

FBI Goes Trumpian, Hypes Imaginary Terrorism Threat as Fake News

By [William Boardman](#)

Global Research, July 06, 2018

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Terrorism](#)

“Protecting our citizens and our nation remains the Justice Department’s top priority,” U.S. Attorney [Justin] Herdman said. “This defendant plotted and scouted locations in downtown Cleveland for an attack on July 4th, when he knew it would be packed with people celebrating our nation’s birthday. We will continue to do all we can to identify, arrest and prosecute those threats while working to keep our communities safe and secure.” – FBI press release, July 2, 2018

Well, that sounds like pretty good news, doesn’t it? The supposed July 4th attack sounds like it could have been horrendous, right? And your Justice Department saved us all yet again, right? That must be why the Justice Department headlined its press release:

Ohio Man Arrested for Attempting to Assist a Foreign Terrorist Organization
With Homeland Attack Plot

Actually, no, that’s not quite what happened. This is fundamentally a big government lie. Actually, it’s a tissue of lies.

The government press release begins with some facts:

Demetrius Nathaniel Pitts, aka Abdur Raheem Rafeeq, aka Salah ad-Deen Osama Waleed, 48, of Maple Heights, Ohio, was charged with one count of attempting to provide material support to al Qaeda, a designated foreign terrorist organization. Pitts was arrested Sunday [July 1] by members of the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force.

This press feed is well-framed to make readers think the worst – “al Qaeda” and “terrorist” and “Terrorism Task Force.” And all those aliases – that’s scary stuff. But what did Pitts actually do? And why only one count? And who else was involved? The details fail to live up to the hype.

Instead of clarifying the arrest, the press release then continues for its next four fat paragraphs with chest-thumping government officials offering bloated, irrelevant, and largely false rhetoric – “the dangerous threat posed by radical Islamic terrorism” and “plans to attack innocent civilians” and “working to keep our communities safe and secure.” This is all good, solid Orwellian language as it avoids lying without actually telling the truth. And it makes one wonder: Good lord, what on earth was Demetrius Pitts up to all by himself? According to the press release:

“Pitts, a U.S. citizen living in Ohio, pledged his allegiance to al-Qaeda, a foreign terrorist organization, and was planning to conduct an attack in Cleveland on Independence Day, the very day we celebrate the freedoms we have in this country,” said Special Agent in Charge [Stephen] Anthony. “The FBI commends the public for reporting individuals that espouse their radical beliefs and/or engage in behavior that threaten the lives of our military personnel and community.”

This is the only – mysterious – reference in the press release to thank “the public for reporting individuals.” And does the FBI now consider it a crime for people to “espouse their radical beliefs”? Isn’t that a radical belief? And does the thanks to informers mean that there was NO independent investigative work? The balance of the press release comprises a summary of a [court-filed affidavit](#) that completely supports such a conclusion. Apparently this heroic defense of public safety consisted of someone giving Pitts’s name to the FBI some time ago and the FBI then executing a sting operation bordering on entrapment (or more likely actual entrapment) of a man of less than full competence or significant ability. Not only that, it’s taken the FBI almost two and a half years to instigate Pitts to allegedly criminal action, as the FBI admits (indirectly) in its 31-page affidavit filed by Special Agent Andrew Wilson, a 22-year veteran assigned to the Cleveland Joint Terrorism Task Force:

6. On December 31, 2015, a Facebook profile for ABDUR RAHEEM RAFEEQ (which was ultimately determined to be PITTS) came to the FBI’s attention after RAFEEQ sent a private Facebook message to “The Craig Sewing Show,” a California-based political commentary program, stating: “Fuck America and there arm[sic] forces. The USA will be destroy. Allahu Akbar.”

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
Northern District of Ohio

2018 JUL -2 AM 9:05

United States of America

v.

DEMETRIUS PITTS, aka ABDUR RAHEEM
RAHFEEQ, aka SALAHADEN OSAMA WALEED

Case No.

