

Magistrate Judge Paula L. McCandlis

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff

v.

JOEY DAVID GEORGE,

Defendant.

CASE NO. MJ22-325

COMPLAINT

Title 18, United States Code,
Section 875

BEFORE United States Magistrate Paula L. McCandlis, Seattle, Washington. The undersigned complainant being duly sworn states:

COUNT 1

(Interstate Threats)

On or about July 19, 2022, in King County, within the Western District of Washington, and elsewhere, JOEY DAVID GEORGE knowingly and willfully did transmit in interstate and foreign commerce from the State of Washington to New York, communications containing a threat to injure another person, to wit, a phone call to a supermarket threatening to shoot people inside the store.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 875(c).

COUNT 2**(Interstate Threats)**

On or about May 12, 2022, in King County, within the Western District of Washington, and elsewhere, JOEY DAVID GEORGE knowingly and willfully did transmit in interstate and foreign commerce from the State of Washington to California, communications containing a threat to injure another person, to wit, a phone call to a restaurant threatening to shoot any Black or Hispanic patrons.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 875(c).

I, Kelli Johnson, having been duly sworn, state as follows:

AFFIANT BACKGROUND

1. I have been employed as a Special Agent of the FBI since 2012 and am currently assigned to the Seattle Field Office. Prior to my service with the FBI, I was a commercial airline pilot. As an FBI agent, I am authorized to investigate violations of federal law and execute warrants issued under the authority of the United States. I have received training and possess experience relating to federal criminal procedures and federal statutes. Moreover, I am a federal law enforcement officer who is engaged in enforcing criminal laws and am authorized by the Attorney General to request search warrants, court orders, and other legal processes.

2. During my employment as a Special Agent for the FBI, I have investigated federal criminal violations related to cybercrime, child pornography and the sexual exploitation of minors, as well as drug-related homicides and bank robberies. Additionally, I have received specialized training in violent criminal matters and child exploitation. In 2021, I received certification as a Digital Evidence Technician (DExT) under the FBI's Computer Analysis and Recovery Team (CART). In this capacity, I am authorized to conduct forensic extractions of various digital devices, such as cellular telephones, desktop and laptop computers, tablets, etc. As a result of my training and experience as a DExT computer technician, I learned, among other things, about the usage and storage capabilities of various digital devices and how those devices can be

1 reviewed with forensic tools. I am currently assigned to the Safe Streets Task Force and
 2 am responsible for investigating violent gangs, violent crime and special jurisdiction
 3 matters.

4 3. I have drafted search warrants and sought other legal process to obtain
 5 information from providers of a variety of electronic services, including cellular
 6 telephone service providers and digital communications providers such as messaging and
 7 email service providers. I have written affidavits in support of court-authorized federal
 8 warrants, pen register/trap and trace orders, and search warrants. I have experience with
 9 investigations involving the use of Title III wiretaps in order to intercept the
 10 communications of target subjects. I have testified in grand jury proceedings, written
 11 investigative reports, and conducted and participated in numerous subject, victim and
 12 witness interviews involving several types of federal violations related to violent crime,
 13 drug trafficking, and child exploitation. Additionally, I have investigated the methods
 14 offenders utilized to commit these federal violations; often these methods involved
 15 communications and other technological means.

16 4. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, training and
 17 experience, and information obtained from other law enforcement officers, law
 18 enforcement reports, and information provided to law enforcement by third parties. This
 19 affidavit is submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause to believe
 20 that JOEY GEORGE has committed the offenses above. I have not included every fact
 21 concerning this investigation. Rather, I have set forth the facts that I believe are
 22 necessary for a fair determination of probable cause.

