IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA Plaintiff,
vs.
. Docket No. CR 21-035-EGS

RONALD MCABEE

- Washington, D.C. Defendant. .
. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . x 1:04 P.M.

TRANSCRIPT OF DETENTION HEARING

BEFORE THE HONORABLE SENIOR JUDGE EMMET G. SULLIVAN UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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Proceedings recorded by machine shorthand, transcript produced by computer-aided transcription.

## PROCEEDINGS

THE DEPUTY CLERK: Your Honor, this is Criminal Case 21-335, United States of America versus Ronald McAbee. Will parties on the line, please identify yourself for the record starting with government counsel.

MS. KEARNEY: Good afternoon, Your Honor, Benet Kearney for the United States, and also on the line is AUSA Colleen Kukowski.

THE COURT: Good afternoon to you both. And for Mr. McAbee.

MR. GANT: Good afternoon, your Honor, Isaish Gant, Assistant Federal Public Defender in Nashville, Tennessee here on behalf of Mr. McAbee.

THE COURT: All right, counsel, good afternoon. Mr. McAbee, how are you today, sir?

THE DEFENDANT: I'm good, sir. How are you?

THE COURT: Good. All right. I read your pleadings. Let me hear from government counsel -- actually, let me hear from Mr. McAbee's attorney. I'm very concerned about what happened on January the 6th, vis-a-vis your client, but what is it that the magistrate judge missed? And what are the strong points you wish to emphasize -actually, it's the government's appeal so let me hear from government counsel first.

MS. KEARNEY: Thank you, your Honor. I know your

Honor's familiar with the 96 seconds to two minutes that are at issue in this case. We have several exhibits which I think your Honor has seen at least versions of before which I'm happy to play highlighting with respect to --

THE COURT: Why don't $I$ give you that opportunity, counsel, so we're all on the same page. Go right ahead.

MS. KEARNEY: Would you like me to play those now or should I play those --

THE COURT: I'll leave it up to you.

MS. KEARNEY: Well, I'll answer the question, your Honor, and I'll get to the exhibits. This defendant poses a significant danger both with respect to his conduct on January 6th itself, which is where these video clips come in. When $I$ play them what you'll see is the defendant emerges from the crowd where these officers are already being violently attacked. Advances towards those officers, grabs one of them, that's Officer AW, and assists another rioter, co-defendant Clayton Mullins in pulling him in to basically what is an angry mob.

When he is interrupted by Officer CM, all attempts to push him away from Officer AW he attacks Officer AW, punching at him while he's wearing metal knuckle gloves. This conduct is violent. It contributed to the injuries of two officers. And it's made worse by the fact that at the time the defendant was himself a sworn police officer. And

I'll address further down the road with respect to his future dangerousness and why detention is necessary here.

THE COURT: Ms. Kearney, I just need you to clarify, he was still an active law enforcement on January the 6th, is that correct, or former?

MS. KEARNEY: That's correct. He was on medical leave at the time due to an injured shoulder, but he did not resign from the sheriff's office until March of 2021 , believe.

Frankly, your Honor, and I'll address this later, but you know, this was an individual who was in a physical state such that he was not permitted to undertake active duty. He was under medical advice not to go to work and yet advanced to the Capitol on January 6 th and participated in this violent melee. But that's a point for another time.

So what I would like to do if your Honor will indulge me is play five, six video clips and then highlight in half speed this defendant's conduct because $I$ think that helps to make clear exactly what his involvement was.

THE COURT: That's fine, counsel.

MS. KEARNEY: Great, thank you, your Honor. The first one is Government Exhibit one, and that is the body-worn camera of Officer CM. Give me one moment to set it up. As you're watching, your Honor, the defendant appears at approximately second 40 , but I'll play the entire
clip so that defense counsel can see the entire clip and we'll examine from second 40 onward.

THE COURT: That's fine.

MR. GANT: May I ask if she's sharing the screen because $I$ don't see it on this end.

MS. KEARNEY: I thought I was. Sorry about that. Can you see it now? Nothing's playing, but --
[Video played.]

THE COURT: Right. Yes, we can. I can anyway.

MS. KEARNEY: I'm just going to pause, your Honor, just to draw your attention to the individual in the red hat, jeans and a black shirt with a tactical vest. For the record this is 162741 timestamp. That is the defendant, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

MS. KEARNEY: And your Honor, I'm going to pause it there at 162808. At this point Officer CM's camera has been knocked off and the rest is just audio unless defense counsel wants to play something then $I$ won't play it any further.

