

Trump-appointed State Department official arrested for attacking police in siege of US Capitol

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On Thursday, the Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested 42-year-old Federico Klein for storming the US Capitol on January 6 and assaulting police with a weapon. Klein, a former State Department aide, was appointed by Donald Trump in 2017.

In an appearance before US Magistrate Zia Faruqui on Friday, Klein did not enter a plea. He was ordered to remain in detention until another hearing, scheduled for next Wednesday.

In addition to assaulting police, Klein is charged with unlawful entry, violent and disorderly conduct and obstructing Congress and law enforcement, offenses that carry a maximum twenty-year prison sentence.

An affidavit submitted by the FBI includes public video, body camera pictures from the police and security footage from the Capitol. Klein can be seen wearing a tan jacket and a red “Make America Great Again” hat, and using a police riot shield to wedge open doors and push back against police trying to keep the mob out of the Capitol.

The affidavit notes that “multiple open-source videos captured Klein inciting the mob and trying to break through the police line.” In one video, Klein was recorded calling multiple times to the crowd behind him, “We need fresh people.”

In a separate bodycam recording, Klein is heard refusing to move as police attempt to recover a fallen officer. “No way,” Klein tells the cop.

The FBI obtained Klein’s phone records through a search warrant and confirmed that his phone was geolocated inside the Capitol on January 6. The FBI admitted last month that it had seized thousands of phone and electronic records of those who were at the Capitol on that day, including lawmakers, some of

whom may have been in contact with rioters prior to or during the storming of the Capitol.

The FBI’s seizure of phone records drew the ire of Republicans implicated in the coup plot during congressional hearings this past week. Republican Missouri Senator Josh Hawley was one of several senators who questioned FBI Director Christopher Wray as to what data had been “scooped up” in the investigation so far, which Wray declined to answer.

In an interview with *Politico*, Klein’s mother, Cecilia Klein, said her son was a former Marine and had deployed to Iraq. The Marine Corps has confirmed that Klein was in the Reserve from January 2004 through November 2012, and that he deployed to Iraq from February to September in 2005.

Cecilia Klein said her son admitted to her that he was on the Capitol grounds that day, but claimed he had not entered the Capitol. She said she preferred not to talk politics or discuss Trump with her son because “Fred’s politics burn a little hot.”

As of this writing, a running tally by NPR shows that at least 42 people who have been arrested for storming the Capitol have a background in military or law enforcement. Fifty-three people have been identified as having ties to extremist or fringe groups. At least 17 members of the Proud Boys and at least 10 members of the far-right Oath Keepers are currently facing charges.

According to his LinkedIn profile, Klein had a “top secret” security clearance from 2014 through 2019. The FBI confirmed on Friday that Klein’s security clearance was renewed in 2019. Previously charged Oath Keeper leader and retired Navy Commander Thomas Caldwell, 66, has also claimed to have worked for the FBI and held a “top secret” security clearance

since 1979, which the FBI has yet to deny.

After storming the Capitol, Klein continued to work at the State Department through January 19, resigning the day before the inauguration of President Joe Biden.

On his LinkedIn page, Klein also listed his prior experience as a researcher at the Family Research Council (FRC). The FRC was founded in 1981 by James Dobson of “Focus on the Family.” The FRC is a Southern Poverty Law Center-designated hate group, which claims that being homosexual is a choice that leads to pedophilia. The current vice president of the FRC is retired Army Gen. William G. “Jerry” Boykin.

Boykin is a former Delta Force commander, who served as undersecretary for defense under President George W. Bush. Boykin, along with Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn, was among the more prominent generals to endorse Trump’s presidential campaign in 2016.

Boykin has previously stated that the US government is infiltrated by the Muslim Brotherhood, and that Holocaust survivor George Soros is part of a “cabal, a group of very nefarious people, who very much want to create a global government.”

The connections between the FRC and the Trump administration run deep. Trump-appointed officials, including former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and former Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, appeared regularly during Trump’s presidency on “Washington Watch with Tony Perkins,” an FRC-hosted show.

Klein has been involved in Republican politics since 2008, beginning as a “campaign volunteer coordinator” for the McCain-Palin campaign. Klein also worked for the Romney-Ryan campaign and for Trump immigration official Ken Cuccinelli’s failed 2013 run for Virginia governor.

Klein began working for the Trump campaign in 2016 as a “tech analyst,” according to Federal Election Commission records, earning \$15,000 according to a financial disclosure he filed before joining the State Department. At the State Department, Klein worked as a special assistant in the Office of Brazilian and Southern Cone Affairs, according to a *ProPublica* Database.

To date, Klein’s arrest represents the closest official direct link between the Trump administration and the assault on the Capitol, although there are undoubtedly more to be found within the State Department, the

Department of Defense and the intelligence and police agencies, underscoring the need for a full and public investigation into the former Trump administration and all those who aided and abetted the attempted putsch.

Testimony this past week from D.C. National Guard Commander General William Walker made clear that officials within the Pentagon purposely delayed sending reinforcements in order to give far-right insurgents such as Klein more time to penetrate the Capitol and capture or kill lawmakers, so as to block Congress from officially counting the electoral vote.

There is no telling how many more fascists remain embedded throughout the government or in Congress itself. In a January 12 Facebook video, New Jersey Democratic Representative Mikie Sherrill claimed to have witnessed Republican legislators giving “reconnaissance” tours to “groups” believed to be far-right militias the day prior to the attack on the Capitol.

It is an undisputed fact that Republican politicians such as former Georgia Senator Kelly Loeffler, Georgia Representative Marjorie Taylor-Greene and Trump political cronies Roger Stone and Alex Jones enjoy business and personal connections to Oath Keepers and Proud Boys members, many of whom are current or former police or military.



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