

June 6, 2007

## Charges Filed Against 6 Men in Plot to Attack Base

By [KAREEM FAHIM](#)

A federal grand jury in New Jersey has charged five men in a plot to kill American soldiers at the Fort Dix military base, and charged a sixth with illegally helping some of the others to obtain weapons, prosecutors said yesterday.

All of the men, whom prosecutors called Islamic extremists, were arrested last month after the authorities said that two of them bought automatic weapons from an informer working with the [F.B.I.](#) The men, who lived in southern New Jersey and Philadelphia, are being held without bail.

“We intend to continue a vigorous prosecution of these defendants,” United States Attorney Christopher J. Christie said in a statement. “Anyone who would plan such an attack should expect no less.”

Mr. Christie’s office said the men would probably be arraigned next week.

The five men facing the most serious charge, conspiring to murder members of the United States military, are Mohamed Ibrahim Shnewer, 22; Serdar Tatar, 23; and three brothers — Eljvir, 23, Shain, 26, and Dritan Duka, 28. The Duka brothers, all illegal immigrants, also each face the charge of possession of firearms by an alien.

The sixth man, Agron Abdullahu, 24, is charged with supplying the Duka brothers with weapons, including a Beretta 9-millimeter pistol and a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun.

Federal agents started trailing the six men in January 2006, after a clerk at an electronics store in Mount Laurel, N.J., told the authorities that the men had dropped off an alarming video that they wanted to convert into a DVD. The video, according to court papers, shows 10 men firing assault weapons at a firing range, “while calling for jihad.”

Over the next year and a half, and with the help of two informers, federal agents kept watch over what they said was the unfolding plot. The men watched videos related to international terrorism, trained with firearms and paintball guns in New Jersey and the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania, and surveyed military installations in New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania.

The men’s aim, prosecutors said, was a spectacular attack on Fort Dix using automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades to kill scores of soldiers. The indictment says the defendants were inspired by [Al Qaeda](#), among other groups.

They were arrested after Dritan Duka, called Tony, and his brother Shain bought inoperable machine guns from an F.B.I informer in early May, the authorities said. The other men were arrested the same day.

Dritan Duka's lawyer, Michael Huff, said his client had not yet been able to visit with his relatives.

"He's doing as well as can be expected, considering he has five children and is accused of something he says he didn't do," Mr. Huff said.

In a statement, a lawyer for Mr. Shnewer, Rocco C. Cipparone Jr., expressed concern at some of the language used by prosecutors. "It is important that the public — the jury pool — not be influenced emotionally by labels such as 'inspired by Al Qaeda' or 'jihadist,' terms contained in the indictment."

Prosecutors have referred to a wealth of audio, video and photographic evidence that chronicles the actions of the men, and conversations like the one between Dritan Duka and one of the government informers in April in which, prosecutors say, he expressed the need for secrecy.

"I just want to be safe, brother," Mr. Duka said, according to court papers. "I got five kids, so I don't want to go down."

[Copyright 2007 The New York Times Company](#)

---

\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |  | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_