

Three active-duty Marines arrested for storming the Capitol on January 6

Jacob Crosse
20 January 2023

On January 19, US federal prosecutors unsealed an indictment revealing that three active-duty US Marines had been arrested the previous day on multiple misdemeanor charges related to the storming of the Capitol on January 6, 2021, as part of former President Donald Trump's failed coup.

Corporal Micha Coomer and Sergeants Joshua Abate and Dodge Dale Hellonen are each facing four charges, including disorderly conduct, demonstrating inside the Capitol and entering restricted grounds without lawful authority. According to prosecutors, all three men spent over 50 minutes inside the Capitol, including the Rotunda, where one of them put a "red MAGA hat" on a statue and photographed it.

According to Military.com, all three Marines work in intelligence and have been enlisted in the Marine Corps for more than four years. Hellonen, the longest serving of the three, enlisted in 2017.

The publication noted that "[O]n paper, the three Marines hold demanding jobs tied to the intelligence community, are stationed at major commands, and have personal commendations and awards to their name. At least one held a significant security clearance. All three had been awarded good conduct medals."

The arrest of the three Marines is just the latest instance of current and former military members being charged for participating in Trump's attempt to overthrow the 2020 elections. According to the George Washington Project on Extremism, of the over 940 people charged in the attack, at least 118 defendants, roughly 13 percent, had a military background.

It should be noted that the figures compiled by the university only denote the arrest of one active-duty soldier, James Mault. Mault was sentenced to 44 months in prison last year after being found guilty of assaulting police with chemical spray on January 6.

In its report on the arrests of the three men,

Military.com wrote that Abate was assigned to "the Marine Corps' Cryptologic Support Battalion at Fort Meade, Maryland—also home to the National Security Agency headquarters—as a signals intelligence operator and analyst."

According to military records, Abate had been awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, "an unusual and prestigious medal for a junior Marine," wrote Military.com.

In their criminal complaint, prosecutors claim that during a June 2022 interview as part of obtaining a security clearance, Abate admitted to investigators that he went into the Capitol on January 6 with two "buddies."

Military.com reported that Hellonen, the most senior soldier arrested, is assigned to the 3rd Marine Raider Support Battalion, "a unit that supports Marine Corps Special Operations Command," as a signal intelligence operator and analyst. Hellonen was stationed at Camp Lejeune and was arrested in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

The lowest-ranking Marine of the group, Coomer, is assigned to the 1st Radio Battalion, I Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group, located at Camp Pendleton in California. Coomer, who was arrested in Oceanside, California, is a systems engineer for intelligence and reconnaissance systems.

Less than a month after storming the Capitol, Coomer, according to court documents, communicated over social media with an associate regarding his desire for a "fresh restart," adding, "I'm waiting for the boogaloo."

The person replied to Coomer asking him what boogaloo meant. Coomer replied, "Civil war 2."

The Boogaloo Boys are a fascist paramilitary movement that draws heavily from the military. Boogaloo memes first appeared online in the early 2010s, however the movement gained in popularity following limited COVID-19 lockdowns in the spring of 2020. Encouraged by Trump and right-wing media, Boogaloo elements,

wielding military-grade rifles and ostentatious flower-print shirts, staged protests against lockdowns, including at the Michigan state Capitol in Lansing. This was part of the ruling class drive to “reopen the economy” in April 2020 following the passage of the misnamed “CARES Act,” leading to over 1.1 million COVID-19 deaths in the US.

In the summer of 2020, Boogaloo Boys were frequently spotted at anti-police violence protests, acting as fascist instigators. Throughout the summer and fall, Boogaloo fascists were arrested for shooting at police stations and murdering cops during the protests. These actions were taken in the hope of starting a “civil war” that would result in the creation of an authoritarian ethno-state. Unsurprisingly, Boogaloo Boys also participated in the January 6 coup.

Coomer, Abate and Hellonen are not the only military intelligence figures revealed to have participated in Trump’s coup. Last year, Petty Officer 1st Class Navy Reservist Hatchet Speed was arrested in McLean, Virginia, on five misdemeanor charges stemming from his actions on January 6, including disorderly conduct. Speed is set to go on trial this year for those charges. However, this past Wednesday, a Virginia jury convicted Speed of unlawfully possessing three unregistered silencers, which he had purchased after he allegedly stormed the Capitol with the Proud Boys on January 6.

According to court records, Speed, who was assigned to the National Reconnaissance Office which operates US spy satellites, told an FBI agent last year that going to the Capitol on January 6 with the Proud Boys to try and prevent the certification of the election “was always the plan.”

“We would listen to Donald Trump then all of us would go to the Capitol. Now the reason we were going to the Capitol was to protest what was going on in the Capitol... what they were doing was counting the ballots,” Speed told the FBI, according to a report in the *Navy Times*.

In addition to working in some of the most sensitive areas of the US military, Speed recently worked as a military contractor for Novetta Solutions LLC, “a defense contractor that conducts advanced analytics for the Defense Department and other federal agencies,” according to the FBI.

Prosecutors allege that after Speed stormed the Capitol, for the next several months he went on a \$50,000 shopping spree, purchasing at least 12 firearms and several gun parts, including the silencers.

Revealing the fascist attitudes that permeate police

departments and military commands across the US, Speed allegedly told an FBI undercover agent that the weapons were going to be used to “wipe out” the Jews. The FBI said that Speed described Adolf Hitler as “one of the best people that’s ever been on this earth.”

The *Navy Times* noted in a report last year that charges against Speed only emerged after an intelligence contractor, Dan Gilmore, claimed he was fired from his job after reporting that colleagues were posting “racist and misogynistic” comments on classified intelligence community message boards.

The *Navy Times* reported that after he was fired, Gilmore wrote on his blog that “many employees” across the intelligence community posted their belief that Trump’s coup was “justified.”

The outsized role played by elements of the police and military in the fascist assault on Congress refutes the false “one-man coup” narrative advanced by the House Select Committee on January 6 in its final report.

Nowhere in the report does the committee acknowledge the more than 100 current and former soldiers arrested in the attack. Instead, the committee whitewashes the 199-minute delay in the deployment of Washington D.C. National Guard troops to the Capitol by Trump-appointed Pentagon officials, despite repeated pleas from the commander of the D.C. National Guard, the chief of the Capitol Police, the D.C mayor and others. The committee writes that the stand-down was merely “the byproduct of military processes, institutional caution, and a revised deployment approval process.” (p. 775)

The failure of the major establishment media to even report the arrests of the three active-duty Marines underscores the corporate media’s ongoing role in the cover-up of the complicity of significant sections of the military, the police and the intelligence agencies in the attempted coup.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact