

# White supremacist Coast Guard officer sentenced to thirteen years in federal prison after plotting massacre of Democrats and “leftists in general”

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The former Coast Guard officer and white supremacist Christopher Paul Hasson—who was arrested a year ago for planning “to murder innocent civilians on a scale rarely seen in this country”—was sentenced on Friday by a federal judge in Maryland to over thirteen years in prison on multiple firearms and drug charges.

Hasson was arrested on February 15, 2019 and pleaded guilty in October to four federal counts including unlawful possession of unregistered silencers, unlawful possession of firearm silencers unidentified by serial number, possession of firearms by an addict to and unlawful user of a controlled substance, and possession of a controlled substance.

US District Judge George Hazel, in sentencing the 50-year-old Hasson to 160 months plus four years of supervised release, said the former Coast Guard lieutenant was preparing to carry out a “mass casualty assault as a way to act out his white nationalist views.” The judge added, “The need to protect the public is of paramount importance.”

As reported at the time of his arrest by the *World Socialist Web Site*, Hasson is a neo-Nazi whose idol is Anders Breivik, the neo-Nazi who murdered 77 Labour Party campers in 2011 in a bloody rampage in Norway. Hasson was also inspired by the white supremacist march through Charlottesville, Virginia on August 11 and 12, 2017 which ended with the murder of Heather Heyer when a fascist drove his car into a crowd of anti-Nazi protesters.

While federal prosecutors had sought a sentence of 25 years in prison and called Hasson a domestic terrorist,

they did not bring terrorism charges against him.

When law enforcement agents entered Hasson’s residence in Silver Spring, Maryland in February 2019, they found an arsenal of 15 weapons—seven rifles, two shotguns, four pistols, two revolvers, and two silencers—along with more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition.

He was found to have compiled a list on January 17, 2019 of Democratic Party officials—including candidates running for the 2020 presidential nomination along with US representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Ilhan Omar of Minnesota—political activists and organizations and MSNBC and CNN media figures that he was targeting for assassination. Included on Hasson’s list, which was found in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet on his computer, was “DSA” for Democratic Socialists of America.

Hasson’s computer contained an email draft that included the following, “Much blood will have to be spilled to get whitey off the couch. For some no amount of blood will be enough. They will die as will the traitors who actively work toward our demise” and “Have to take serious look at appropriate individual targets, to bring greatest impact. Professors, DR’s, Politi[ci]an’s, Judges, leftists in general.” Hasson’s browser history also showed that he had searched online in February 2018 for the addresses of Supreme Court justices Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

In a letter written seven weeks after the Charlottesville events, but never sent to its intended American neo-Nazi recipient, Hasson said of himself,

“I am a long time White Nationalist, having been a skinhead 30 plus years ago before my time in the military. I have served in 3 branches currently serving as an Officer (never attended college) with 2 years till I hit mandatory retirement at 30.”

At the sentencing on Friday, Hasson’s lawyer Elizabeth Oyer described her client as a decorated member of the Coast Guard, a devoted father and husband with no prior criminal record. She said that Hasson had gone through a midlife crisis and had become addicted to opioid drugs. She was particularly concerned about the labeling of Hasson by the prosecution as a “domestic terrorist” and “racist” when they had not charged him with offenses connected to these claims.

While federal prosecutors and Judge Hazel declined to make the obvious connection between the defendant’s preparations for mass murder and the fascistic politics of the Trump administration, who routinely portrays the Democrats as socialists who pose an imminent danger to America, the timeline of Hasson’s online search activity, drafted email messages and weapons purchases are undeniable. Beginning on February 13, 2017—three weeks after the swearing in of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States—Hasson began purchasing and stockpiling the firearms and accessories needed to establish a “white homeland.”

Another extremely significant aspect of this case is that Hasson’s white supremacist views were undoubtedly known by superiors and others in the Coast Guard, a branch of the US military. He worked at Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, DC as an “acquisitions officer” responsible for the National Security Cutter program since 2016. Hasson was kept on active duty with Coast Guard pending the outcome of his criminal case.

There is no question that the Trump administration is mobilizing the most right-wing, fascistic and racist elements within American society to bolster his extreme right-wing agenda as part of the 2020 reelection campaign. This has been demonstrated in Trump’s defense of the fascistic Navy SEAL Edward Gallagher, who indiscriminately murdered civilians in Afghanistan and threatened to kill fellow soldiers who were reported his depravity to superiors. The White House is protecting other such elements within the

military from prosecution and counting on them as part of the reelection political base.

A distinct feature of Trump’s 2020 campaign has been the sustained denunciation of socialism and communism as anti-American and the whipping up of hostility and violence against those who hold left-wing and anti-capitalist political positions.

Trump’s incessant anti-socialist rants took a particularly ominous form on Friday when Rodney Garcia, a Republican state legislator from Montana, complained that he was concerned that there were socialists “everywhere” in his district of Billings. When asked to clarify what he meant, Garcia said, “So actually in the Constitution of the United States, [if you] are found guilty of being a socialist member you either go to prison or are shot.”

The conviction of Hasson and the threats by Garcia must be taken as a serious warning by the working class that extreme right-wing violence is being prepared against the growth of the class struggle and popular embrace of socialist politics.



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