



## Emily Claire Hari (f/k/a Michael Hari)

- Aged 50 at time of sentencing
- Illinois leader of "White Rabbits" militia
- Charged, tried and convicted under the name Michael Hari
- Authored "The White Rabbit Handbook" which espoused hatred for Muslims
- Former sheriff's deputy and self-described entrepreneur and watermelon farmer



# CDSE

Center for Development  
of Security Excellence

# CASE STUDY

## Domestic Terrorism

### WHAT HAPPENED

During the summer of 2017, Hari established a terrorist militia group called "The White Rabbits" in Clarence, Illinois. Hari recruited co-defendants Michael McWhorter and Joe Morris to join the militia, which Hari outfitted with paramilitary equipment and assault rifles. On August 4, and 5, 2017, Hari, McWhorter, and Morris drove in a rented pickup truck from Illinois to Bloomington, Minnesota, to bomb the Dar al-Farooq (DAF) Islamic Center in Bloomington. Hari targeted DAF specifically to terrorize Muslims into believing they are not welcome in the United States and should leave the country.

Hari, McWhorter, and Morris arrived at DAF on August 5, 2017, at approximately 5:00 a.m. At Hari's direction, Morris used a sledgehammer to break the window of the Imam's office at DAF and threw a plastic container with a mixture of diesel fuel and gasoline into the office. Then, also at Hari's direction, McWhorter lit the fuse on a 20-pound black powder pipe bomb and threw it through the broken window. McWhorter and Morris ran back to the truck where Hari was waiting in the driver's seat. The trio sped away from the building and drove back to Illinois. When the pipe bomb exploded, the blast caused extensive damage to the imam's office. It also ignited the gasoline and diesel mixture, causing extensive fire and smoke damage. At the time of the bombing, several worshipers were gathered in the mosque for morning prayers.

On November 7, 2017, police were called to the Women's Health Practice in Champaign, Illinois. This clinic provides women's health services, including abortions. The staff member had discovered a broken window, glass on the floor, and a device inside the surgery room. The device had not exploded.

The FBI in Illinois investigated the clinic bombing. On March 10, 2018, they conducted an interview with Michael McWhorter, in which he admitted his involvement, and the involvement of Michael Hari and Joseph MORRIS, in the clinic bombing, and in the bombing of the Dar al-Farooq Islamic Center.

### INDICATORS

- **Criminal, Violent, or Abusive Conduct** - A FBI confidential source (CS) reported that he saw Hari's group in possession of illegal firearms (fully automatic), M4s, and the binary explosive Tannerite, which the group locked in a safe inside Hari's store/office.
- According to court documents, "Hari and his men hated Islam and wanted Muslims out of the United States." The "paramilitary terrorist organization" stockpiled weapons and equipment including cell phone jammers to wage a war against those they did not like.

## IMPACT

- Hari was convicted on all five counts of the indictment, including intentionally defacing, damaging, and destroying religious property because of the religious character of that property; intentionally obstructing, by force, the free exercise of religious beliefs; conspiracy to commit federal felonies by means of fire and explosives; using a destructive device during and in relation to crimes of violence; and possession of an unregistered destructive device and sentenced to 53 years in prison.
- The DAF is used not only for religious purposes, but also for commercial purposes. The al-Jazari Institute is housed at the DAF where it operates a dugsi, or Islamic religious school for children, and did so on August 5, 2017. The dugsi is a fee-based school. As a result of the bombing, the al-Jazari Institute lost out on approximately \$30,000 per month until repairs could be made.

## ADDITIONAL INFO

- In August 2021, Hari announced that she had embraced her identity as a trans woman. Prior to the sentencing, Hari's defense attorney, Shannon Elkins, alleged that her "inner conflict" had forced her to live a "double life" as the leader of a right-wing militia and might have influenced her state of mind leading up to the bombing.
- According to court documents, "Hari strongly desired to make a full gender transition but knew she would be ostracized from everyone and everything she knew." Hari's gender dysphoria was an intrapersonal conflict which can be a pre-disposition and personal stressor. Both things may negatively impact the resilience of any insider and may have increased the risk of Hari becoming a threat.
- According to Court Documents, Judge Donovan Frank respectfully declined to consider Hari's inner conflict over her gender identity as a defense. Instead he focused on the "very violent act" of the bombing itself. The 53-year sentence was more than what Hari's attorney had requested but also less than the prosecution's demand for life in prison.

Questions to consider:

- How could lessons learned from this case be used to inform your organization's terrorism prevention program?
- What indicators may have been missed or unreported in this case?

Resources for further exploration:

- Homegrown [Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators](https://www.cdse.edu/Portals/124/Documents/jobajds/insider/homegrown-violent-extremist-mobilization-indicators.pdf?ver=Pnd573NYc-8eV0NIXVt5Sg%3d%3d)  
(<https://www.cdse.edu/Portals/124/Documents/jobajds/insider/homegrown-violent-extremist-mobilization-indicators.pdf?ver=Pnd573NYc-8eV0NIXVt5Sg%3d%3d>)
- [Anti-Terrorism Officer Level II Course](https://www.cdse.edu/Training/eLearning/GS109/)  
(<https://www.cdse.edu/Training/eLearning/GS109/>)
- [DODI 2000.12, Antiterrorism Program](https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/200012p.pdf?ver=2017-08-01-133056-317)  
(<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/200012p.pdf?ver=2017-08-01-133056-317>)

## IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

Contact the appropriate POC to report any observed potential risk indicators:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency/Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: Supervisor/Security Officer/ITP Senior Official/ITP Manager