

Six Minneapolis Somali-Americans arrested in FBI terror “sting”

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The Minnesota US Attorney’s Office Monday announced the arrest of three young Somali-Americans in connection with an alleged plan to travel to Syria and join the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

The announcement came with the usual assurance that the alleged terrorists had posed “no threat to the public,” and the outline of the case that was presented made it clear that once again the FBI had used a confidential informant to organize a “sting” operation.

The defendants, three of them age 19 and the other three between 20 and 21, were all charged with conspiracy and attempt to “provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization.”

Federal authorities acknowledged that there is no evidence whatsoever that the young men who are charged had any plans to carry out terrorist acts within the United States.

The criminal complaint against them specifies their crime as “attempting to travel to Syria in order to involve themselves in the fighting that has consumed Syria for more than three years.” It further explains: “A variety of armed groups are operating in Syria. Those armed groups include many terrorist organizations, among which is [ISIS].”

This argument reads like an indictment not merely of the six Somali-American youth, but of the US government itself. After all, “the fighting that has consumed Syria” has been supported directly by the US and its regional allies, which have funneled money and weapons to the so-called rebels, who, as the federal prosecutor acknowledges, “include many terrorist organizations.”

On this basis, it would be far more fitting to indict President Barack Obama along with leading figures in the CIA and Pentagon for providing “material support” to these elements, than the six hapless youth who were

ensnared by the FBI.

The six were arrested Sunday. Two of them—Mohamed Abdihamid Farah and Abdirahman Yasin Daud—were picked up in San Diego, where they had been lured by the FBI and their “confidential human source”—aka informant—with a phony scheme to supply them with fake passports and get them across the border to Mexico and from there to the Middle East.

The other four—Adnan Abihamid Farah, Hanad Mustafe Musse, Guled Ali Omar and Zacharia Yusuf Abdurahman—were seized at their homes in Minneapolis. While the informant had recorded them in his discussions about the fabricated travel plan, they had backed out either for lack of money or because of qualms about making the trip.

The criminal complaint, while claiming that they had been in touch with one Minneapolis man who managed to leave the US and reach Syria last year, acknowledges that earlier attempts by the youth to travel to Syria—made when at least some of them were in high school—had been thwarted, either by the authorities, who refused to allow them to board planes, or, in one case, by one of the youth’s parents, who confiscated his passport.

It was the role of the FBI’s informant to overcome all such problems, making himself the ringleader in a plan to get out of the US.

As the complaint explains, the informant told the six that he had secured a “contact in California for the production of forged passports.” He asked them to give him passport photos and \$100 down payments for the fake documents.

One of the youth asked for his picture back, and, in the end, only two agreed to make the trip to California. Even they moved to pull out of the scheme, just two days before their arrests, when one of them was unable

to sell his vehicle, which he was counting on to pay for the trip.

At that point, the informant arranged a call to an FBI undercover agent posing as the passport forger in San Diego, who said he would buy the car and throw in the passports for free, convincing them to make the trip with the informant to San Diego, where they were promptly arrested

Minneapolis US Attorney Andrew Luger told a press conference Monday: “What this case shows is the person radicalizing your son, your brother, your friend may not be a stranger. It may be their best friend, right here in town.” He could have added that this “friend” might also be an informant working under the direction of the FBI.

Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) described the atmosphere as “tense” at the St. Paul, Minnesota, courthouse where four of the defendants were arraigned on Monday. Some 70 Somali-Americans, including relatives of the accused, packed the courtroom.

MPR quoted Abdihamid Yusuf, the father of Adnan and Mohamed Farah, as saying that his US-born sons had been “brainwashed” by the FBI’s undercover informant.

The Minneapolis case comes on the heels of the arrest earlier this month of a 20-year-old Kansas man who was charged with plotting a suicide bomb attack on the Fort Riley military base. The defendant, John T. Booker, was brought into a Kansas City court Tuesday in an orange jumpsuit and shackles, where he was charged with federal crimes, including attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction and attempting to provide material support to a terrorist group.

Booker, who reportedly suffers from mental illness, was entrapped by the FBI after he came to the government’s attention for postings on his Facebook page. These led to his being barred from the US Army after initially being recruited.

An FBI informant was used to pump Booker about his sympathy for ISIS. This informant then put him in touch with an individual he described as his “cousin,” supposedly a “high-ranking sheikh planning terrorist attacks in the United States.”

The two undercover FBI men then convinced Booker he should carry out a bombing, provided him with a list of explosive materials and subsequently assembled the dummy “bomb” themselves, showing the 20-year-old

how he could supposedly detonate it.

Imam Omar Hazim of the Islamic Center of Topeka told the media that Booker suffered from bipolar disorder and had stopped taking his medication because “he didn’t like the way it made him feel and it was expensive.”

“I think the two FBI agents set him up,” he said.

These cases are part of a long pattern of the FBI manufacturing terrorist plots and entrapping individuals who on their own would have never carried out criminal actions.

These activities have become so ubiquitous and so blatant that even the *Wall Street Journal* reported Wednesday that “The wide use of informants or undercover agents in the arrests of suspected Islamic State supporters in the US is sparking criticism that authorities are luring people into crimes.”

The *Journal* cited a report by the Center for National Security at Fordham University’s School of Law that found that 60 percent of the cases against Americans charged with ISIS-related offenses involved undercover FBI informants.

“They’re playing on people’s frailties, especially the younger types with mental and emotional problems,” Wadie Said, a professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law, told the *Journal*. “Is the government trying to remove a danger or working to create the crime, break it up and then claim a victory against ISIS?”

The political interests underlying these FBI sting operations are clear. By fabricating terror cases, the US government seeks to provide a pretext for both endless war abroad and the steady buildup of a police state apparatus at home.



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