

In the News One

U.S. Army Soldier Arrested For Attempting To Assist ISIS To Conduct Deadly Ambush On U.S. Troops,

by U.S Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York,

United States Department of Justice,

January 19, 2021

Analyzed by Alexei Hooks

Summary:

Cole James Bridges, or "Cole Gonzales," was arrested after an investigation lead to federal terrorism charges as Bridges was feeding ISIS intelligence against US Army member serving in the Middle East. Cole Bridges was attempting to provide the terrorist organization information that was to lead to an attack against US service personnel. US Attorney Audrey Strauss eluded that the military advice the Bridges attempted to give to ISIS was for the purpose of ambush and murder against US Army service members in the Middle East. Bridges was intercepted by an FBI online covert employee who posed as an ISIS supporter, which lead to the arrest and charges.

Analysis:

This report was eye opening to me as terrorists can be one of us. The displeasure that Bridges was brought from being in the Army allowed his allegiances to be confused. I believe that this will happen more and more as the current political situation is alienating more people that were once devout patriots. In this instance, the information that Bridges had could have been deadly for servicemen and women as it would have led directly to an ambush. I believe as an intelligence community we need to take into account that the state is able to create terrorist with one wrong vote or political move. For these terrorists that are radicals born within the state that they want to see burn, have an advantage as they are not as easily picked up by agencies. The fact that the FBI was able to locate and capture Bridges before he was able to do any damage to the state was very impressive and goes to show how good the workers of the intelligence community are at their jobs. This story reminded me of how the terror cells are separated by degrees. As Bridges thought his ISIS handle was secure, he gave up that he was informing on the US Army to an FBI employee. The degrees of terror cells allow for ease of tracking and

capturing individuals through communications and other mediums in which they give their identities and motives up. If done properly, the intelligence agencies should be able to link multiple individuals to a single cell as the data these terrorists communicate with each other should be readily available. In this specific case, Bridges was communicating through phone calls and online. This data was quite important to the case as is crucial evidence to put away a traitor and terrorist to the state. As for the learning lesson that received from this report is that there is possible evil in every corner and that is why good security is key when sensitive information is available to approved personnel.

“U.S. Army Soldier Arrested For Attempting To Assist ISIS To Conduct Deadly Ambush On U.S. Troops.” *The United States Department of Justice*, 19 Jan. 2021, www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/us-army-soldier-arrested-attempting-assist-isis-conduct-deadly-ambush-us-troops.

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/us-army-soldier-arrested-attempting-assist-isis-conduct-deadly-ambush-us-troops>