

John H. Durham, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, and Patricia M. Ferrick, Special Agent in Charge of the New Haven Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced that TODD J. MILLER, 36, of New York, N.Y., has been charged by federal criminal complaint with intentionally conveying to law enforcement false information about an explosive device on a train traveling to Connecticut.

MILLER was arrested last night at LaGuardia Airport in Queens, New York. He appeared today before U.S. District Judge Jeffrey A. Meyer in New Haven and was released on a \$100,000 bond. The charge carries a maximum term of imprisonment of five years.

As alleged in the criminal complaint, on the evening of March 18, 2018, MILLER called a 911 dispatcher in New Jersey and reported that he was on Amtrak Train 2256 traveling from Washington, D.C., toward Penn Station in New York City, and that a female passenger “has a bomb in her bag.” MILLER described the woman as having brown hair and a scarf. By the time Amtrak investigators received notice of the call and were mobilized to stop and search the train, the train was in Connecticut. Amtrak officials stopped Train 2256 at Green’s Farms Station in Westport, where passengers were directed to detrain, and bomb squad members boarded and searched the train. No evidence of any explosive device or materials was detected.

The complaint alleges that an investigator contacted MILLER, who was in New York, by phone. On the call, MILLER said the woman, who he described this time as having red hair and a red scarf, was carrying a “black bag carry on suitcase with a handle.” He said she kept checking her bag without taking anything out; kept asking the First Class attendant what the next stop was, and seemed to want to get off the train and leave her bag behind. The officer detected slurring in MILLER’s voice and asked if he had consumed alcohol that day. MILLER replied that he had consumed “one glass of red wine.” Asked if he suffered from mental illness, MILLER replied “no, absolutely not. This is the first time I’ve ever made a call like this before. I am worried for everyone on that train. Someone has to check that lady out.”

The complaint further alleges that investigators determined that MILLER had actually been traveling on Amtrak Train 2258, not 2256. When Amtrak Train 2258 arrived into Green’s Farms Station shortly thereafter, it was stopped, inspected, and eventually found not to contain any explosive devices or materials. During the stop, Amtrak officers interviewed an attendant from the First Class car where MILLER had been sitting. The attendant stated that MILLER appeared intoxicated upon boarding in Washington, that he consumed multiple drinks on the train, and that he had been removed in New York owing to his intoxication. The attendant also advised that MILLER had been involved in hostile exchanges with a woman who was sitting in a different row from him in the First Class car.

The complaint alleges that investigators identified and interviewed the subject female and determined that that she was not carrying any explosives, was not checking a “carry on suitcase with a handle,” was not “checking her bag without taking anything out,” and would have been largely out of MILLER’s view unless he repeatedly stood up to observe her over or around the intervening seat row, or rows. The complaint further alleges that MILLER, motivated by a grudge against the subject female, called 911 to relay false information about a suspected bomb on the train, and continued to convey false information to investigators while the public safety response was ongoing.

U.S. Attorney Durham stressed that a complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Charges are only allegations, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

This matter is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Joint Terrorism Task Force, Connecticut State Police, Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police Department, Amtrak

Police Department, and Westport Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Henry K. Kopel.

Topic(s):
National Security

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