

**AFFIDAVIT OF SPECIAL AGENT PAUL AMBROGIO
IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENT'S MOTION FOR DETENTION**

I, Paul Ambrogio, being duly sworn, state as follows:

1. I am a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and have been so employed for over five years. From 2009 to present, I have been assigned to the Boston Division, Springfield Resident Agency of the FBI.

2. Prior to my assignment in the Boston Division, I trained for the Special Agent position for twenty-one weeks at the FBI training academy in Quantico, VA. During the training period, I received several hours of legal and practical applications training. I also learned many aspects of conducting criminal investigations including, but not limited to, preparing affidavits and conducting search warrants.

3. Over the course of my employment as a special agent, I have conducted and participated in criminal investigations which have resulted in arrests for crimes involving threats to use weapons of mass destruction, controlled substance violations, firearms violations, child pornography violations and fraud. Many of these crimes resulted in subsequent convictions in State and Federal Courts.

4. I also have written and executed or participated in the planning and execution of Federal search warrants. These search warrants have resulted in my testimony in Federal Court in Massachusetts.

5. I am currently assigned to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (FBI JTTF) located in Springfield, Massachusetts and have participated in investigations relating to international and domestic terrorism.

6. Along with other agents, I am investigating the activities of Alexander CICCULO a/k/a Abu Ali al Amriki (“CICCULO”). I make this affidavit in support of the government’s motion to detain CICCULO pending his trial.

7. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other agents and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to support the government’s detention motion and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter.

Background Information about “ISIL”

8. On October 15, 2004, the United States Secretary of State designated al-Qa’ida in Iraq, then known as Jam’at al Tawhid wa’al-Jihad, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224. On May 15, 2014, the United States Secretary of State formally amended the existing designation of al-Qa’ida in Iraq as a Foreign Terrorist Organization to add the alias Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant as its primary name. The Secretary also added the following aliases to the ISIL listing: the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), ad-Dawla al-Islamiyya fi al-‘Iraq wa-sh-Sham, Daesh, Dawla al Islamiya, and Al-Furqan Establishment for Media Production (all collectively referred to herein as “ISIL”).

9. The State Department has reported that, among other things, ISIL has committed systematic abuses of human rights and violations of international law, including indiscriminate killing and deliberate targeting of civilians, mass executions and extrajudicial killings, persecution of individuals and communities on the basis of their identity, kidnapping of civilians, forced displacement of Shia communities and minority groups, killing and maiming of children,

rape, and other forms of sexual violence. According to the State Department, ISIL has recruited thousands of foreign fighters to Iraq and Syria from across the globe and has leveraged technology to spread its violent extremist ideology and to incite others to commit terrorist acts.

10. On or about September 21, 2014, ISIL spokesperson Abu Muhammad al-Adnani called for attacks against citizens—civilian and military—of the countries participating in the United States-led coalition against ISIL. Members of ISIL have used social media to encourage people in the United States and Europe to conduct terrorist attacks on behalf of ISIL. For instance, ISIL has posted messages on Twitter with the names of U.S. military members. I believe these postings are used to direct ISIL followers and supporters to attack targets.

11. United States law enforcement agents, including members of the Boston FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, have been investigating individuals located in the United States who are seeking to travel abroad to join ISIL as well as individuals located in the United States who are trying to provide material support to ISIL by planning or engaging in violent attacks domestically.

12. Approximately one month ago, one of these individuals indicated that he intended to carry out a domestic attack imminently and was shot and killed after being intercepted by the FBI JTTF. Approximately three weeks ago, Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was sentenced for various terrorism-related offenses including among other things, exploding home-made bombs fashioned out of low-explosive powder contained in pressure cookers and pipe segments.

CICCOLO's Background

13. On February 17, 2015, CICCOLO was convicted in Northern Berkshire District Court, of the offence of Operating Under the Influence of Liquor, a violation of Massachusetts

state law Chapter 90 Section 24(1)(a)(1), a crime punishable by up to 30 months imprisonment. CICCOLO was placed on probation.

14. On September 11, 2014, the FBI JTTF received information from a close acquaintance that CICCOLO had expressed a desire to go overseas and fight for ISIL.

