

**PRESS RELEASE**

Two Charged with Conspiracy, Obstruction and Assault on Law Enforcement Related to Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Monday, September 27, 2021

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of
Columbia

Superseding Indictment Alleges Defendants Planned for Violent Conflict in D.C., Forced Entry into Capitol and Attacked Police Officers

Earlier this month, a superseding indictment was unsealed adding charges against two men for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, which disrupted a joint session of the U.S. Congress that was in the process of ascertaining and counting the electoral votes related to the presidential election.

Ronald Sandlin, 34, of Shelby County, Tennessee, and Nathaniel DeGrave, 32, of Clark County, Nevada, are charged with federal offenses that include conspiracy, obstruction of an official proceeding, and assaulting, resisting or impeding certain officers, among other charges. Sandlin was arraigned on the superseding charges on Sept. 21 and pleaded not guilty to all counts. DeGrave was arraigned this afternoon in the District of Columbia and pleaded not guilty to all counts. Both remain detained pending a status conference set for Oct. 21.

According to court documents, Sandlin and DeGrave planned to interfere with the peaceful transition of presidential power, beginning in December 2020. On Dec. 23, 2020, Sandlin posted to Facebook asking who else was traveling to Washington. DeGrave replied that he was considering joining him and the two exchanged further messages about the activities in D.C., as alleged.

On Dec. 31, Sandlin solicited his Facebook community for donations from other “patriots” asking them for financial support in exchange for a “personal thank you video shot on location in Washington, D.C.” The post also contained a link to a GoFundMe webpage with the caption “Patriots Defending Our Country on Jan. 6th, organized by Ronnie Sandlin.” As alleged, Sandlin and DeGrave began a private group chat with another Capitol breach defendant: Josiah Colt, who [entered a plea agreement with prosecutors in July 2021](#). In the chat, they discussed “shipping guns” and shared meeting information.

As alleged, on the day of the riots, Sandlin, DeGrave and Colt met in a hotel room in Maryland and recorded video discussions for a social media audience. In one video, the Colt mentioned a “debate we’ve been having for days now: should we carry our guns or not?” DeGrave replied that “for the camera’s sake, we’re not going to carry.” Later that day and before the attack on the Capitol began, the defendants created a video in which Sandlin called on “fellow patriots” to watch his live stream on social media. In the video, he stated four times that “freedom is paid for with blood.” He also stated that “there is going to be violence.”

As alleged, the defendants then traveled together to the District of Columbia wearing protective gear, including gas masks, helmets and protective body armor, and carried two knives and walkie talkies. Shortly after arriving on Capitol grounds, the defendants forcibly stomped past exterior barricades and law enforcement officers, and ignored building alarms, to breach the Capitol. While inside, Sandlin and DeGrave pushed several U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) officers guarding an exterior door to the Capitol rotunda. DeGrave shouted, “get the f*** through” and “kick [the door] the f*** open,” and Sandlin attempted to rip the helmet off an officer.

After forcing open the door, the defendants went together up a set of stairs in search of the Senate Chamber. As they walked, Colt stated numerous times to Sandlin and DeGrave, “let’s get to the Senate,” adding, “where they’re meeting.” The defendants eventually reached the Senate Gallery where they encountered several USCP officers who were attempting to lock the doors to prevent rioters from entering. Sandlin and DeGrave tried to wrestle past the officers and eventually managed to enter the Gallery – a balcony overlooking the Senate Chamber.

Colt climbed into the Senate Chamber and sat in a chair reserved for the Vice President. While Colt was on the floor of the Chamber, DeGrave shouted at him and others to “take laptops, paperwork, take everything.”

Before exiting the Capitol, Sandlin stopped to live stream himself smoking marijuana inside.

The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and the Department of Justice National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Offices for the District of Nevada and District of Idaho.

The case is being investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office, as well as the Metropolitan Police Department, with significant assistance provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and FBI's Salt Lake City, Las Vegas and Memphis Field Offices.

In the eight months since Jan. 6, more than 600 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including at least 185 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement. The investigation remains ongoing.

Anyone with tips can call 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324) or visit tips.fbi.gov.

The charges contained in any criminal complaint or indictment are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Updated September 27, 2021

Attachment

[Sandlin-DeGrave Superseding Indictment](#) [PDF, 882 KB]

Topic

COUNTERTERRORISM

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