THE COURT: All right.

MS. KEARNEY: All right. I'm just going to switch applications for one second, so that $I$ can slow down the video. I apologize, your Honor, I'm not able to open any other application, so I'll move to the next exhibit and will
clear it up and $I$ can draw your attention to certain aspects after that.

THE COURT: That's fine.

MR. GANT: Excuse me, are you viewing it again?

We don't see it on this end.

MS. KEARNEY: No, I apologize. I'm having technical difficulties and I'm trying it another way. All right. One second I'm going to show my screen. This is Government's Exhibit two. And this is body camera footage from Officer DP.

I apologize, I'm accessing it through the folder that $I$ shared with Mr. Coates, and so I apologize for the irrelevant stuff around the edges.

THE COURT: That's fine.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: Thank you. I'm now going to play Government's Exhibit 3.

THE COURT: All right.

MS. KEARNEY: Which is what we've been calling the story fold video. It is an excerpt from a video posted on YouTube that displays basically the opposite angle of the officer's body camera footage.

With respect to this angle, your Honor, if you are looking at the arch the defendant is on the right-hand side and then moves to the center of the arch.

THE COURT: Thank you.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: I'm pausing at seconds 12, and
there's an individual behind that is co-defendant Witton.

There's an individual in a red hat and a black shirt that's the defendant, your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you.

MS. KEARNEY: I'm going to pause the video there, your Honor, at the 119 mark. I don't believe the defendant is in it after that point.

THE COURT: Very well.

MS. KEARNEY: I'm going to play Government's Exhibit 4, which is the body camera footage of Officer AW. And you'll see, your Honor, that $A W$ ends up on his back in the arch at a certain point in the video.
[Video played.]

THE COURT: Is that Mr. McAbee with the sweater on?

MS. KEARNEY: Yes, with the patch that we described.

THE COURT: Showing the word "sheriff," is that correct?

MS. KEARNEY: That's correct, your Honor.

THE COURT: That's pretty outrageous.

MS. KEARNEY: Yes, your Honor, I think it
contributes to the determination of his level of dangerousness.

THE COURT: I completely agree. These videos are very disturbing.

MS. KEARNEY: And yet this is, your Honor, someone who not only was employed as a sheriff's deputy at the time, but chose to wear that insignia combined with other extremists group insignia to the Capitol. And as I'll play in another video, your Honor, to then invoke that status when it suited him. He attempts to later get through the arch by gesturing towards that patch itself.

But let me finish this video, your Honor. I think we timed out the amount time Mr. McAbee spends over Officer AW. It's clear that he has dragged Officer AW. You can hear him grunt during that video. You can hear the officer grunt in pain. And he spends approximately 25 seconds over Officer AW with his arms holding him down. At this point in the video, Your Honor, Officer AW has rolled to his side and is attempting to get back into the arch.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: Two remaining exhibits, your Honor, and then I'm only going to play a portion of them in the interest of time. Because $I$ think there's a lot of filler in between, but should defense counsel like to display them they're obviously available. The first is Government's

Exhibit 6 A which is body camera footage from Officer SS. [Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: And the individual in the red hat in front of -- Officer $S S$ right now is looking at CM's back. The individual in the red hat in front of $C M$ is the defendant.

THE COURT: Thank you.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: I'm going to pause at the 40 second mark. The defendant isn't in it beyond that. And I'm also going to play Government's Exhibit $6 B$ starting at minute 120, and going until approximately 216 . This your Honor, just to provide you with context is from after the 427,428 time period. At that point several minutes later rioters attempt to bring an individual in distress to the arch.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: That's at 2 minutes, 18 seconds, your Honor. And the defendant gestures towards the sheriffs' patch in an effort to try and get through the police line. I'm going to stop sharing now and I'll pull it back up for some specific clips, but I think, you know, these videos highlight, your Honor what the magistrate judge in the Middle District of Tennessee overlooked. And that is the nature of the attack at the time.

In his opinion magistrate judge suggested that
there was ambiquity in what the defendant was doing, that perhaps he was, he was provoked. And therefore, while not necessarily justifiable was significantly less dangerous than other defendants who participated in this type of violence.

And these videos make clear that is not so. I have specific portions $I$ can slow down and show your Honor exactly what is going on. But it's clear, clear from these videos that the defendant saw an assault in progress that was started by his codefendants, that he approached the archway and that he joined in that assault.

He stood over Officer AW while he was on his back, while defendant Mullins was pulling the officer into the crowd, grabs the officer's torso and his leg and dragged him not to safety, not to provide assistance, but farther into the crowd. He's working against the other officers who are attempting to help AW in these videos.