According to this acquaintance, CICCOLO was specifically referring to travel to Syria or Iraq to fight for ISIL. The acquaintance was concerned with statements CICCOLO was making about his support of ISIL and volunteered this information to the FBI. The acquaintance stated that CICCOLO had a long history of mental illness and in the last 18 months had become obsessed with Islam. The acquaintance also said that CICCOLO had recently stated that he believed the, “Faith is under attack” and that he is, “Not afraid to die for the cause.”¹ The acquaintance advised that the acquaintance had received text messages from CICCOLO indicating that America is "Satan" and characterizing Americans as disgusting.

15. On October 17, 2014, the FBI discovered a Facebook profile, under the name "Ali Al Amriki," that contained information indicating the user was interested in martyrdom for the sake of Islam and was living in the United States. On or about October 18, 2014, Ali Al Amriki's Facebook page included a photograph of an individual in a wooded area wearing a head covering and holding a black machete, accompanied by the statement, “Another day in the forest strengthening myself.” On or about October 27, 2014, Ali Al Amriki's Facebook page posted an image that appeared to be a dead American soldier that included the following statement by Ali Al Amriki, “Thank you Islamic State! Now we won't have to deal with these kafir back in America.” “Kafir” means “non-believers” of Islam.

¹ CICCOLO has previously stated that he will not be taken alive.

16. The FBI JTTF obtained CICCULO's Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) photograph, and recognized it as the same person as that in a photograph of CICCULO provided by his acquaintance. Comparing these photos to those posted as depicting the user of the Facebook account under the name "Ali Al Amriki," it appeared that the user was CICCULO. Information posted on the Facebook page showed that "Ali Al Amriki" had the desire to fight for ISIS, confirming CICCULO's acquaintance's statement to the FBI that CICCULO had stated that he wanted to travel overseas to fight for ISIL.

CICCULO's Interaction with a Cooperating
Witness and Discussion of his Domestic Terrorism Plans

17. The FBI arranged for a cooperating witness ("CW-1") to meet CICCULO. CICCULO told CW-1 that he had a plan to engage in domestic terrorist operations. After being propositioned by CICCULO, CW-1 agreed to participate with CICCULO in a plot to engage in a terrorist attack.

18. On June 24, 2015, CICCULO contacted and had an in-person meeting with CW-1 in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The meeting was audio recorded. During this meeting, CICCULO spoke about his plans to travel to another state to conduct terrorist attacks on civilians, members of the U.S. military and law enforcement personnel. CICCULO told CW-1 that he would attack two different bars and a police station, which he described geographically. CICCULO stated that he planned to use improvised explosive devices during the attack to include pressure cooker bombs and/or portable microwave bombs. CICCULO stated that:

you put umh, take a pressure cooker

* * *

Uhm, fill it up with ah, black powder .

* * *

Yeah, you fill it up with ball bearings, nails, glass, rocks . . . you know.

CICCOLO also explained that the improvised explosive device would have a “built in timer” and that the device “heats itself up.”²

19. On June 30, 2015, CICCOLO had a second in-person meeting with CW-1 in Springfield, Massachusetts, which was also audio-recorded. During that conversation, CW-1 asked CICCOLO whether he had heard what happened in Tunisia. CICCOLO responded, “Awesome. Awesome, you know that ah, that brother in Tunisia was impressive ... he got like 38, 39 people ... one guy ... that is a huge accomplishment I think.” I believe this is a reference to the June 26, 2015 shooting attack at a beachside resort in Tunisia in which one person used firearms and grenades to kill 38 people. The gunman was killed and after the attack ISIL claimed credit for the attack. That same day, additional terrorist attacks occurred in other cities in France and Kuwait, in what appeared to have been coordinated fashion. CICCOLO referenced the attack in France, saying something to the effect that “I think he cut off his boss’s head in uhm, somehow pinned it to the gate of his work.”

20. CICCOLO continued to talk with CW-1 about his plan to conduct a terrorist attack in another state. CICCOLO wrote out a list of items that would be needed to conduct the attack. The following items were on the list: four (4) AK-47s, two (2) sniper rifles, four (4) handguns, gelnite (which CICCOLO explained was a blasting gelatin, “a variety of dynamite”), black powder (a low explosive which CICCOLO explained could be extracted from fireworks), and improvised grenades. CICCOLO explained how he would construct the grenades, and described them essentially as pipe bombs. CICCOLO also drew a map of the

² References to conversations between CICCOLO and CW-1 are based on preliminary draft transcripts of the conversations. I believe that the references accurately convey the substance of the conversations.

