



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of Maryland*

*Thomas M. DiBiagio
United States Attorney*

*Vickie E. LeDuc
Public Information Officer*

*6625 United States Courthouse
101 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2692*

*410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4885
FAX 410-962-3091
Vickie.LeDuc@usdoj.gov*

**October 20, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION CONTACT
VICKIE LEDUC, AUSA
(410) 209-4885**

**DAMASCUS MAN CHARGED WITH BOARDING
AIRCRAFT WITH A CONCEALED DANGEROUS WEAPON**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, Gary Bald, Special Agent in Charge and Steve McHail, Deputy Administrator for the Transportation Security Administration, announced that Nathaniel Travis Heatwole, age 20, of Damascus, Maryland was arrested today on a charge set forth in a one count criminal complaint filed today in connection with smuggling box cutters with blades, a container of liquid, molding clay and matches onto a Southwest Airlines flight from Baltimore Washington International Airport (BWI) on September 14, 2003.

The criminal complaint alleges that on September 15, 2003 an e-mail was sent to TSA-Contact Center (TSA) stating that it was from Nat Heatwole and enumerating six incidents from February 7, 2003 to September 14, 2003 during which the writer of the e-mail smuggled the following items on his person and some in his carry-on bag through security checkpoints and onto aircraft, including Southwest Flight 613 on September 14, 2003: box cutters blades; box cutters; a knife; what is referred to as "a simulated plastic explosive (reddish molding clay)"; matches; approximately 8 ounces of liquid bleach; and notes signed "3891925". The complaint alleges that

Heatwole indicated in his e-mail that the items were placed in a plastic bag and left in the compartment directly below the sink in the lavatory of each aircraft.

The complaint further alleges that in the late afternoon of October 16, 2003 a pilot reported a maintenance problem with the rear lavatory on his aircraft Southwest Airlines Flight 474 arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana. A check of the lavatory by a maintenance technician allegedly revealed three plastic zip lock bags containing an anonymous note, three box cutters with blades, a small container of liquid which the note described as being bleach, molding clay and matches. The items are alleged to have been secreted in an access panel surrounding the toilet in the lavatory. The note allegedly stated that the items were taken through security in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina and placed onboard the aircraft designated as Flight 993 on September 12, 2003.

The complaint further alleges that subsequently in the early evening of October 16, 2003, a routine maintenance check of a rear lavatory of Southwest Airlines Flight 578 in Houston revealed a similar package of the above described items. The note allegedly stated that the items were taken through security at Baltimore Washington International Airport and placed aboard Southwest Flight 613 on September 14, 2003. Both this note and the previous note discovered in New Orleans were allegedly signed "Sincerely, 3891925."

Investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation sponsored Joint Terrorism Task Forces in Maryland and North Carolina revealed that Heatwole is a student at Guilford College located in Greensboro, North Carolina, and his date of birth is 5/29/1983, which, when reversed, is 3891925 -- the signature of the letters found on the Southwest Airlines flights on October 16, 2003. According to the complaint, investigators from the Maryland Joint Terrorism Task Force located and interviewed Heatwole at his residence and Heatwole admitted writing the e-mail to the TSA on September 15, 2003 and also admitted that on September 12 and 14, 2003 he carried onboard the

Southwest flights the items described above.

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Heatwole faces a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000.

A criminal complaint is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by complaint is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

The criminal charges in this complaint are the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation sponsored Joint Terrorism Task Forces of Maryland and North Carolina, and the United States Attorney's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Harvey E. Eisenberg.