THE COURT: Can you show that scene, please?

MS. KEARNEY: Yes, your Honor. There are several angles. The first $I$ would like to show is Exhibit one starting at 40 seconds.
[Video played.]
MS. KEARNEY: So that officer that was just grabbed that was Officer BM.

THE COURT: Yes.

MS. KEARNEY: And I'm going to slow this down to half speed. The sound would be distorted, but it's easier to see.

THE COURT: Thank you.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: I'll pause it at 107. The next one
is Exhibit two starting at approximately --

THE COURT: I'm sorry, I'm sorry. If you were
showing something we didn't see it. I didn't see it.
MS. KEARNEY: I apologize, your Honor. To go back
to Exhibit one at approximately 40 seconds.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: What you see at approximately 48
seconds is the defendant --

THE COURT: We can't see anything. I can't see it.

MS. KEARNEY: It's not shared. I apologize, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Take your time.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: I'll back up to approximately 40
seconds. And what you see here, your Honor, is there is an Officer who reaches out in an attempt to bring AW back to safety. And the defendant rather than working with the officer, you know, defense counsel in Tennessee argued that
he was actually attempting to render aid. The defendant is pulling $A W$ in the opposite direction. He's pulling him towards co-defendant Mullins and towards this mob out here. THE COURT: It appears that way to the Court as well.

MS. KEARNEY: I'm sorry?

THE COURT: It appears that way to this Court as well.

MS. KEARNEY: This, your Honor, is Officer CM's body camera footage, and so these hands and this baton belongs to Officer CM. And it's actually difficult to see, your Honor, because the officer turns away as he's being struck, but you see the defendant also swing towards that officer as well.

THE COURT: And it's clear if you can see the, those gloves with spikes with them or whatever the studs. Is that what you're referring to?

MS. KEARNEY: Yes, those are hard-knuckled gloves. As you see in the defendant's text messages which we submit as Exhibit B, which he purchased specifically for this occasion. I'd also like to play a small sample of Government's Exhibit 2 starting at 28 , which is a different angle. The drag of Officer AW into the crowd $I$ think is clearer from here.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: Your Honor, there you see him grab Officer AW's thigh and essentially pull him further into the crowd.

THE COURT: It appears that way to the Court as well. It also appears the DC police officers are depicted to the right of the screen in yellow and white and black. And there's an officer there with, on his helmet appears to be MPD it. So it appears clearly to this Court that the defendant is pulling the officer back into the crowd of other terrorists.

MS. KEARNEY: And finally, your Honor, I think Officer AW's footage is particularly powerful. I'm not going to slow this one down because $I$ think the sound here is important. I'm going to start at 55.
[Video played.]

MS. KEARNEY: Your Honor at the beginning of that section starting around seconds 55 or 57 , you can hear Officer AW groan as he's being moved. It's clear from the movement on the screen that his body is being lifted and it's being moved. You can hear him groan as that happens. I'll stop sharing now.

THE COURT: I'm sorry, I couldn't hear anything. I don't know if you had the volume muted or not.

MS. KEARNEY: Oh, I did not have it muted, but I'm not sure how to fix that problem. If you want to review it
on your own computer it would be starting around second 55 of government's exhibit --

THE COURT: That's fine. That's fine. I accept the government's proffer as to what it depicts. That's fine.

MS. KEARNEY: Okay. And so frankly, your Honor, as $I$ was arguing earlier $I$ think these specific clips highlight how the magistrate judge in the Middle District of Tennessee did not fully consider the gravity and the severity of the defendant's actions on January 6th.

In addition, I think he discounted the future dangerousness that this defendant presents. Putting aside these actions on that day this is a defendant who was a sworn law enforcement officer, was, you know, under medical advice not to engage in work, who expressed in his text messages that his wife and others were reluctant for him to go on January 6th, and yet he persevered and did.

This is a defendant who in preparation for traveling to Washington, D.C. on the 6th, ordered metal knuckled gloves, a weapon. His traveling companion sent him text messages of his own quote "arsenal," which consisted of knives, brass knuckles, a magazine. The defendant made no effort to dissuade that associate, associate one in our papers, from bringing those items to the Capitol. Now to be clear, your Honor, $I$ don't know which or whether any of
those were brought, but their text messages certainly make clear they thought it was a good idea.

