Office of the Kane County State's Attorney

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YOUTH PLEADS GUILTY FOR PLAN TO DETONATE EXPLOSIVES, CAUSE MASS DEATHS AT BATAVIA HIGH SCHOOL

May 28, 2020

17-year-old **Samuel Plenio** of Batavia today pleaded guilty to the offense of possession of an explosive/explosives/incendiary device, Class 1 felony, in exchange for a sentence of 48 months of probation and mental health treatment in a residential facility.

Kane County Associate Judge Salvatore LoPiccolo accepted the plea.

Plenio was initially charged in juvenile court. He agreed to have the case transferred to adult court.

Kane County Assistant State's Attorney Bridget Sabbia stated in court that on Nov. 26, 2019, agents from the FBI went to Samuel Plenio's Batavia home after they were notified that a Batavia resident had made suspicious purchases of bomb-making materials.

FBI agents first located suspicious social media accounts belonging to Plenio that included anti-Semitic posts. The FBI's search of Plenio's home revealed a working laboratory with numerous chemicals, compounds, laboratory equipment and other items and materials used to make bombs. Among the explosive compounds were lead azide, erythritol tetranitrate and nitroguanidine. They also found three threaded PVC pipes, three metal pipes and end caps, half with holes drilled in them, detonators, initiators and ball bearings, which are commonly used as projectiles in bombs.

A notebook found in Plenio's bedroom included numerous statements of hate ideology. The notebook detailed Plenio's plan to detonate a bomb in a restroom at Batavia High School, throw a pipe bomb and Molotov cocktail into a crowd, open fire, aim for the weak, throw a pipe bomb down the mail hallway, kill at his own discretion, and use the rest of the grenades wherever possible. His plan was for him to die by suicide.

Along with the probationary term, Plenio must follow additional conditions, which include but are not limited to:

- Remain in custody at the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center until placed in a residential treatment facility that complies with the treatment plan.
- The cost of placement and treatment is to be born entirely by Plenio's parents.
- Residential treatment will be a minimum of six months to successfully complete treatment plan, which includes treatment for schizophrenia.
- No possession of firearms, explosives, incendiary devices or precursor explosives or devices, including no such items allowed his home.
- He must take all medications as prescribed.
- His Internet access is limited to school assignments.
- He is subject to a curfew set by the probation department upon completion of residential treatment.
- He may not enter Batavia High School or be on any school grounds.

Plenio has been in custody at the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center since Nov. 26, 2019.

Kane County State's Attorney Joe McMahon said:
"This is the right outcome for this case as it protects the community and also provides Mr. Plenio with the important help that he needs.

"I cannot overstate the significance of the work that our law-enforcement and public safety partners at the federal, state and local levels, particularly of Chief Dan Eul and his team at the Batavia Police Department, undertook to prevent what would have been a horrific act of mass violence and unimaginable harm. Their cooperation and support throughout the investigation and prosecution was critical to achieving a disposition that protected the public in both the short and long term and laid out a plan to hold Mr. Plenio accountable and give him access to necessary treatment. In addition, Mr. Plenio's parents and his attorney, Gary Johnson, understood the complex issues at stake.

"My thanks to the Kane County Bomb Squad, who responded to the scene and immediately secured the scene and ensured the safety of the community, to the alert person who contacted authorities when he became suspicious of Mr. Plenio's activities, and to the many employees of this office who worked hard for this just resolution."

Batavia Chief of Police Dan Eul said:
"On behalf of the citizens of Batavia, I would like to express our collective gratitude for the excellent work of all the local, state and federal law enforcement agencies who were involved in this investigation. I believe their cooperative efforts and resourcefulness prevented a tragedy that would have made the City of Batavia synonymous with too many other communities that have dealt with the tragic loss of life of young people due to a senseless act of mass violence."

Samuel Plenio: Age 17, of Batavia, Illinois. Case No. 20CF946.