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Two Men Indicted In Arson-For-Hire Plot; And On Grand Larceny, Identity Theft And Other Charges In Real Estate Scheme
Defendants Enlisted Undercover Detective To “Torch” Building

Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson today announced that two men have been charged in two indictments with conspiring to set fire to a building to force out squatters, and to steal properties using fraudulent deeds.

District Attorney Thompson said, “These defendants allegedly tried to burn down a building with people in it and thereby put their lives in jeopardy, solely to get paid. We simply cannot tolerate such alleged criminal conduct here in Brooklyn and will now hold them accountable.”

District Attorney Thompson identified the defendants as Jean St. Fleur, 30, and Lalbahadour Byjoo, 50. They were charged in an indictment with fourth-degree conspiracy and fourth-degree criminal solicitation, and in another indictment with fourth-degree conspiracy, second-degree grand larceny, attempted grand larceny, first-degree identity theft, second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument, first-degree falsifying business records, and second-degree criminal impersonation.

They were arraigned before Brooklyn Supreme Court Justice Danny Chun and remanded on \$200,000 bond/\$100,000 cash bail. They face up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

District Attorney Thompson said that, according to the investigation, Byjoo was the owner of a two-family house at 304-A Sumpter Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant in which two people had taken up residence. In 2013, Byjoo colluded with St. Fleur and others to intentionally set fire to the building to force the squatters out.

On January 25, 2014, Byjoo met with an undercover detective, instructed him how to enter the building to avoid surveillance cameras, gave him \$100 for gasoline and told the undercover that he “liked his steak well done.” On January 31, 2014, they met again and Byjoo told the undercover to “torch” the building.

According to the second indictment, beginning in September, 2013, the defendants chose properties which were boarded up and overgrown, and researched information on the last owners of record. Then they enlisted other people to help them find buyers.

According to the indictment, the defendants then forged documents that enabled them to fraudulently obtain titles to the properties located at 121 Lewis Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant and 56A Somers Street in Brownsville. The defendants were able to sell the title to 121 Lewis Avenue for \$64,000. They attempted to sell 56A Somers Street for \$160,000 in cash.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Hilda Mortenson and Danielle Gough of the District Attorney’s Investigations Division, under the supervision of William E. Schaeffer, Chief of the Investigations Division.

An indictment is an accusatory instrument and not proof of a defendant’s guilt.

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