

People v Wiggins
2018 NY Slip Op 34014(U)
October 1, 2018
County Court, Westchester County
Docket Number: 18-0575
Judge: Anne E. Minihan
Cases posted with a "30000" identifier, i.e., 2013 NY Slip Op <u>30001</u> (U), are republished from various New York State and local government sources, including the New York State Unified Court System's eCourts Service.
This opinion is uncorrected and not selected for official publication.

COUNTY COURT: STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

-----X
THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

-against-

Tyrone Wiggins;

Defendant.

-----X
MINIHAN, J.

FILED
AND ENTERED
ON 10-4 2018
WESTCHESTER

DECISION & ORDER
Indictment No.: 18-0575

FILED

OCT 05 2018

TIMOTHY C. IDONI
COUNTY CLERK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Defendant, Tyrone Wiggins, having been indicted on June 12, 2018, for aiding, abetting and acting in concert with is co-defendant, the crimes of Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the First Degree (Penal Law § 170.30)(23 counts); Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree (Penal Law § 170.25); Criminal Possession of a Forgery Devices (Penal Law § 170.40 [02]) and False Personation (Penal Law § 190.23 [00]); has filed an omnibus motion consisting of a Notice of Motion and an Affirmation in Support thereof.

In response thereto, the People have filed an Affirmation in Opposition together with a Memorandum of Law. Upon consideration of these papers, the stenographic transcript of the grand jury minutes and the Consent Discovery Order entered in this case, this Court disposes of this motion as follows:

A.

MOTION to INSPECT, DISMISS and/or REDUCE
CPL ARTICLE 190

The court grants the defendant's motion to the limited extent that the court has conducted an *in camera* inspection of the stenographic transcription of the grand jury proceedings. Upon such review, the court finds no basis upon which to grant defendant's application to dismiss or reduce the indictment. Defendant's request to dismiss the indictment in the interests of justice is denied.

The indictment contains a plain and concise factual statement in each count which, without allegations of an evidentiary nature, asserts facts supporting every element of the offense charged and the defendant's commission thereof with sufficient precision as to clearly apprise the defendant of the conduct which is the subject of the indictment (CPL 200.50). The indictment charges each and every element of the crimes, and alleges that the defendant committed the acts which constitute the crimes at a specified place during a specified time period and, therefore, is sufficient on its face (*People v Cohen*, 52 NY2d 584 [1981]; *People v Iannone*, 45 NY2d 589 [1978]).

The grand jury was properly instructed (*see People v Calbud*, 49 NY2d 389 [1980]; *People v Valles*, 62 NY2d 36 [1984]; *People v Burch*, 108 AD3d 679 [2d Dept 2013]). The evidence presented, if accepted as true, is legally sufficient to establish every element of each offense charged (CPL 210.30[2]). “Courts assessing the sufficiency of the evidence before a grand jury must evaluate whether the evidence, viewed most favorably to the People, if unexplained and uncontradicted--and deferring all questions as to the weight or quality of the evidence--would warrant conviction” (*People v Mills*, 1 NY3d 269, 274-275 [2002]). Legally sufficient evidence means competent evidence which, if accepted as true, would establish every element of an offense charged and the defendant’s commission thereof (CPL 70.10[1]; *see People v Flowers*, 138 AD3d 1138, 1139 [2d Dept 2016]). “In the context of a Grand Jury proceeding, legal sufficiency means prima facie proof of the crimes charged, not proof beyond a reasonable doubt” (*People v Jessup*, 90 AD3d 782, 783 [2d Dept 2011]). “The reviewing court’s inquiry is limited to whether the facts, if proven, and the inferences that logically flow from those facts supply proof of every element of the charged crimes, and whether the Grand Jury could rationally have drawn the guilty inference. That other, innocent inferences could possibly be drawn from those facts is irrelevant to the sufficiency inquiry as long as the Grand Jury could rationally have drawn the guilty inference” (*People v Bello*, 92 NY2d 523, 526 [1998]).

Additionally, the minutes reveal a quorum of the grand jurors was present during the presentation of evidence, that the Assistant District Attorney properly instructed the grand jury on the law, and only permitted those grand jurors who heard all the evidence to vote the matter.

