Beat: News

U.S. man pleads guilty to sending poisoned letters to Obama, others

-, 18.01.2014, 17:26 Time

USPA News - A Mississippi man pleaded guilty on Friday in connection with poisoned letters which were sent to U.S. President Barack Obama and other officials last year, prosecutors said. He is expected to be sentenced to 25 years in prison as part of a plea agreement.

James Everett Dutschke, 42, was arrested at his residence in Tupelo, a city in Lee County, in April 2013 by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents. He was later indicted with five charges that included one count of developing a biological agent for use as a weapon, two counts of threatening others by mail, and one count of threatening the president. Dutschke, who was also indicted for trying to pin the crimes on an Elvis impersonator, had faced maximum possible penalties of life imprisonment, a $250,000 fine and 5 years of supervised release. After Friday`s guilty plea, Dutschke is expected to be sentenced to 25 years in prison as part of his plea agreement with prosecutors. Another Mississippi resident, Elvis impersonator Paul Kevin Curtis, was briefly arrested in April 2013 in connection with the case. But he maintained his innocence and insisted that he knew nothing about the poisoned letters, and the charges against him were eventually dropped as authorities began to focus on Dutschke, who had tried to pin his crimes on Curtis. The poisoned letters were sent in April 2013 and addressed to Obama, Republican U.S. Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi, and Lee County judge Sadie Holland, but all were detected before reaching their intended targets. They came just days after a double bomb attack at the Boston Marathon, briefly raising fears that the letters were part of a wider terror plot.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1803/us-man-pleads-guilty-to-sending-poisoned-letters-to-obama-others.html

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483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619