1:18 MJ 2120*Defendant(s)*

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of June 15, 2018 to July 1, 2018 in the county of Cuyahoga in the
Northern District of Ohio, the defendant(s) violated:*Code Section*

18 U.S.C. 2339B

*Offense Description*Attempt to provide material support or resources to a foreign terrorist
organization

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached affidavit

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.*Complainant's signature*

SA Andrew J. Wilson

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: _____

MAG. JUDGE RUIZ*Judge's signature*City and state: Cleveland, Ohio

Magistrate Judge David Ruiz

Printed name and title

First of all, this is all Constitutionally-protected free speech. Secondly, no serious terrorist is going to out himself to the Craig Sewing Show. What Pitts probably unwittingly did was to set himself up as a clay pigeon for the FBI to take potshots at. There is a long, shameful pattern of FBI agents manipulating marginal people into imaginary threats to build a bogus arrest record that actually undermines freedom by "defending" it. Who knows how many people rot in jail as "terrorists" only because they were entrapped by the FBI in "plots" that never actually existed as real-world threats? The FBI apparently ignored Pitts for a year until he made another post, on Facebook, according to the FBI affidavit:

7. On January 25, 2017, PITTS used his Facebook account Abdur Raheem Rafeeq (UID 100010669985661) to comment on pictures believed to be from a

jihad training camp. PITTS posted, "We as Muslim need to start. Training like this everyday. We need to know how to shoot guns. Throw hand grenades hand to hand combat. How survey out in the woods. Look at the bed blue eyed devils. They teach their little dogs on how to shoot and Hunt. If you fear death. Then don't say you love Islam. The Rasool saw said. We should always be prepared to fight in the name of Allah Akbar. All cowards stay home. Walsalaam. Abdur Raheem sahl Rafeeq. Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar."

The FBI slouched into action, reviewing Pitts's Facebook account in February 2017 and observing it into June 2018. According to the affidavit, during those 16 months, the FBI believed Pitts was "threatening violence against the United States," "expressed a desire to recruit people to kill Americans," and was "willing to conduct a U.S. based attack." The FBI took no action. Neither did Pitts.

As of early 2018, Demetrius Nathaniel Pitts, 48, an African-American US citizen, had apparently been living a quiet life in Willoughby, Ohio, about 19 miles east of Cleveland on Lake Erie. In May he apparently moved to Maple Heights, about 13 miles south of Cleveland. It's not clear what he did for work, or whether he was employed. He apparently lived alone. After the FBI arrested Pitts, Diane Stoudemire, [his aunt near Cincinnati](#), expressed bewilderment, even though she hadn't heard from him in two years:

He's never been a violent person, so that's what I don't understand.... He had had some problems with drugs and everything. He came up without his father, which is my brother, that was killed before Demetrius was born. His mother passed away while Demetrius was in penitentiary, so he's been having such a hard time....

Diane Stoudemire said [Pitts lived "on the fringe" of society](#), but had no idea he'd been living near Cleveland:

We've been worried about him, because I was his favorite aunt. And he used to would come to me, and I haven't heard from Demetrius in a few years.... He was a good person. I never knew him to get in no trouble, like hurting somebody or fighting or anything. Anything he ever done was to himself.

According to the FBI at a [July 2 press conference](#), Pitts has a criminal history that includes felonious assault and aggravated robbery [in 1989, when he was 19](#). He served less than a year before being released on probation. He was arrested in 2006 but charges were dismissed. He was arrested again in 2007, convicted on a theft charge, and placed on probation. He was arrested in 2016 for absconding from probation in 2009.

On June 18, everything started to change from bad to worse for Pitts. That was the day the FBI sent an undercover agent to meet with Pitts in Willoughby and surreptitiously recorded their conversation (excerpted in the FBI affidavit). The conversation is full of violent fantasy to which the FBI agent contributes, but nothing like a plan or even a credible threat emerges. Pitts makes it clear that he has not joined al Qaeda but would take a test to join. The FBI agent suggests a test: "take out a soldier? A US Army soldier?" Pitts responds: "He dead. He dead. He dead. It's like I said." Then Pitts seems to back off the idea. They go through a similar loop talking about killing a Marine. Nothing is decided, or even promised. Pitts does not ask the FBI agent to prove he's from al Qaeda.