B.

MOTION for DISCOVERY, DISCLOSURE and INSPECTION CPL ARTICLE 240

The parties have entered into a stipulation by way of a Consent Discovery Order consenting to the enumerated discovery in this case. Defendant’s motion for discovery is granted to the extent provided for in Criminal Procedure Law Article 240. If there any further items discoverable pursuant to Criminal Procedure Law Article 240 which have not been provided to defendant pursuant to the Consent Discovery Order, they are to be provided forthwith.

As to the defendant’s demand for exculpatory material, the People have acknowledged their continuing duty to disclose exculpatory material at the earliest possible date upon its discovery (*see Brady v Maryland*, 373 US 83 [1963]; *Giglio v United States*, 405 US 150 [1972]). The People have also acknowledged their duty to comply with *People v Rosario*, (9 NY2d 286 [1961]). In the event that the People are or become aware of any material which is arguably exculpatory and they are not willing to consent to its disclosure to the defendant, they are directed to immediately disclose such material to the Court to permit an *in camera* inspection and determination as to whether such must be disclosed to the defendant.

Notably, the People have a continuing duty to disclose the terms of any deal or agreement made between the People and any prosecution witness at the earliest possible date (*see People v Steadman*, 82 NY2d 1 [1993]; *Giglio v United States*, 405 US 150 [1972]; *Brady v Maryland*, 373 US 83 [1963]; *People v Wooley*, 200 AD2d 644 [2d Dept 1994]).

As to the defendant's demand for scientific related discovery, the People have acknowledged their continuing duty to disclose any written report or document concerning a physical or mental examination or test that the People intend to introduce, or the person who created them, at trial pursuant to CPL 240.20 (1)(c).

Defendant's motion for a further Bill of Particulars is denied. The Bill of Particulars set forth in the Consent Discovery Order provided to the defendant has adequately informed the defendant of the substance of his alleged conduct and in all respects complies with CPL 200.95.

Except to the extent that the defendant's application has been specifically granted herein, it is otherwise denied as seeking material or information beyond the scope of discovery (*see People v Colavito*, 87 NY2d 423 [1996]; *Matter of Brown v Grosso*, 285 AD2d 642 [2d Dept 2001]; *Matter of Brown v Appelman*, 241 AD2d 279 [2d Dept 1998]; *Matter of Catterson v Jones*, 229 AD2d 435 [2d Dept 1996]; *Matter of Catterson v Rohl*, 202 AD2d 420 [2d Dept 1994]).

C.

MOTION to STRIKE IDENTIFICATION NOTICE and
PRECLUDE IDENTIFICATION TESTIMONY
CPL 710

The motion to strike is denied. Said notice is in conformity with the statutory requirements of CPL 710.30.

Defendant's motion is granted to the limited extent of conducting a hearing prior to trial to determine whether the identifying witness had a sufficient prior familiarity with the defendant as to render them impervious to police suggestion (*People v Rodriguez*, 79 NY 2d 445 [1992]). In the event the court finds that there was not a sufficient prior familiarity with the defendant on the part of the witness, the court will then consider whether or not the noticed identifications were unduly suggestive (*United States v Wade*, 388 US 218 [1967]). Specifically, the court shall determine whether the identifications were so improperly suggestive as to taint any in-court identification. In the event the identifications are found to be unduly suggestive, the court shall then go on to consider whether the People have proven by clear and convincing evidence that an independent source exists for such witness' proposed in-court identification.

D.

MOTION to SUPPRESS NOTICED STATEMENTS

This branch of the defendant's motion seeking to suppress statements on the grounds that they were unconstitutionally obtained is granted to the extent that a *Huntley* hearing shall be held prior to trial to determine whether any statements allegedly made by the defendant, which have been noticed by the People pursuant to CPL 710.30 (1)(a), were involuntarily made by the defendant within the meaning of CPL 60.45 (*see* CPL 710.20 [3]); CPL 710.60[3][b]; *People v Weaver*, 49 NY2d 1012 [1980]), obtained in violation of defendant's Sixth Amendment right to counsel, and/or obtained in violation of the defendant's Fourth Amendment rights (*see Dunaway v New York*, 442 US 200 [1979]).

