

Detroit Sleeper Cell

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The **Detroit Sleeper Cell** is a group of men of Middle-Eastern descent who the United States Department of Justice believed were plotting an attack on Disneyland. The members of the alleged cell were Farouk Ali-Haimoud, Ahmed Hannan, Karim Koubriti, and Abdel Ilah Elmardoudi.

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Trial

While on a trip to Disneyland, the four men recorded a home video. The Justice Department believed that this recording was reconnaissance for a future terror attack. This video, combined with the testimony of self-described con-artist Youssef Hmimssa, and what the defense called doodles in a day planner, but the prosecution called terror plans, led to the conviction of Koubriti and Elmardoudi.^[1]

The prosecution claimed the five were "Takfiris" — followers of a radical Islamic sect that allowed jihadists to drink alcohol, use narcotics, and refrain from praying, in order to blend in to Western societies, so they could mount clandestine attack on them.^[2]

Youssef Hmimssa, who plead guilty to multiple charges of credit card fraud and identity theft, agreed to testify against the four men, in a deal that would allow him to consolidate his other charges, and avoid further charges, reducing his sentence to between 37 and 46 months in prison.^[3]

Post-trial

Later, the conviction of the two men was overturned by information indicating that the prosecution had withheld important information from the defense. In the Justice Department's filing they claimed there was "no reasonable prospect of winning," and "In its best light, the record would show that the prosecution committed a pattern of mistakes and oversights that deprived the defendants of discoverable evidence (including impeachment material) and created a record filled with misleading inferences that such material did not exist".^[4]

A federal grand jury is investigating whether the prosecution withheld information from the defense and deceived the jury. Richard Convertino, the lead prosecutor in the case, sued Attorney General John D. Ashcroft, accusing Ashcroft and others of mismanagement and retaliation, but the lawsuit was thrown out by a judge.^[5]

See also

- Buffalo Six - A terror cell captured in Buffalo, New York, United States
- Richard Convertino - Lead prosecutor in the case
- Youssef Hmimssa - Star witness for the prosecution

- Saad Madai Saad al-Azmi - Guantanamo detainee also accused of being a Takfiri

References

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(<http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/terrorism/uskoubriti82802ind.pdf>) , *Findlaw*
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3. ^ Detroit 'Sleeper Cell' Prosecutor Faces Probe: Grand Jury Considering Indictment for Misconduct
(<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/19/AR2005111900952.html>) , *Washington Post*, November 19, 2005
4. ^ Cell phony - Government's star witness says he's a scam artist, not a terrorist.
(<http://www.metrotimes.com/editorial/story.asp?id=4801>) , *Metro Times*, April 16, 2003

External links

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- Split verdict in Detroit terror trial exposes government frame-up
(<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2003/jun2003/detr-j07.shtml>) , *World Socialist Web Site*, June 7, 2003
- Federal Officials Reveal Arrest Of Alleged Leader Of Terror Cell
(<http://www.cooperativeresearch.org/timeline/2002/bostonglobe111502.html>) . *The Boston Globe*, November 15, 2002
- Petra Bartosiewicz, "The Prosecutor
(http://www.thislife.org/Radio_Episode.aspx?episode=356) , " This American Life, episode 356, May 30, 2008.

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Categories: Islamist terrorism in the United States

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