United States and showed CW-1 where the states that he was interested in were located on the map. CICCULO also stated that he wanted to conduct an attack at the State University in that state using assault rifles and improvised explosives. CICCULO told CW-1 that the attack would be concentrated in the college dorms and cafeteria, to include executions of students which would be broadcast live via the internet. CICCULO stated that he planned to rob a gun store to obtain firearms and travel out of state to purchase fireworks in order to obtain black powder needed for the attacks. CICCULO told CW-1 that the items obtained for the attack could be stored at CICCULO's apartment. CICCULO stated his apartment was safe and that there were no kids living there, and that he lived alone. CICCULO also stated he would purchase pressure cookers to use as improvised explosive devices.

21. During the June 30, 2015 meeting CICCULO also explained that he had changed his plans from targeting a police station to targeting a university because there were many more people at the university. CICCULO said that if a student was Muslim, then they would be permitted to help, sit tight, or leave. CICCULO said that he knew how to use sniper rifles, and that he had grown up with guns. "I know what I'm doing," he explained. CICCULO told CW-1 that he wanted to have "tons of ammo" for the assault rifles. CICCULO told CW-1 that he previously owned a .38 caliber revolver and a shotgun, but that he has since sold them. CICCULO said that he wanted to do it before Ramadan was over, and no later than July 31, 2015. He said that he wanted to ensure that there were a lot of people there and that he wanted the conditions to be right where he could see it with his own eyes. CICCULO said that if he ended up having to make a stand, then that was okay. He said, "We win or we die."

22. Operationally, CICCULO explained that he intended to place a few explosives on campus before the attack, and would plan to attack the cafeteria at lunchtime when it would be

packed. CICCULO said that he wanted to use pressure cookers to make a big explosion. He said that the Boston Marathon bombing gave him the idea of what to do, using the same materials and emptying fireworks into a pressure cooker. CICCULO also said that he knew someone who could get hand grenades.

23. On July 2, 2015, CICCULO had an online conversation with CW-1. During this conversation, CICCULO told CW-1 “Alhamdulillah [Arabic phrase for praise be to god], going well. I’m gonna send you link in shaa Allah [Arabic phrase for God willing].” CICCULO then sent CW-1 a hyperlink to a Facebook page.

24. The Facebook page link that CICCULO sent is the Facebook page for a bar located in the state that CICCULO had previously targeted. The Facebook page shows, among other things, a promotion celebrating the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding the right to marry a person of the same gender.

25. CICCULO then wrote, “That is our target. I collected a lot of info on this place. It is connected to the college and one of the most crowded places. It also support the faggots so even better to destroy them bi’idhnillah [Arabic phrase for with the permission of God].”

26. When CW-1 inquired whether this target was the same bar as the bar CICCULO had previously mentioned, CICCULO then described the location of the bar, its proximity to a military base, its proximity to a state forest, the hours of the bar, and the activities at the bar.

27. CW-1 inquired whether CICCULO had acquired any explosives, and CICCULO said that “We are gonna need the same stuff as before.” CICCULO said that they would use two pressure cooker bombs, and that the pressure cookers were not expensive, but the black powder (a low explosive) would be. CICCULO said that the brothers in Boston (a reference to the Boston Marathon bombers) paid four hundred dollars for the amount of fireworks they used.

28. CICCOLO said that he knew how to build the bombs, and other components were also necessary, “Nails and things like that. But I already have those. And I also have aerosol cans and propane tanks to maximize explosive power.” When asked about the ignition of the bomb, CICCOLO said that “[t]he timer is already built in, it heats up and builds up pressure.” CICCOLO said that he would handle acquisition of the ignition source.

