

Man Arrested in Plot to Bomb 9/11 Memorial

A Florida man has been arrested and accused of plotting to detonate a pressure-cooker bomb at a memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, to commemorate the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, the U.S. Justice Department said on Thursday.

Joshua Ryne Goldberg, 20, was arrested on charges of distributing information relating to explosives, destructive devices and weapons of mass destruction, the department said. His arrest was announced a day before the 14th anniversary of the attacks.

If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison, the department said.

The criminal complaint said Goldberg distributed information to an informant on how to manufacture a bomb and instructed the informant to make a pressure-cooker bomb and fill it with nails, metal and other items dipped in rat poison.

When the informant claimed to live near Kansas City, Goldberg instructed the informant to place the bomb at an upcoming memorial in Kansas City that was commemorating 9/11, the complaint said.

The complaint details numerous conversations from the Twitter account of someone using the names AusWitness and AusSecret, who presented himself as a Muslim living in Australia who supported the Islamic State militant group.

However, the complaint also says that Goldberg, who was using his mother's computer in Orange Park near Jacksonville, was responsible for Internet hoaxes and had taken over the identities of other people online.

The complaint said a witness from Australia had identified Goldberg as an “online troll,” who had used numerous identities.

In the complaint, FBI investigators said a computer owned by Goldberg’s mother had the IP address of the computer associated with the email and Twitter accounts through which the conversations with the informant took place.

In one conversation recounted in the complaint, the FBI informant, referring to the possibility of a Jihadi attack, said: “We could probably figure something out,” adding that he had “learned a lot” from a Syrian.

The AusWitness account replied: “That sounds good. What do you have in mind? Do you have any bombs already?”

Later, the AusSecret Twitter account sent guidelines on how to make bombs and suggested that the informant bomb Kansas City since he was near there.

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