This is a defendant who continued to express pride in ownership of what he had done. You'll see in exhibits either text messages the days after January 6th, where he says the Latin equivalent of liberty or death, and that he has shed blood for his country and would do so again. The exact quote, Your Honor is on, I apologize, page, page 3 of the text messages associate two, which I think was Government's Exhibit $F$, but $I$ don't remember.

And he says to associate two, "I've shed blood for my country by the hands of the swamp. I will shed much more in the days to come. But I will not forget the oath I swore years ago to protect the America once knew, libertatem vel mortem, which is liberty or death."

And so this is the defendant who was not caught up in a 90 second moment. This is a defendant who planned for precisely that moment, and then continued to express pride, satisfaction with that moment and the intention and willingness to do so again.

THE COURT: Thank you, counsel. Mr. Gant.
MR. GANT: Judge Sullivan, your reaction to seeing these videos, and I'm sure you've seen other videos about, that occurred on January 6th, 2021. But your reaction, Judge, was the same reaction that Judge Frensley had. If
the Court please at page 127, the transcript, if $I$ might just with your Honor's permission read what he said.

THE COURT: Sure.

MR. GANT: "The question $I$ have to decide today is a very narrow and specific question, and that is whether or not there are conditions that will reasonably assure the safety of the community if Mr. McAbee is released, is to be released in this case."

Goes on to say, "but what $I$ think is really important and make clear for the record is that the decision that I have to make today is not a decision about whether or not Mr. McAbee engaged in conduct that's alleged in the indictment, or whether Mr. McAbee is guilty of the conduct alleged in the indictment, or whether or not he should be punished for the conduct alleged in the indictment, or what punishment he should receive for that conduct that's alleged."

He talks about, Judge Sullivan, how horrific these videos are. He speaks of how he reviewed each of these videos and talked about his disdain for the conduct that he saw. So your reaction is the same reaction that Judge Frensley had. What difference here, Judge is this, and I say this most respectfully.

THE COURT: Sure.

MR. GANT: When you look at, for example,

Government's Exhibit 1 that's the body camera CM. And again, your Honor, I'm sure if you haven't you will certainly review this. But what government counsel says is that that's the video where Mr. McAbee reaches over and he assists other folks in dragging the body of that officer down the railing. If you look at that video, what you will see Judge is this, Mr. McAbee puts his hand on the thigh of that officer and he reaches over. When you slow that up you do not see him grabbing that officer.

Next, the government says well, what the government is relying on Judge is the horrific nature of this conduct as the basis for saying you need to lock this guy up, but we know you can't do that. You have to be able to say I'm only trying to determine whether or not there are conditions or a combination of conditions that will assure the safety of any person in the community. That's my fold.

But what the government is saying, Judge Sullivan, to you is this, this man went to Washington bent on mayhem. And they suggest as a proof of that is these gloves with the brass, silver knuckles. The fact that he had on a flak jacket. Judge, again if you go back to that very first video, $C M$ I think it is, and you will see as you're looking at that video on the left of that video you'll see an individual, red cap, glasses, clearly it's Mr. McAbee, reach down over a rail and he picks up the baton.

First, he's hit in the back, in the back of the head by something, but he leans over and picks up a baton. And the very next second you see Mr. McAbee in that same video no baton. You never see him wield that baton not one time.

Government talks about well, he's got these gloves with these silver hard knuckles. The two videos that your Honor will see where Mr. McAbee engaged in any kind of offensive conduct with Capitol police was when he, Mr. McAbee, gets pushed, he pushes back. He did that. But Judge if he went to Washington, D.C. on January 6th bent on causing some kind of mayhem why didn't he use those knuckled gloves to hit anybody? You never see him do that.

Now again, the government says well, he pushed the officer. In fact, Judge, if you will look at -- and again, I'm not suggesting your Honor hasn't. But if you look at the government's last pleading docket entry 116 , that's their reply to my response.

And it's interesting Judge in that you go from their motion here in the Middle District of Tennessee to their emergency motion. And when you read it it has Mr. McAbee basically in nonstop motion, but when you read their reply especially at page 4 , where it says, the defendant's words in the days leading up to January 6th, and his attire on that day demonstrate that he engaged in prior planning
before arriving at the Capitol, that he carried and used a dangerous weapon during the riot.

Now the dangerous weapon were the gloves with the knuckles. It goes on to say, "The defendant attempted to purchase metal knuckled gloves to use January 6th, but he learns that he couldn't get them delivered in time. He asked associate number one to procure them for him." It then says, "He, the defendant, the accused, considered bringing an additional makeshift weapon a T-handled tire puncture." Considered not brought, but considered.