29. During the July 2, 2015 instant messaging chat, CICCOLO said that “The big thing is guns.” CW-1 responded that he may be able to help. CICCOLO said “What I am gonna do is prepare fire bombs. I’ll do that today. T[hey] are cheap and effective.” CICCOLO again lamented that “Really need the guns though. Otherwise it’s a waste of time for me to stay around here akhi [Arabic for brother].” CW-1 said that AK-47s (a type of assault rifle) are hard to get. CICCOLO’s response was, “If they are hard to get but you can get something else easier then get the easier one ... You still have the list akhi?” CICCOLO confirmed that his list for guns included four handguns and two assault rifles. CW-1 asked whether it could assist CICCOLO in getting a ride to acquire the black powder, and CICCOLO said, “You get the rifles. I’ll get the powder. Then next time we meet I want us to have at least those two things.”

30. In a later instant messaging session on July 2, 2015, CICCOLO told CW-1 that “Things are moving right along.” CW-1 asked whether the target was the same bar CICCOLO had previously mentioned, and CICCOLO responded that it was not. He explained that the other place was a cafeteria at the college he had mentioned and that the target place was “Very sinful and has a crowd.” CICCOLO also said that it was a favorable place to get out of, suggesting that he was also considering the escape routes. CW-1 asked to clarify portions of their roles in the preparation for the attack, and CICCOLO said, “You get the rifles, I’ll get the powder.”

31. On July 3, 2015, FBI JTTF agents observed CICCULO purchase a pressure cooker at the Walmart in North Adams, Massachusetts. An agent observed CICCULO in the house wares department at Walmart looking at pressure cookers. CICCULO was observed opening a pressure cooker box and examining it. Walmart provided a receipt indicating that CICCULO purchased a pressure cooker, as well as a copy of the store video and a review of that video shows CICCULO purchasing a pressure cooker.

32. On July 3, 2015, CICCULO communicated with CW-1 during an instant messaging chat. During the chat, CICCULO told CW-1 that he had purchased a pressure cooker. “Allahu Akbar!!![Arabic phrase for God is great] ... I got the pressure cookers today. Alhamdulillah.” CICCULO also said that he had already made ten firebombs. CICCULO further stated that he still did not have the black powder he had previously stated that he would acquire. CW-1 asked whether CW-1 should help provide money for CICCULO so that he could get the powder to which, CICCULO replied “Allah will provide.”

33. On July 4, 2015, CICCULO accepted delivery from CW-1 of the following four firearms that CICCULO previously had ordered from CW-1.

- a. 9mm Glock 17 handgun,
- b. 10mm Glock 20 handgun,
- c. .223 Colt AR-15 rifle, and
- d. 556 Sig Arms SG550 rifle.

CICCULO's Arrest

34. CICCULO was arrested as he was carrying the firearms from his meeting with CW-1 towards his apartment. He also was carrying a knife with a 5 inch blade in a sheath on his belt. A receipt for the pressure cooker CICCULO purchased at Walmart on July 3, 2015 was in

his wallet. He was charged in a complaint in federal court with being a felon in possession of firearms in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g).

35. After he was arrested CICCULO waived his Miranda rights and, in substance, reaffirmed his support of ISIL.

Search of CICCULO's Apartment

36. After CICCULO was arrested on July 4, 2015, FBI Special Agent Jeffrey J. Lawrence applied for federal search warrants for CICCULO's mother's house and CICCULO's apartment. Magistrate Judge Katherine A. Robertson issued the requested search warrants.

37. During the execution of the search warrant at CICCULO's apartment the searching agents seized several partially constructed "Molotov cocktails" which CICCULO had told CW-1 he was building. These incendiary devices contained what appeared to be shredded Styrofoam soaking in motor oil which CICCULO told CW-1 would cause the fire from the exploded devices to stick to people's skin and make it harder to put the fire out.

38. CICCULO also had two machetes and a long curved knife in his apartment.

CICCULO's Stabs a Nurse

39. After he was arrested, CICCULO was taken to the Franklin County House of Correction. During CICCULO's processing into the facility he met with a nurse for routine medical screening. During his meeting with the nurse, CICCULO grabbed a pen and forcefully stabbed the nurse in the head, leaving a hole in the nurse's skin and causing the pen to break in half.

Conclusion

40. Based on the information described above, I believe that CICCULO is both a risk of flight and danger to the community. Therefore, he should be detained pending trial.

Paul Ambrogio
Special Agent, FBI