

Gun Suspect described as a threat to Ridge

Comments allegedly made by a Clarion County resident cause alarm. He is jailed pending trial.
The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH--A convicted felon will be held in prison pending a trial on charges that he possessed guns illegally, after a federal judge determined he posed a threat to Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge and others, according to court records.

Douglas B. Leuschen of Clarion County was arrested by federal agents on gun charges in July and was indicted this week by a federal grand jury in Pittsburgh, authorities said. As a convicted felon, Leuschen is prohibited from possessing firearms.

Leuschen, 53, said he had a right to defend himself against "belligerents", saying he was ready to go to war and that he's recently driven past Ridge's family home in Erie, according to court records.

During a July detention hearing U.S. Magistrate Ila Jeanne Sensnich said Leuschen posed a threat to Ridge and others and put him in jail pending trial.

"He believes the only action now available to him is to take his gun and go to war against the people who have caused him such injustice for many years", Sensenich wrote in a a detention order.

"During his interview with federal agents he referred to the Columbine (school) shooting and to past shootings at U.S. postal facilities. He also referred to Timothy McVeigh and Osama bin Laden and stated that there was a reason they took the action they did", Sensenich said in the order.

Authorities said Leuschen has been upset with Ridge since the late 1980's, when he was apparently denied a worker's compensation claim for a 1988 injury. He collects veteran's disability checks and hasn't worked since 1988, and he blames Ridge for conspiring against him, according to authorities.