It then goes on to say, your Honor, "And expressed no concern when associate one announced his intention to bring knives, brace knuckles, and mace." Again, what they're saying now is not that he, Mr. McAbee did something, he did not do something. He did not stop his associate. So there's kind of an attempted backing off of the aggressiveness that they say he posed. They go on to say, "He also planned to wear and did wear a ballistic vest."

Now what the government is saying to you Judge when you look at these videos, if you look at the videos in a mindset that says Mr. McAbee did something you're going to see that. But when you look at it in an objective fashion clearly you can say to yourself now wait a minute, is he dragging an individual. The other video, Judge, where you see Mr. McAbee is supposedly laying on the officer and
supposedly laid on the officer for 25 seconds.

Your Honor, look at that video. You can tell from the video he could not have been doing that. Why? Because when, in the video you see the full chest of Mr. McAbee. And you see him hovering over the officer, but if he was pressed up against that officer for 25 seconds, Judge, the body camera would not have been able to film him like it did. He wouldn't have been able to because he would have covered up the lens. But again, if you're looking at that video with an eye for saying that Mr. McAbee did something then you might, you might arrive at that conclusion.

The other thing is this, Judge, when you look at each and every one of these videos in particular let's talk about $S$ n number one. You see Mr. McAbee and he's pushing. He's extending his arms, not striking at anybody but extending his arms. Okay. In $S$, when he's pushing and extending his arms what does he do? Doesn't swing at anybody. Doesn't ball up his fists. Doesn't do anything aggressive. He drops to his knees and attempts to assist one of the protesters who's down and whose been trapped.

Again, that would be consistent with what your Honor may well learn from the character letters which were submitted as exhibits here. But not one single video, not one, can be looked at and said definitively that this young man engaged in any aggressive conduct.

Next, the government wants to make a big deal out of Mr. McAbee pointing to the sheriff written on his vest. Again, your Honor, when you look at that video and you listen to it, when you hear the language what Mr. McAbee is doing is saying look I'm hurt. I just want to get in. I need some medical attention. And let me in and he shows his, the word sheriff in an attempt to get in to get some kind of help, not in an attempt to get in to somehow cause further insurrection. But if that's what you're looking for you'll see it. But if you look at this, if you look at this in an objective fashion, and it's difficult to do.

THE COURT: Counsel, let me stop you though.

Isn't the Court allowed to draw appropriate inferences from what the Court sees with its own eyes? Or am I suppose to just forget about what $I$ see with my own eyes?

MR. GANT: No, Judge, you are not to --

THE COURT: My job, I clearly understand what my job is today. It's not to determine proof beyond a reasonable doubt or not, or whether the government has proved allegations beyond a reasonable doubt. The standard is very narrow. It's very narrow. You agree though I can draw appropriate inferences from what is clearly depicted on the screen, correct?

MR. GANT: Yes, sir, I would.
THE COURT: All right. Okay.

MR. GANT: What $I$ say to your Honor is this, when you look at those videos and you draw appropriate inferences from what you see $I$ suggest to you that if you look at the videos objectively you'll say to yourself wait a minute, I'm not so sure he's grabbing anybody, but clearly it can be argued that he is. You know, I don't want your Honor to think that $I$ don't, $I$ don't believe that that can be a conclusion that can be drawn. I understand that.

But if what the government is saying to you, Judge, is this individual Mr. McAbee ought to be locked up and he ought to be locked up because he poses a danger to the community they have to come forward with clear and convincing evidence that he is a danger. And if that evidence is not clear and convincing, but subject to some interpretation then $I$ suggest to you they have not met their burden.

Judge, again this is not your first January 6th case, and I'm sure you've seen lots of videos. What I say to your Honor is this, Judge Frensley just like your Honor was appalled by the conduct that's shown in these videos. And he was able to say to himself though I can't look that. I can't be, $I$ can't allow my motions over what $I$ see to cloud my one objective here today. And that objective was to determine whether or not there were conditions. THE COURT: Tell me what the conditions would be
if the Court were incline to release your client? What would give the community comfort in knowing that your client does not present himself to be a danger to the community?

MR. GANT: Yes, your Honor. One of the conditions that you could impose would be home confinement. That is, is he can't leave that house going anywhere but to court, to church, to work or to his lawyer's office. Your Honor could impose electronic monitoring to be sure that he's not going anywhere. Your Honor can impose restrictions like preclude him from using the internet or any other platform in order to view and or participate and or promote the kind of activity that government believes he was involved in.