23 **SUMMARY OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

24 **A. The Buffalo Threat**

25 5. On July 19, 2022, an individual called a Tops grocery store in Buffalo, New
 26 York. The caller, who identified himself as "Peter," spoke with an employee at the store.
 27 The caller asked how many Black people were in the store. He said he would make the
 28 news if he shot and killed all of the Black people, including all of the women, children,

1 and babies. He asked if the employee had cleared out the building. He said there was a
 2 chance he was already in the store, or somewhere nearby. He said that if he did not see
 3 anyone at the store, he would travel to the Jefferson Tops store. In May 2022, a gunman
 4 killed ten people in a racially-motivated attack at the Jefferson Tops store. During the
 5 July 19 call, “Peter” said he was a really good shot and could pick off people from the
 6 parking lot. He said he had assault rifles and other weapons.

7 6. On July 20, 2022, the caller called the store again. He ranted about a “race
 8 war” and said, “This is what happens in a blue state.”

9 7. The caller attempted to mask his phone number by using *67. According to
 10 phone records, the call was made from 206-579-2843. As set forth below, this phone
 11 number belongs to JOEY GEORGE. According to T-Mobile location data, the phone
 12 call was placed within 0.2 miles of GEORGE’s residence in Lynnwood, Washington.

13 **B. The San Bruno Threat**

14 8. On May 12, 2022, a person, using telephone number 206-579-2843, called
 15 Shari’s Restaurant and Pies in San Bruno, California. An employee of the restaurant
 16 answered the phone. The caller, who identified himself as “Tony” threatened to shoot
 17 any Black or Hispanic patrons in the restaurant if the restaurant did not close within
 18 twenty minutes. The San Bruno Police Department (SBPD) responded to the call. A
 19 SBPD Officer called 206-579-2843 and spoke with a male who identified himself as
 20 “Tony Sumorrah.” This individual provided a date of birth in October of 1982, but
 21 refused to provide his address. The individual told the SBPD Officer that he called the
 22 Shari’s restaurant because he wanted to attack Black people and strike fear into the Bay
 23 Area’s Black community. He stated Black people are not human, but rather “sub-
 24 humans.” He said he was proud of his actions because he instilled fear in the employees
 25 and customers of the restaurant.

26 9. The SBPD obtained location data pertaining to the call. The location data
 27 showed that the call was made from Lynnwood, Washington. According to records
 28 provided by T-Mobile, T-Mobile provides service for 206-579-2843. JOEY GEORGE is

1 the subscriber of the number. His service was activated on November 1, 2018.
 2 According to T-Mobile, George has been using his current phone, a 2020 iPhone SE,
 3 since March 13, 2021. GEORGE has a Shoreline, Washington address listed with T-
 4 Mobile, the same address that GEORGE has listed with the Washington Department of
 5 Licensing.¹ T-Mobile records confirmed that the user of 206-579-2843 placed the call to
 6 Shari's restaurant, and received the call from the SBPD officer, on May 12, 2022.

7 10. Other facts tie GEORGE to the calls. According to law enforcement
 8 records, the date of birth the caller provided corresponds to the date of birth of one of
 9 GEORGE's relatives. GEORGE also has multiple ties to the San Francisco Bay Area. In
 10 addition, according to location data provided by T-Mobile, the phone call was placed
 11 within 0.2 miles of GEORGE's Lynnwood, Washington home.

12 **C. Other Threats**

13 11. GEORGE has made other racial threats using phone number 206-579-
 14 2843. On September 11, 2021, a call placed from 206-579-2843 was made to the Verilife
 15 Dispensary in Rockville, Maryland. An employee of the business answered the call and a
 16 male who identified himself as "David Lester" threatened to shoot to and kill "n***ers"
 17 [redacted] at the business. The individual calling himself "Lester" told the employee that
 18 he was sick of "n***ers" [redacted] harassing his girlfriend and he was on his way to the
 19 business to shoot and kill "n***ers." [redacted]. The manager of the business attempted
 20 to speak with the caller and de-escalate the threats, but she became alarmed when "David
 21 Lester" threatened a particular employee at the business, accurately describing the
 22 employee's appearance, including their skin tone.

