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**Indiana Man Sentenced to 10 Years in Federal Prison for Possessing
Unregistered Destructive Devices During Portland Protests**

PORTLAND, Ore.—An Indiana man was sentenced to federal prison today for repeatedly and intentionally jeopardizing the lives of police officers, destroying public property, and encouraging others to commit violence during protests that occurred in Portland in 2020.

Malik Fard Muhammad, 25, was sentenced to 10 years in federal prison and three years' supervised release.

“In the summer of 2020, a historic protest movement in Portland was marred by violent rioters taking advantage of the momentum built by thousands of peaceful demonstrators. Sadly, this violence drastically changed the narrative around these protests and what they accomplished. In the lead up to and during protests, federal law enforcement is focused on doing everything we can to support the First Amendment rights of individuals while keeping all demonstrators, other community members, and law enforcement officers safe. Holding accountable those individuals whose sole focus is violence and destruction, like Mr. Muhammad, is central to our ongoing effort to support the rights of all Oregonians,” said Scott Erik Asphaug, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

“Malik Fard Muhammad intentionally planned and committed acts of violence that threatened other protestors, members of the public, and law enforcement officers. This type of violence has no place in our community,” said FBI Portland Special Agent in Charge Kieran Ramsey. “The FBI is committed to apprehending and charging violent instigators who plan, promote, and commit acts of violence and destruction. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to protect the peaceful expression of free speech throughout Oregon.”

“The right to protest peacefully is absolute,” said ATF Seattle Field Division Special Agent in Charge Jonathan T. McPherson. “But it is clear Mr. Muhammad didn't come to exercise his rights. He came from out-of-state to bring violence to our community. This sentence should send a clear message to those who want to engage in violence that it will not be tolerated, and ATF will investigate these acts whenever they occur.”

“The risk of a law enforcement officer or community member being seriously hurt or killed by the actions of this individual was very real,” said Portland Police Chief Chuck Lovell. “I'm gratified to know that he is being held accountable for the danger his criminal actions caused. I want to extend my sincere thanks to the investigators and prosecutors whose diligent, meticulous

work made this sentence possible, as well as the members of PPB and other agencies who put themselves at risk to protect our city against violence and destruction during this period of time.”

According to court documents, in late summer 2020, Muhammad traveled to Portland with his girlfriend from their home in Indianapolis to violently engage in area riots. On September 5, 2020, during a large civil disturbance in east Portland, demonstrators threw dangerous objects at police, including commercial grade fireworks, Molotov cocktails, and bottles. Muhammad later pleaded guilty in Multnomah County Circuit Court to seriously burning a demonstrator by throwing a Molotov cocktail and providing baseball bats to members of the crowd.

Following Muhammad’s arrest in October 2020, law enforcement seized his cell phone and found messages where he bragged about providing the baseball bats to other rioters. The cell phone also contained a shopping list including common supplies used to make a Molotov cocktail. The day after the demonstration, police located a discarded baseball bat with a Goodwill price tag in the area where the event occurred. Police found the Goodwill store where the bat was purchased and obtained surveillance footage showing Muhammad and his girlfriend buying the bats and several “growler” bottles.

On September 21, 2020, during a large demonstration near the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office Penumbra Kelly Building, law enforcement observed an individual light on fire and throw an object toward the building. One officer observed the burning object flying through the air toward his vehicle, landing approximately 15 feet from a police sound truck. Officers recovered the unexploded device. It consisted of a yellow glass growler with a Goodwill sticker on the bottom, a cloth wick, and an ignitable liquid. It was later determined that the growler was one of the items purchased at Goodwill by Muhammad and his girlfriend. A DNA analysis also linked the growler to Muhammad.

On September 23, 2020, protesters set fire to and broke windows at the Multnomah County Justice Center. When officers advanced toward the crowd, an individual threw a Molotov cocktail in a large yellow growler that landed in front of the officers, shattered, and exploded into a large fireball. While some officers were able to move out of the way, one officer’s leg caught fire. Several videos obtained by law enforcement show Muhammad throwing the explosive device.

On October 11, 2020, police were monitoring a protest involving approximately 250 people in downtown Portland. Members of the group began heavily vandalizing various buildings and parks including the Oregon Historical Society, Portland State University, a Starbucks coffee shop, and a Bank of America branch, among others. Law enforcement observed Muhammad in the crowd dressed in black. Portland Police officers reported observing Muhammad using a metal baton to smash the windows of several buildings and arrested him after a short chase. Muhammad possessed a loaded handgun magazine in his pocket. A loaded handgun matching the magazine found on Muhammad’s person was found discarded near the location of his arrest.

Muhammad’s trip to Portland does not appear to be an isolated event. Investigators obtained evidence that he traveled to Louisville, Kentucky in August 2020 to meet with anti-government and anti-authority violent extremist groups to conduct firearms and tactical training. Investigators also obtained several public social media posts by Muhammad promoting violence toward law enforcement in other cities including Kenosha, Wisconsin, and Chicago.

On May 28, 2021, Muhammad was charged by criminal complaint with possession of unregistered destructive devices, engaging in civil disorder and obstructing law enforcement, and using explosives to commit a felony. Later, on June 15, 2021, a federal grand jury in Portland indicted Muhammad on the same charges. On May 28, 2022, he pleaded guilty to two counts of possessing unregistered destructive devices.

As part of his sentencing, Muhammad forfeited or abandoned his interest in a 12-gauge shotgun, an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle, a second rifle, a pistol, assorted ammunition, and all seized Molotov cocktail components and ingredients.

Muhammad's federal sentence will run concurrently with a 10-year sentence recently imposed in Multnomah County Circuit Court. Muhammad will serve his sentence in Oregon state prison.

U.S. Attorney Asphaug, Special Agent in Charge Ramsey, and Chief Lovell made the announcement.

This case was investigated by the Portland Police Bureau, FBI, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Adam E. Delph.

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