On June 22, the FBI agent met with Pitts in Walton Hills and surreptitiously recorded the conversation (excerpted in the affidavit). The FBI agent starts with a pitch that fits an effort at entrapment:

And so that's part of, part of the question. Part of the in and out is understanding what al Qaeda is about and then wanting to know are you willing to, I mean any brother that's gonna be in al Qaeda has to be willing to do all the things that we've already talked about.... That's why I mean, I mean, I mean I'm excited I went back but of course the brothers, they wanna build trust by steps. And they're willing to send a brother out to meet you but we gotta make, we gotta get to that level too. The other thing too is I mean there is, there is risk with all this and that's why we gotta, we gotta start somewhere. I mean I think we are there but I gotta go back and convince.... I mean I think that can happen pretty soon. But-but this is, but I think this is what this is a big thing that was asked of me cause I told him I told him about hey the value in the knife fighting. The possibility of like what we talked about last time. Finding places where we could get in and set up a bomb. I mean if they provide the bomb maker and we find the path in. Then man, dude we can do, I mean you wanna talk about if doing something like that, that from, from, from within, that will shake them more than 9/11 . 9/11 mashallah was amazing.

Pitts doesn't buy into any this. He volunteers that he been thinking about the 4th of July, but nothing specific. Pitts says:

"I'm trying to figure out something that would shake them up on the 4th of July.... See I-I that's why I like chess."

Pitts mentions "a bomb to blow up at the 4th of July parade," then rejects it because of too many surveillance cameras in the city. The FBI agent abets the "planning" by googling a map of downtown Cleveland. Later the same day, the FBI agent promises to provide Pitts with a bus pass and a cell phone.

On June 25, a second FBI agent posing as "a trusted 'brother'" met with Pitts in Maple Heights, delivering the bus pass and cell phone.

On June 26, Pitts texted the first FBI agent that he had scouted out downtown Cleveland, as discussed. Pitts said he planned to go to Philadelphia (his hometown) for further surveillance. The FBI agent talked to Pitts on the phone and asked if Pitts was going through with the July 4th plan that other "brothers" were building devices for. The conversation was inconclusive.

On June 27, Pitts met with the second agent posing as a "brother" and turned in his cell phone. The second agent gave Pitts a black flag as a terrorist symbol. Later the same day, Pitts met with the first FBI agent for two and a half hours to discuss "the impending July 4th bombing" (according to the FBI affidavit). Pitts says he's going to spend the day July 3 casing the surroundings, "We're just takin' pictures, takin' video." Pitts says he wants to see the explosion on the 4th and the FBI agent says:

You wanna see it - you wanna see that fireball go flying - you wanna see the body parts flying into the sky?... Alright. Well you know what? Like where we were standing when you can overlook the whole lake, off by that - on top of that parking garage, you can get a pretty good view from way up there.

At this point in the affidavit, neither party has specified just what kind of bomb might be used and they've discussed a number of possibilities. They have no specific target. The FBI agent seems confused: "Oh, so you're talking like uh - like uh full car bomb in the whole van." Pitts, who has no way of knowing about and no connection with any bomb, agrees. The FBI agent says: "Alright. I mean this is a - we're going from a remote control car bomb to a full size van." Pitts seems to agree but talks about the remote control toy cars with bombs. This seems to fluster the FBI agent, the conversation wanders, "this is gonna take an adjustment and my plan was for the - well what we kinda - they gonna bring in the bomb guy for us...." They seem to reassure each other that they're going through with the plan even though they haven't settled on the plan. Pitts isn't planning to be involved with the bombing directly:

My part is just to go scope, get the information we need, and bring it back....
See you gotta have Brothers who don't nobody never see. Like I don't wanna meet all the Brothers. No.

The FBI agent agrees to this. Later in the day, Pitts texted the FBI agent that the plan was impossible, too much security. Pitts talks about pushing on, maybe in Philadelphia:

Ahki (brother) I want to do this by myself. I have no reason to live. Since I know Philly very well. All I need from the brother. Is some chicken eggs that go [emojis inserted that appear to be explosions]. I will put my life on the line. This will be done in September labor day. Just help me get there. So ahki you must show me. How to drive again. Now can you do that. You don't need to be in this. Ahki you have a family. So keep your hands clean ahki.