Your Honor likewise can impose a petition where every day, every week, twice a week that he is reporting to a probation officer who's supervising his conduct. So there are a number of conditions, your Honor, that you can impose that $I$ suggest to you would for all intents and purposes preclude Mr. McAbee from engaging in the kind of conduct the government suggests he's engaged in.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you, counsel. As with most of these cases these are very difficult issues because many of the cases the individuals charged with violent conduct have been pillars of the community like your client. Your client was a sworn law enforcement officer. People have attested to his good
character, et cetera. These are not easy questions for any judge to resolve. Mr. Kearney, would you like to respond? Or maybe it's more appropriate to give the government a chance to respond in writing after this hearing. What's your pleasure? I'm not ordering that, but $I$ want to give you a choice.

MS. KEARNEY: No, Your Honor, I think I can respond now.

You know, to Mr. Gant's suggestion that there are conditions that can be set. Frankly, this is a defendant that has taken oaths before. He sworn oaths in multiple sheriff's offices that he would uphold the law. His job was on the line when he went to the Capitol on January 6th. He went against medical advice. He went against his wife, who I note that the magistrate judge in Tennessee appointed as his third party custodian, he went despite her protestations that she didn't want him to go.

You know, this is someone who uses his badge of authority when it works for him and disregards it when it does not. This is someone who has expressed a disinclination to abide by laws he does not agree with. I note that he is on Facebook wearing Three Percenters insignia that he did so on the day of January 6th. That he flies a black flag outside of his residence which is used to connote a lack of surrender if you will.

And that he chose on January 6 not only to wear a tactical vest which to his dangerousness I think suggests just exactly what he expected would happen, but that he chose to wear his sheriff's patch while doing it. He saw no conflict between his oath to uphold the law and to abide by the law and what he did on January 6th. And $I$ think that indicates an unwillingness to abide by any such conditions even if they were to cut off his internet, to put him on GPS or anything like that.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you, counsel.

Mr. Gant, anything further?

MR. GANT: May I just address a couple of her remarks?

THE COURT: Of course, sure.

MR. GANT: One of the things, Judge, that $I$ know the government wants to be careful about arguing his -Mr. McAbee because of his beliefs when they talk about the black flag outside of his home. They talk about anything that has to do with what he believes. Certainly his beliefs are not a basis to lock him up.

The suggestion that the government is making here with this argument is that there's a suggestion that he may belong to some antigovernment organization. That's speculation, Judge, there's nothing to suggest that he is. The fact that he wears an emblem Three Percenters doesn't
mean that in fact in the record of this case when Mr. McAbee learns of the mission of the Three Percenters he disavows and distaning himself from them.

The point $I$ want to make, Judge, and I'm going to shut up because $I$ know we're out of time here.

THE COURT: No, I'm not trying to cut you off, counsel.

MR. GANT: I'm not suggesting that you are. When I start repeating myself $I$ know it's time to [indiscernible].

THE COURT: But look, I'm going to stop you there you're starting to repeat yourself. Because I have a bad habit of doing that myself, so $I$ know a repeater when $I$ hear one.

MR. GANT: Thank you, Judge.

THE COURT: All right. Anything further? No, no, if you have any new points to make go ahead and make them, counsel.

MR. GANT: The only point I'm trying to make here is this, when the government says, for example, Mr. McAbee cannot be trusted to follow conditions that would be imposed by the Court because, for example, here he was a sworn police officer and he's out there in this crowd protesting. Certainly a police officer has a right to express his or her dislike some policy of the government. Nothing wrong that.

But what the government is suggesting is he went there, did that knowing he can lose his job. There's no evidence that he would have lost his job. In fact, from January to March he was still employed, so to make that argument $I$ suggest, Judge, is mere speculation. Thank you for your patience.

THE COURT: Counsel makes a good argument. Had the sheriff's department where he worked knew that he was in DC on January the 6 th with some metal spiked gloves on contrary to medical directives to remain at home, you know, I guess that would have caused him a lot of concern and stress about his ability to abide by the very solemn oaths he's taken in the past.

And counsel makes a very good point that as a law enforcement officer abide by the Constitution, et cetera, et cetera, he raised his right hand. Probably put his left hand on a Bible more than once and sworn to administer justice. So if he didn't do that on January the 6th, how can Court take any comfort in knowing that he will abide by the Court's directives to do certain things going forward?

And I will tell you now that if $I$ were to release him $I$ would not point his wife as third party custodian. I don't know her. My guess is she knows her husband dearly. She's not going to pick the phone up to let me know that he's not complying with the conditions of release. And I
say that respectfully and give her the benefit of loving her husband. She's just not going to do it. It's asking too much of a spouse.

