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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of New York

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Onondaga County Man Detained on False Statement Charges

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK – Chasib Hafedh Saadoon Al Fawadi, age 35, of Syracuse, appeared yesterday in federal court on an indictment charging him with making false statements in connection with his application to obtain a green card.

The announcement was made by Acting United States Attorney Antoinette T. Bacon and Thomas F. Relford, Special Agent in Charge of the Albany Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Al Fawadi appeared before United States Magistrate Judge Andrew T. Baxter, who ordered him detained pending a detention hearing on October 8, 2020.

According to the indictment, Al Fawadi, an Iraqi citizen, made false statements in connection with his application to become a lawful permanent resident. Specifically, the indictment alleges that he made false statements (1) on his United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Form I-485 for permanent residence; (2) to an official of the USCIS, a component of the Department of Homeland Security, during an interview conducted on April 9, 2019, in connection with his application for permanent residence; and (3) to another USCIS official on October 30, 2019.

As detailed in the indictment, Al Fawadi falsely answered questions where honest answers would have revealed that (1) he had been a member of and affiliated with Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, an Iranian-backed Shiite militia and paramilitary organization and group whose members routinely used weapons against others and threatened to do so; (2) he had also assisted and provided material support to Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq knowing that it had engaged in and conspired to engage in sabotage, kidnapping, political assassination, hijacking, and other forms of terrorist activity; (3) he had received military, paramilitary and weapons training; and (4) he had traveled to Iran and Syria. By instead providing false answers, Al Fawadi attempted to conceal all of this information from the USCIS.

According to the indictment, on March 17, 2015, while in Turkey, Al Fawadi applied for classification as a refugee and to be admitted to the United States along with his family in large part on his claim that, while in Iraq, he was persecuted and threatened by Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq because he had refused to assist in the kidnappings of Sunni Muslims.

The charges in the indictment are merely accusations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

If convicted, Al Fawadi faces up to 5 years in prison on each false statement charge, up to 3 years of post-imprisonment supervised release, and a maximum \$250,000 fine. A defendant's sentence is imposed by a judge based on the particular statute the defendant is charged with violating, the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other factors.

This case is being investigated by the FBI and Homeland Security Investigations, with assistance from the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven D. Clymer.

Topic(s):

Immigration

National Security

Component(s):USAO - New York, Northern

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