On June 28, on the direction of the first FBI agent, Pitts carried out instructions relating to the imaginary bombing, including searching for a vehicle. Pitts said a purchase would be difficult because he'd have to provide a driver's license. The FBI agent suggested a strawman purchase. Pitts found several possible vehicles, but bought none.

June 30, the FBI agent "told Pitts that the attack Pitts planned in Cleveland for July 4th was a "go" and that the al Qaeda brothers were happy with Pitts' plan for Cleveland" (according to the FBI affidavit), even though there was still no clear record of any specific plan. The FBI agent egged Pitts on with false promises of a "large explosion ... on behalf of al Qaeda."

On July 1, the FBI agent met with Pitts in Garfield Heights to learn what plan Pitts had for Philadelphia. Pitts explained he was still planning an attack that he wanted to be bloody. The FBI showed Pitts a "remote control car ... [that] contained C-4 explosives and BB's" rigged by the FBI, a toy that could roll under a police vehicle. Pitts freely speculated on uses for remote control cars as well as a larger bomb that he assumed existed. The meeting ended with his arrest.

On July 2, the Justice Department issued its deceitful press release, claiming to have protected the country from a fearsome terrorist attack, even though the FBI knew that attack was never even close to taking place, and even though the FBI knew Pitts had zero capability of carrying it out on his own. The FBI makes no claim to the contrary, but merely asserts the sort-of-true claim that Pitts "did knowingly attempt to provide material support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization." The FBI does not acknowledge that the "foreign terrorist organization" was an FBI fiction and that Pitts's attempt was based on a

delusion.

The FBI filings make very clear that no terrorism and no threat of terrorism existed before the FBI decided to pump one up, using a troubled, angry, isolated black man as its pawn to inflate its own institutional ego with fake news. And the news media bought the fake news as presented, [uncritically parroting the FBI spin](#) that they stopped an attempted terror attack.

[CNN](#): Man accused of plotting terror attack on July 4th parade in Cleveland

[New York Times](#): Man Arrested in Cleveland Terror Plot After F.B.I. Sting

[ABC News](#): Man accused of planning terrorist attack in Cleveland had San Francisco travel plans

[USA Today](#): FBI: Man who planned attack on Cleveland wanted to give explosive-filled cars to military children

And so it went [across the news media](#), with a presumption of guilt fostered by FBI lies taken at face value. FBI agent Stephen Anthony set the tone for media coverage:

Law enforcement cannot sit back and wait for Mr. Pitts to commit a violent attack.... We don't have the luxury of hoping an individual decides not to harm someone or get others to act.

This is disingenuous to the point of deceit. This is a totalitarian mindset. Anthony knows full well that Pitts has never committed a terrorist act, that Pitts has never attempted a terrorist act, that Pitts is known to have "planned" a terrorist act only with FBI incitement. The FBI knows it has no evidence that Pitts is even capable of committing a terrorist act. Based on the available evidence, Pitts has done nothing worse than exercise his First Amendment rights in politically incorrect ways, expressing deep anger and hostility toward the US for its endless slaughter of Muslims. What Pitts was incoherently expressing was rage at his own country's terrorism. For that, his country makes him the terrorist.

That's not a reality that many Americans can perceive from their 9/11-induced fear bubble (that the FBI cleverly invoked). The hysteria of 9/11 has not abated much. We continue to spend endless millions on terrorism task forces, so of course they're going to find terrorists even where there are none - that's their job. And if they can't find terrorists, they'll invent them as they did with Demetrius Pitts, who was essentially helpless once the FBI targeted him. His case should bring shame to anyone serious about law enforcement and justice. Instead it has brought on nothing better than official empty strutting and craven media credulity.

As for Demetrius Pitts, he has been serially lynched - first by life, which could happen to anyone. But then he was lynched by an FBI in search of easy prey, next he was lynched by the Justice Department in search of easy praise, and now he is being lynched by news media in search of easy answers. In due course, he will likely be lynched by the court system and then by the prison system.

This case is what societal failure looks like. Police-state tactics can railroad an innocent man

and no one questions the police state's flimsy official story.

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This article was originally published on [Reader Supported News](#).

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