandatory minimum penalties of 25 years in prison.

Mr. BHARARA praised the FBI's New York Joint Terrorism Task Force -- which principally consists of agents of the FBI and detectives of the New York City Police Department -- the New York State Police, and the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations for their extraordinary work in the investigation of this case. He also thanked the National Security Division of the U.S. Department of Justice for its assistance in the case.

This case is being handled by the Office's Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys DAVID RASKIN, ADAM HICKEY, and JASON P.W. HALPERIN are in charge of the prosecution.

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