

NEW BEDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT



871 ROCKDALE AVENUE · NEW BEDFORD, MA · 02740

P R E S S R E L E A S E

(PR-9-102)

For Immediate Release

Thursday, September 20, 2007

Lieutenant Jeffrey P. Silva
Public Information Officer

See Also: 2007-17544

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NEW BEDFORD BANK ROBBER CAUGHT “RED HANDED”

New Bedford, Massachusetts – Able John FERNANDES (DOB: 04/07/1956) was arrested for Armed Robbery of the Sovereign Bank located at 1230 Braley Road in New Bedford, MA today just after 12:00 noon in Acushnet, MA after an alert Acushnet Police sergeant spotted the vehicle broadcast by the New Bedford Police as being wanted in connection with a bank robbery that had occurred only minutes earlier.

New Bedford Police patrol officers and detectives arrived at Sovereign Bank only minutes of receiving the 911 call and immediately broadcast the license plate, vehicle type and direction of travel of the bank robbery suspect over the radio. Sergeant Christopher Richmond of the Acushnet Police Department was on patrol on Lake Street in the neighboring town of Acushnet, MA when he spotted FERNANDES’ blue Dodge Van with Massachusetts license plate 47WK42 given in the New Bedford radio broadcast.

Sergeant Richmond immediately pulled behind the van, which was about to pull out of a parking area on the side of the road, turned on his lights and signaled it to stop. When Sergeant Richmond ordered FERNANDES to show his hands outside of the van’s driver’s side window so he could see them he noticed that they were covered with red dye consistent with the dye packs used by banks. *(These dye packs are designed to explode after a bank robber exits the bank and marks him/her as well as the money with red dye).* Sergeant Richmond subsequently took FERNANDES into custody without incident, notified the New Bedford Police, and within minutes after robbing the bank FERNANDES was in the back of a New Bedford Police car on the way to New Bedford Police Headquarters to be booked for Armed Robbery. The money taken by FERNANDES in the robbery was recovered in the van.

FERNANDES had walked into the bank and handed the teller a note demanding money claiming that he had a gun. Although it was later learned that FERNANDES did *not* have a gun, FERNANDES had a smoking pipe under his sweatshirt positioned in such a way that it appeared to be a firearm. The teller handed FERNANDES the money as instructed however secreted with the money was a security dye pack. Once FERNANDES exited the bank the dye pack exploded spraying red dye on his hands, clothing, face and the money. FERNANDES only made it a few miles away to Acushnet before he had to pull over because the dye was irritating his eyes. It was as FERNANDES was attempting to continue on after wiping his eyes that he was stopped by Acushnet Police Sergeant Richmond.

FERNANDES was transported to New Bedford Police Headquarters for processing and was ultimately transported to New Bedford 3rd District Court for arraignment. FERNANDES is currently being held at the Bristol County Ash Street Jail on \$25,000.00 bail.



New Bedford Police

Media Report

PERSONS FILE Number: **151931**

Name: **FERNANDES, ABLE JOHN**

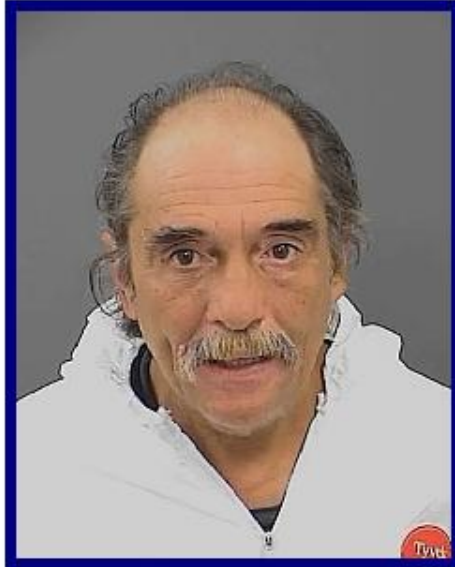
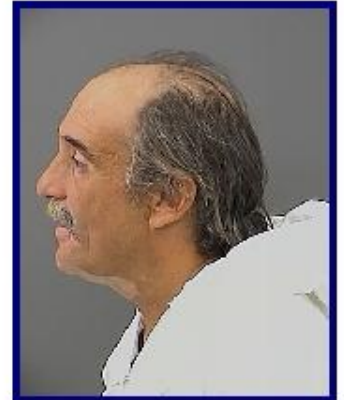


Photo Date: 9/20/2007

Race: **WHITE**
DOB: **04/07/1956**
Age: **51**
Sex: **MALE**
Eyes: **BROWN**
Hair: **BROWN**
Height: **68 INCHES**
Weight: **160 LBS**



Last known Address: **31 ROBINSON ROAD**

ROCHESTER

MA

02770

Parole or Probation?:

