

Heavily armed January 6 insurrectionist arrested outside Obama's home after Trump posts his address on social media

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Last Thursday, June 29, Taylor Taranto, 37, a heavily armed US Navy veteran and January 6 insurrectionist, was arrested outside former President Barack Obama's house shortly after former President Donald Trump posted Obama's address on his Truth Social media account. Taranto was in the Navy from 2004 to 2010 and deployed to Iraq in 2007.

In court filings, prosecutors claim that prior to going to Obama's residence, Taranto re-posted Trump's post revealing Obama's address on his Telegram and another social media account, with the caption, "We got these losers surrounded! See you in hell, Podesta's and Obama's."

As of this writing, the Republican front-runner for the 2024 presidential nomination has not removed his June 28 post featuring an April 2017 article that includes the Obamas' Washington address. Taranto was arrested at around 2 p.m. in the Kalorama neighborhood of Washington DC, parts of which are under 24-hour Secret Service surveillance.

Prosecutors claim that after parking his van, Taranto broadcast himself walking around the neighborhood while referencing what he called "entrance points" that would grant him access to private residences and allow him to "get the shot."

"Gotta get the shot, stop at nothing to get the shot," Taranto allegedly said, adding, "This is where other people come to get the shot." Further along in the video, Taranto references getting a "good angle" and adds that he is trying to "get an angle, for First Amendment, free speech," purposes.

Taranto is currently being held in the D.C. Metropolitan jail on four misdemeanor charges related to his involvement in Trump's failed coup, for which he is yet to be prosecuted more than 29 months after the attack. A warrant for Taranto's arrest related to his numerous crimes caught on camera during the attack on Congress was only issued on June 28, 2023. That same day, Taranto made threats on a YouTube live stream to "blow up" the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), adding that he was "Coming at you Speaker (Kevin) McCarthy."

At a court hearing on June 30, prosecutors claimed that Taranto had two firearms with 400 rounds of 9mm ammunition and a machete in his van at the time of his arrest in the Kalorama neighborhood. However, in court documents the government revealed that Taranto has 20 firearms registered to him and that government agencies do not know where the other 18 are.

According to prosecutors, Taranto has been living in a black van for the last two months. Police claim to have recovered from the van the same "Make Space Great Again" hat that Taranto wore during the January 6 attack. For the last several weeks, Taranto's van has been parked outside the D.C. jail, where he has appeared at protests in support of other January 6 fascists.

In addition to being a US Navy veteran, Taranto is an engineer, an adherent to the QAnon conspiracy theory, and, according to the Franklin County Republican Party (in Washington state), he was the webmaster of the Party's website until 2022, well after he had been publicly identified by online researchers as a violent participant in Trump's coup.

In August 2021, Taranto and David Walls-Kaufman were identified by January 6 researchers who go by the name #SeditionHunters as two of the men who fought with former D.C. Metropolitan police officer Jeffery Smith inside the Capitol. Smith suffered a severe concussion while fighting with Trump's mob, which led to extreme depression and suicide two weeks later. In 2021, Smith's widow filed a civil lawsuit against Taranto and Walls-Kaufman. Earlier this year, Kaufman was sentenced to 60 days in jail for his actions on January 6.

In 2013, Taranto ran in the primary election for the Pasco School District, but placed third out of three candidates, with 8 percent of the vote. Up until his recent cross-country trip to D.C., Taranto was living with his wife in Pasco, a city in Franklin County, which is located in southeastern Washington and is home to about 60,000 people.

In court documents released last week and this past Wednesday, federal prosecutors allege that Taranto not only participated in the attack on the Capitol, but was at the front of the mob and within feet of QAnon fascist Ashli Babbitt when she was shot and killed while attempting to breach the House Speaker's lobby. The prosecutors' filings include pictures of Taranto outside and inside the Capitol on January 6, armed with a black cane that he used against police and other protesters.

In a video posted to social media on July 15, 2021, Taranto indicated his surprise that he had yet to be arrested for participating in the failed coup despite his violent actions having been caught on camera.

In the July 15 post, Taranto included a video of himself inside the Capitol on January 6, with the caption: "This is me 'stormin' the capitol' lol I'm only sharing this so someone will report me to the feds and we can get this party rolling."

In its court filings, the government claims that even though law enforcement entities have been actively monitoring Taranto's social media accounts since January 2021, they were unable to locate him and arrest him until last Thursday. This is despite the fact that on June 14, 2023, Taranto appeared at the sentencing hearing for Walls-Kaufman and was identified by US Marshals, according to reporters.

Four days after that hearing, on June 18, Taranto and a group identified as "Make America Safe Again" held a screening of a January 6 film inside an elementary school in Takoma Park, Maryland. The event was streamed on Taranto's YouTube channel.

In the video, prosecutors claim that Taranto said he chose the school due to its proximity to Maryland Democratic congressman and former member of the January 6 Select Committee Jamie Raskin. Taranto allegedly said Raskin is "one of the guys that hates January 6 people, or more like Trump supporters, and it's kind of like sending a shockwave through him because I did nothing wrong and he's probably freaking out and saying shit like, 'Well, he's stalking me.'"

Later in the video prosecutors claim that Taranto said, "I didn't tell anyone where [Raskin] lives 'cause I want him all to myself," and "That was Piney Branch Elementary School in Maryland... right next to where Rep. Raskin and his wife live."

Nine days later, prosecutors allege, Taranto called Speaker McCarthy's office requesting access to the January 6 footage. According to police, Taranto had a falling out with other January 6 fascists after he began advancing a conspiracy theory that Ashli Babbitt was not really dead.

In keeping with the Biden administration's desire for a "strong Republican Party" and the Democrats' downplaying of the threat of fascism in the United States, neither Obama nor President Biden has denounced Trump for inciting terrorist violence against Obama, along with LGBTQ people, immigrants and socialists.



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