

Documents: Man at compound trained kids for school shooting

By MORGAN LEE and MARY HUDETZ
Associated Press

TAOS, N.M. — A father arrested at a ramshackle New Mexico compound where 11 children were found living in filth was training youngsters to commit school shootings, prosecutors said in court documents obtained Wednesday.

The allegations against Siraj Ibn Wahhaj came to light as authorities awaited word on whether human remains discovered at the site were those of his missing son, who is severely disabled and went missing in December in Jonesboro, Georgia, near Atlanta.

The documents say Wahhaj was conducting weapons training with assault rifles at the compound near the Colorado border that was raided by authorities Friday.

Prosecutor Timothy Hasson filed the court documents while asking that Wahhaj

be held without bail after he was arrested last week with four other adults facing child abuse charges.

“He poses a great danger to the children found on the property as well as a threat to the community as a whole due to the presence of firearms and his intent to use these firearms in a violent and illegal manner,” Hasson wrote.

Prosecutors did not bring up the school shooting accusation during initial court hearings Wednesday for the abuse suspects. A judge ordered them all held without bond pending further proceedings.

In the court documents, authorities said a foster parent of one of the 11 children removed from the compound had told authorities the child had been trained to use an assault rifle in preparation for a school shooting.

Taos County Sheriff Jerry Hogrefe previously said



Siraj Ibn Wahhaj, left, sits next to public defense attorney Aleks Kostich at a first appearance in New Mexico state district court in Taos, N.M.

adults at the compound were “considered extremist of the Muslim belief.” He did not elaborate, saying it was part of the investigation.

Aleks Kostich of the Taos County Public Defender’s Office questioned the new accusation of a school shooting conspiracy against

he said.

The human remains were being analyzed by medical examiners to determine if they are those of Abdulghani Wahhaj, the missing boy.

Earlier this year, his grandfather, Imam Siraj Wahhaj, posted a plea on Facebook for help finding his grandson.

The elder Wahhaj heads the Masjid At-Taqwa in Brooklyn, a mosque that has attracted radical speakers to over the years. He met Mahmud Abouhalima when he came to the site to raise money for Muslims in Afghanistan. Abouhalima later helped bomb the World Trade Center in 1993.

In a Georgia arrest warrant, authorities said 39-year-old Siraj Ibn Wahhaj had told his son’s mother that he wanted to perform an exorcism on the child because he believed he was possessed by the devil. He later said he

was taking the child to a park and didn’t return.

He is accused in Georgia of kidnapping the boy.

The arrest warrant issued there says the missing boy has a condition caused by lack of oxygen and blood flow around the time of birth. He cannot walk and requires constant attention, his mother told police.

For months, neighbors worried about the squalid compound built along a remote New Mexico plain, saying they took their concerns to authorities long before sheriff’s officials raided the facility described as a small camping trailer in the ground.

The search at the compound came amid a two-month investigation that included the FBI. Hogrefe said federal agents surveilled the area a few weeks ago but did not find probable cause to search the property.

New York congressman charged with insider trading

NEW YORK (AP) — Republican U.S. Rep. Christopher Collins of New York was arrested Wednesday on charges he fed inside information he gleaned from sitting on the board of a biotechnology corporation to his son, helping family and friends dodge hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses when one of the company’s drugs failed in a medical trial.

Collins, a staunch supporter of President Donald Trump who was among the first sitting members of Congress to endorse his candidacy for the White House, pleaded not guilty to an indictment unsealed at a court in Manhattan. The indictment charges Collins, his son and the father of the son’s fiancée with conspiracy, securities fraud, wire fraud and making false statements to the FBI.

Speaking to reporters in Buffalo hours after his release on bail, Collins, 68, professed his innocence and said he would remain on the ballot for re-election this fall.

“I believe I acted properly and within the law at all times,” he said. “I will mount a vigorous defense in court to clear my name. I look forward to being fully vindicated and exonerated.”

Prosecutors said the charges stem from Collins’ decision to share with his son insider information about Innate Immunotherapeutics Ltd., a biotechnology company headquartered in Sydney, Australia, with offices in Auckland, New Zealand. Collins was the company’s largest shareholder, with nearly 17 percent of its shares, and sat on its board.

According to the indictment, Collins was attending the Congressional Picnic

at the White House on June 22, 2017, when he received an email from the company’s chief executive saying that a trial of a drug the company developed to treat multiple sclerosis was a clinical failure.

Collins responded to the email, saying: “Wow. Makes no sense. How are these results even possible???” the indictment said.

It said he then called his son, Cameron Collins, and,

after several missed calls, they spoke for more than six minutes.

The next morning, according to the indictment, Cameron Collins began selling his shares, unloading enough over a two-day period to avoid \$570,900 in losses before a public announcement of the drug trial results. After the announcement, the company’s stock price plunged 92 percent.



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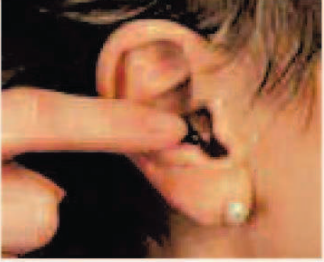
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