

Massachusetts Man Arrested for Sending Threatening Letters, White Powder to Federal Agencies

A Southwick man was arrested today and charged in federal court in Springfield, Mass., for sending four packages, two of which contained white powder, to federal agencies.

Kevin A. Johnson, 47, was charged by criminal complaint with two counts of conveying false information and hoaxes and two counts of mailing threatening communications. Johnson was detained following an initial appearance in federal court in Springfield.

According to the charging document, between July and November 2018, the FBI's Springfield Office and the Springfield Social Security Administration Office (SSA Springfield), received collectively three packages containing either threatening communications and/or suspicious substances. The Springfield Branch Office of the United States Attorney's Office received a letter from an individual claiming responsibility for sending the packages. All of the packages contained a piece of white-lined paper with a hand-drawn logo that appeared to combine the "anarchist A" symbol (the capital letter "A" surrounded by the letter "O") and the symbol for ISIS. Two of the packages contained suspicious white powder.

As alleged in court documents, on July 23, 2018, security cameras at the FBI Springfield Office captured an individual throwing a manila envelope at the front door. The package contained a handwritten note saying: "Death to TRUMP."

On Oct. 23, 2018, SSA Springfield received a package containing white powder and a handwritten letter stating,

among other things: "FOR ALLAH YOU DIE, ATHENA KNOWS YOUR LIES, DEATH TO YOU TRAITORS, AND THE FU— FBI."

On Oct. 24, 2018, the FBI Springfield Office received a package through the mail addressed to "AGENT UNCLE HAM." The package contained white powder and a handwritten note stating: "FOR ALLAH YOU DIE, ATHENA KNOWS YOUR LIES, DEATH TO THE N.O.R.A.D SPIES, AND THE FBI." Laboratory testing later determined that the white powder in the packages did not contain hazardous material.

On Nov. 13, 2018, the Springfield Branch Office of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts received a letter through the mail addressed to the U.S. Attorney. The return address stated: "WANTED FOR TERRORISM." The package included a handwritten letter and two newspaper articles. One of the newspaper articles was a report that the SSA Springfield building closed after receiving a suspicious package. The article noted that the powder was found to be onion salt. The words "onion salt" were circled in pen on the article. The second article was about the death of James "Whitey" Bulger Jr. The phrase "5 finger Freddy" was written in pen next to the name "Freddy Geas" on the article. News media outlets have reported Geas as Bulger's suspected killer.

The charges of false information and hoaxes provide for a sentence of no greater than five years in prison, one year of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charges of mailing threatening communications provide for a sentence of no greater than 10 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Harold H. Shaw, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; Joseph W. Cronin, Inspector in Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service,

Boston Division; Scott Antolik, Special Agent in Charge of the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, Boston Field Division; Stephen A. Marks, Special agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service, Boston Field Division; and Southwick Police Chief Kevin A. Bishop, made the announcement today. Assistance was provided by the Western Massachusetts Joint Terrorism Task Force, Hampden County Sheriff's Department, and Holyoke Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Deepika Bains Shukla of Lelling's Springfield Branch Office is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.