I may have done it in the past a couple of times to release someone to -- in fact, I don't think I've ever done that. But that's the big question. You know, he's taken these oaths to be a law enforcement officer. The government contends he's broken those oaths by coming to Washington dressed as he was dressed. And shown videos depicting him doing certain things on the Capitol on January the 6th.

So again, how can the Court take any comfort in the fact he will follow the Court's directives to be law abiding going forward and comply with any conditions of release the Court imposes?

MR. GANT: Just from roughly May, June, July, Mr. McAbee was aware that there was a potential that he might be charged with some illegal activities with regard to January 6th rioting at the Capitol, and yet Judge he didn't go anywhere. When law enforcement arrested him and searched his house he was at the same house that he'd been before and after January 6th.

THE COURT: Let me just stop you there for a second. That is an issue that has perplexed this Court for the 37 years I've been a judge. And the marshals will tell
you by and large when they're looking for someone they'll go to the person's home or they'll telephone the landline at the home, and just say don't put your family in jeopardy of something happening if we were to come to your house to arrest you, just return yourself in. By and large people never leave their homes.

That's just the way it is. And law enforcement officers will be the first to tell you that. They have learned how to minimize danger to themselves, to spouses and children of people they're interested in arresting by just picking the phone up and calling them. If the person is responsible himself they'll just turn themself in.

I don't know what happened in this case did your client turn himself in?

MR. GANT: No, your Honor, he did not.

THE COURT: I'm not going to hold that against him. That's fine. He was arrested. That's fine. They probably had a warrant, that's fine. But it's not unusual that a person would be at home. That's the point the court is making. That's something I've been amazed at for the past 37 years. People don't go anywhere for the most part, for the most part. Now every now and then people will take off and leave the country and they leave his wife and children and that's it. But for the most part people go home. But go ahead I didn't mean to cut you off.

MR. GANT: I made my final point. Appreciate your Honor's patience.

THE COURT: That's fine. This is a significant issue. We've spent, I don't know, we started around one o'clock. It's after two now. And your client's liberty interest is at stake and that always concerns this court. I want to think about it some more. I want to look at those tapes again with my staff, and $I$ want to be fair and will be fair to your client.

It is very disturbing what's depicted on the screens. But I agree with you counsel it's the government's burden to prove by clear and convincing evidence. And you know, clear and convincing evidence is, that's the evidentiary basis that's appropriate for the court to draw inferences. I'm not going to speculate about anything. It's the government's burden.

But $I$ want to be fair to your client as well, so I'm not going to decide the issue this afternoon. I'm not going to take it under advisement $I$ can tell you that. This is my plan. This is my suggestion. The motion that's filed does toll speedy trial. I recognize that's also an infringement on your client's rights, but the stakes are high here. He wants to be returned to the community.

By and large he has, he has served in a very law abiding manner. I haven't heard anything contrary that
would persuade me that he was, that he was not by all accounts a conscientious, law-abiding public servant. So in every case $I$ want to be clear and I do want to give it some more thought.

My suggestion and maybe counsel have a better suggestion we have another status hearing sooner rather than later. I recognize Mr. Gant, you're probably in the process now of obtaining whatever discovery, whatever additional discovery the government has. Maybe you concluded that process, I don't know. I just don't know.

What's an appropriate time frame? I may write on this as well. What's an appropriate time frame for the next status hearing? I'm not talking about two months from now. What's your recommendation, Mr. Gant and also Ms. Kearney?

MR. GANT: Judge, may I make an inquiry before I answer your Honor's question?

THE COURT: Sure.
MR. GANT: Judge, I had been thrown into this case much deeper than $I$ had anticipated I would be. I am not sure after your Honor rules on this motion whether or not $I$ will still be counsel of record in this case, so $I$ say that simply to say tomorrow there is a hearing scheduled in this matter and $I$ assume it's going to require that Mr. McAbee appear for that as well. It's been difficulty to get this hooked up but we'll get it done, but I would suggest that
your Honor can do this say in a week.

THE COURT: That's pushing it. Let's do this, you say there's a hearing tomorrow in this case in Kentucky?

MS. KEARNEY: We have a status conference in the larger Sobol case, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. You know, I learned early on don't tell people the date by which you're going to resolve something because if for some reason it's not resolved on that date your phone's burned up and I learned and $I$ never forget that, $I$ did it once. I will -- let's do this, let's scheduled a status hearing two weeks from today and $I$ will endeavor to issue an appropriate decision before that date or either on that date.