23 12. A Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) officer called
 24 telephone number 206-579-2843 after the threats were made. The officer spoke with a
 25 _____

26 ¹ GEORGE is believed to have moved to an address in Lynnwood. Officers have encountered GEORGE on several
 27 occasions, including as recently as June 5, 2022, at a Lynnwood apartment. On June 21, 2022, two agents
 28 conducted surveillance at the Shoreline residence, which is an apartment complex. An officer spoke with an
 employee conducting maintenance at the apartment complex. The employee said that he believed that GEORGE no
 longer resided at the residence. The officer attempted to contact the apartment manager several times to confirm
 when GEORGE moved out, but the apartment manager did not return his calls.

1 male who identified himself as “David Lester.” This person stated that he wanted to
2 shoot any “n***ers” [redacted] who were at Verilife Dispensary upon his arrival. He
3 provided another date of birth in October of 1982, but refused to provide his address.
4 According to a law enforcement database, GEORGE’s mother was born on the same date
5 in October, but in a different year. As noted above, another of GEORGE’s relatives was
6 born in 1982. Thus, it appears that GEORGE combined the dates of birth for these two
7 family members when speaking with the MCPD officer. In light of the threats, the
8 dispensary closed for the remainder of the day, and for the following day as well. The
9 store also hired additional security. The store estimates that it incurred over \$50,000 in
10 expenses and lost business.

11 13. On September 21, 2021, a MCPD detective telephoned 206-579-2843 and
12 asked to speak with JOEY GEORGE. The male who answered the phone identified
13 himself as GEORGE. The detective identified himself as a law enforcement officer with
14 MCPD and proceeded to have a conversation with GEORGE. During the call, GEORGE
15 admitted to making the telephone threats to Verilife Dispensary and stated, “I felt Black
16 people do too much and have it coming. I did it for fear.” T-Mobile records confirm that
17 the user of 206-579-2843 made the call to the dispensary and received the above-
18 described calls from the MCPD.


19 14. An individual using a device with the same phone number, 206-579-2843,
20 made a separate threat on September 11, 2021. On that day, the user of 206-579-2843
21 called a Denny’s restaurant in Enfield, Connecticut. During the call, a male caller asked
22 the employee who answered the telephone if there were any Black people in the
23 restaurant. The employee responded that there likely were Black patrons because the
24 restaurant invites customers of all races. The caller responded that he would throw a
25 bomb through the window and “fuck everybody up.” The caller made a second call that
26 day to the restaurant. This time, an Enfield Police Department (EPD) Officer spoke with
27 the caller. The caller admitted to calling the restaurant earlier and directing the employee
28

1 to clear the restaurant of Black people. T-Mobile records show that the user of 206-579-
2 2843 placed these calls.

3 15. Finally, on January 16, 2022, the user of telephone number 206-579-2843
4 called a dispensary in Seattle, Washington. An employee answered the call and the male
5 caller asked if there were any Black employees at the business. The male caller stated
6 that he carried a gun and would go to the business to shoot any Black people who were
7 there at the time of his arrival. According to the dispensary, there was a similar threat
8 made to an employee at its business location in Skyway, Washington. T-Mobile records
9 show that 206-579-2843 placed the call to the Seattle dispensary.

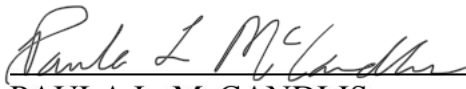
10 CONCLUSION

11 16. Based on the above facts, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause
12 to believe that JOEY GEORGE did knowingly and intentionally commit the offenses of
13 sending interstate threatening communications, in violation of Title 18, United States
14 Code, Section 875.

15
16 
17 KELLI JOHNSON, Complainant
18 Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation

19 Based on the Complaint and Affidavit sworn to before me, and subscribed in my
20 presence, the Court hereby finds that there is probable cause to believe the Defendant
21 committed the offenses set forth in the Complaint.

22 Dated this 21st day of July, 2022.

23
24 
25 PAULA L. McCANDLIS
26 United States Magistrate Judge
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