E.

MOTION to SUPPRESS PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

This branch of the defendant's motion is granted solely to the extent of conducting a *Mapp* hearing prior to trial to determine the propriety of any search resulting in the seizure of property from his person (*see Mapp v Ohio*, 367 US 643 [1961]). The hearing will also address whether any evidence was obtained in violation of the defendant's Fourth Amendment rights (*see Dunaway v New York*, 442 US 200 [1979]).

As to the search of the car, where the defendant was a passenger, this branch of the defendant's motion is granted solely to the extent of conducting a hearing to address whether the defendant had a reasonable expectation of privacy as to any of the locations searched in the car to constitute standing to challenge the seizure of any physical evidence (*see Rakas v Illinois*, 439 US 128 [1978]; *People v Ramirez-Portoreal*, 88 NY2d 99 [1996]; *People v Ponder*, 54 NY2d 160 [1981]; *People v White*, 153 AD3d 1369 [2d Dept 2017]; *People v Hawkins*, 262 AD2d 423 [2d Dept 1999]). If it is determined that the defendant has standing then a *Mapp/Dunaway* hearing will be conducted prior to trial to determine the propriety of the any search resulting in the seizure of property (*Mapp v Ohio*, 367 US 643 [1961]). The hearing will also address whether any evidence was obtained in violation of the defendant's Fourth Amendment rights (*see Dunaway v New York*, 442 US 200 [1979]).

F.

MOTION for SANDOVAL and VENTIMIGLIA HEARINGS

Defendant has moved for a pre-trial hearing to permit the trial court to determine the extent, if at all, to which the People may inquire into the defendant's prior criminal convictions, prior uncharged criminal, vicious or immoral conduct. The People have consented to a *Sandoval* hearing. Accordingly, it is ordered that immediately prior to trial a hearing shall be conducted pursuant to *People v Sandoval* (34 NY2d 371[1974]). At said hearing, the People shall be required to notify the defendant of all specific instances of his criminal, prior uncharged criminal, vicious or immoral conduct of which they have knowledge and which they intend to use in an attempt to impeach the defendant's credibility if he elects to testify at trial (CPL 240.43).

At the hearing, the defendant shall bear the burden of identifying any instances of his prior misconduct that he submits the People should not be permitted to use to impeach his credibility. The defendant shall be required to identify the basis of his belief that each event or incident may be unduly prejudicial to his ability to testify as a witness on his own behalf (*see People v Matthews*, 68 NY2d 118 [1986]; *People v Malphurs*, 111 AD2d 266 [2d Dept 1985]).

To the extent defendant's application is for a hearing pursuant to *People v Ventimiglia* (52 NY2d 350 [1981]), it is denied since the People have not indicated an intention to use evidence of any prior bad act or uncharged crimes of the defendant during its case in chief (*see People v Molineaux*, 168 NY2d 264 [1991]). If the People move to introduce such evidence, the defendant may renew this aspect of his motion.

G.

MOTION to STRIKE PREJUDICIAL LANGUAGE

The Defendant moves to strike certain language from the indictment on the grounds that it is surplusage, irrelevant or prejudicial. The language concluding the indictment merely identifies the Defendant's acts as public, rather than private wrongs and such language should not be stricken as prejudicial. This motion is denied (*see People v Gill*, 164 AD2d 867 [2d Dept. 1990]; *People v Winters*, 194 AD2d 703 [2d Dept 1993]; *People v Garcia*, 170 Misc. 2d 543 [Westchester Co. Ct. 1996]).

The foregoing constitutes the opinion, decision and order of this court.

Dated: White Plains, New York
October 4, 2018


Honorable Anne E. Minihan
Acting Supreme Court Justice

To: HON. ANTHONY A. SCARPINO, Jr.
District Attorney, Westchester County
111 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
White Plains, New York 10601
BY: Elizabeth Knowlton, Esq.
Assistant District Attorney

CLARE J. DEGNAN, ESQ.
The Legal Aid Society of Westchester County
150 Grand Street, Suite 100
White Plains, New York 10601
By: Tamika Coverdale, Esq.
Associate Counsel