I'm sure the parties will continue with their discovery efforts. Is the hearing before the magistrate judge in Kentucky is that correct or not or what?

MS. KEARNEY: No, in the larger case, Mr. Sobol and Mullins in a status conference.

THE COURT: The consolidated, right, right, right. Okay. Well, I certainly can't resolve the issue before tomorrow. So unless someone has a better suggestion I'll continue the hearing on this issue for two weeks. I recognize, Mr. Gant, you'll participate tomorrow in the larger hearing, correct?

MR. GANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: I'm sorry, I thought you were talking about a hearing before a magistrate judge. I'm aware now that the larger hearing is tomorrow. On the sole issue of detention I'll continue the case for two weeks before I make -- I can separate that issue out from the other issues. Someone have a better suggestion go ahead and tell me.

I do want to go back and look at the tapes again and focus again on your arguments and the arguments that counsel has made. I think the big issue is the combination of conditions. That's the huge issue before the court. Is there a combination of conditions that can give the community the comfort that it wants and deserves that Mr. McAbee will not be a danger to the community.

That's the big issue. And again, this case is complicated. Because up to January the $6 t h$, he was a pillar of the community by all accounts. I'm not aware of any infractions prior to January the 6th. I don't think the government has argued that, right, Ms. Kearney?

MS. KEARNEY: That's correct.

THE COURT: I have never presided over cases in which I've letters numbering in the, you know, scores of letters coming in. I've never had that experience with scores of people written letters to me saying, vouching for someone's character in the community. Maybe every now and then. But in these cases by and large most of the
participants were pillars of the community before January 6th, and people have attested. Friends and family members and others have attested to their good character in the community which makes the issue of detention extremely difficult to resolve.

But I will talk to you tomorrow, Mr. Gant and Ms. Kearney in the larger case. Let's pick a date. Mark, we don't have Zoom issues two weeks from today. You want to suggest the date and the time for the hearing, Mark, on the sole issue of detention.

THE DEPUTY CLERK: October 6th at one o'clock p.m.

THE COURT: Is that a bad date? If it's a bad date for anyone $I$ can certainly accommodate you.

MR. GANT: Judge, I don't have my calendar with me, but $I$ can make that work.

THE COURT: Are you sure? Now look, if you want to take a minute and talk with your staff that's fine. I want to accommodate you as well, counsel. You want to take a minute or so to check?

MR. GANT: I think that will work.

THE COURT: Okay. If you get back to your office and you realize that you've got something else pressing that you can't move just let Mark know and we're happy to accommodate you as well as Ms. Kearney. Is that a good date for the government, counsel?

MS. KEARNEY: That's a good date for the government.

THE COURT: Mr. McAbee, you are presumed to be innocent. Even though we've been talking a lot about January 6th, you're presumed to be innocent. You never have to prove your innocence if you go to trial. It's the government's burden to, always the government's burden, rest with the government to go to trial to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

So presumption of innocence means a lot. It means
a lot. I take the matter very seriously and that's why my staff and I are willing to spend the additional time and effort to go back over the tapes, to go back over the written pleadings, focus on what the magistrate judge said at his hearing, to rely upon the government's supplemental -- to go back and take a look at the government's supplemental motion and your attorney's arguments.

And your attorney has done an excellent job of making the strong arguments for you and the stakes are high. Now I don't take that lightly. It's your liberty interest and everyone's liberty interest is of special importance to the Court, so $I$ want to be fair about it.

We'll continue the matter for two weeks. I'll see you tomorrow probably on the Zoom hearing with Mr. Gant and
the other individuals with who you've been joined and we'll talk about planning in that case other than for the detention issue which is separated out from the other issues. Okay.

You are presumed to be innocent and be mindful the Court is well aware of that and the court takes that very seriously. You're not presumed to be guilty by any stretch of the imagination. All right.

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: All right. Mr. Gant, you made some good arguments. I'm going back to the drawing board, look at everything which $I$ should do, talk to my staff and endeavor to make the right decision for the right reasons. No one is asking for an opportunity to supplement anyone's written submission, is that correct?

MR. GANT: That's correct, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Fine. Thank you very much everyone. And unless anyone else has any other issues to discuss I'm going to wish everyone well. Be safe and healthy. I'll see everybody tomorrow. All right.

MR. GANT: Thank you, Judge same to you.

MS. KEARNEY: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: Take care, counsel. Bye bye.
[Thereupon, the proceedings adjourned at 2:15 p.m.]

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