

Dawn Hanna's case was like numerous others, where a United States citizen unwittingly brokers goods that end up in an embargoed country. Between 2002 and 2003, Dawn brokered 10-year-old, recycled telecommunications equipment that her client, a U.K. citizen, told her was for Turkey. And, in fact, the equipment was shipped to Turkey.

But, unlike other cases, Dawn's client kept secret from her two very important facts. First, the equipment was to be trans-shipped to Iraq. Second, he was working with the CIA to purchase the equipment so the U.S. could track the whereabouts of Saddam Hussain and Iraq's high government officials just before the U.S. invaded.

And, unlike nearly every other case where unaware brokers received no prison sentences for equipment that ended up in countries such as Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, China, etc., Dawn was sentenced to 72 months in federal prison and fined \$1.1 million. She has served at the Federal Medical Center (FMC) in Lexington, Ky., since early September 2009.

Dawn was found guilty of conspiracy to knowingly and willfully export property from the U.S. to Iraq in violation of the U.S. embargo largely because, at trial, the U.S. government suppressed critical evidence involving Dawn's client, a known CIA asset who was working with the U.S. government.

Instead of disclosing this key information to the defense and jury, government prosecutors convinced the court to exclude and seal the information in the name of national security. The government asked Dawn's client, the known CIA asset, to testify in writing only, edited key information that would have exonerated Dawn, and then portrayed Dawn's client as a common criminal and co-conspirator, whose testimony was then rendered virtually useless.

After sentencing, Dawn's client and another individual working with the CIA were so outraged that they risked their lives by coming forward with the truth, which the prosecutors knew the whole time. They submitted affidavits to the defense revealing that the entire transaction was actually a U.S. operation, and that Dawn never knew anything about it; no crime was ever committed. The prosecutors immediately declared that these affidavits must be sealed because the information was related to national security. Besides hiding key information from the jury, the accused and their defense counsel, the government prosecuted the case as if Dawn knew that the brokered equipment was headed to Iraq to help Saddam Hussein. In addition, federal prosecutors labeled Dawn a terrorist in the local media.

The U.S. District Court/Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, which handled Dawn's case, has a dubious record on terrorism. It handled both the Nada Prouty¹ case in 2007 as well as the high-profile terror trial² in 2001 that cost U.S. Attorney Richard Convertino his job because of prosecutorial misconduct.

Last December, the lead prosecutor in this case cited the Hanna case on a Congressional Judiciary Committee Questionnaire as the top most significant litigated matter qualifying her for a U.S. Attorney's job. She received the promotion.

¹ Featured on CBS News' 60 Minutes 3/28/10

² "For two years, Convertino led the government's case in the nation's first terrorism trial after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. He was removed in 2003 after the Justice Department concluded he withheld evidence that could have proved the innocence of the four defendants accused of being a Detroit terror cell. Convictions of three of the four men were later overturned because of prosecutorial misconduct. The fourth was acquitted." -- By Lara Jakes Jordan and Matt Apuzzo, The Associated Press