

## **He told them to go and they went**

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The convictions of two far-right militia leaders of seditious conspiracy for the Jan. 6 Insurrection scared Donald Trump.

The Proud Boys is a neo-fascist organization that promotes political violence. When Trump said “Proud Boys, stand back and stand by, but somebody’s got to do something about Antifa and the left,” Proud Boys organizer Joe Biggs said Trump told them to take on Antifa.

When Trump tweeted “Big protest in DC on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Be there, will be wild!” they answered Trump’s call and attacked the Capitol. Four Proud Boys were convicted of seditious conspiracy. Their leader, Enrique Tarrío, wasn’t in DC, but was still convicted of organizing the attack.

Stewart Rhodes founded the Oath Keepers to resist the government after Obama’s inauguration. On Jan. 6, Oath Keepers led the mob that breached the Capitol. Nine were convicted of seditious conspiracy, including Rhodes.

Rhodes didn’t storm the Capitol, beat police officers, or trash Nancy Pelosi’s office. Still, he was convicted and sentenced to 18 years, the longest yet for Jan. 6 insurrectionists. The sentencing judge said Rhodes tried to start a revolution and is “an ongoing threat and peril to our democracy and the fabric of this country. He was the reason they were in Washington DC. He was the one who gave the order to go, and they went.”

The insurrectionists believed they were Trump’s army, following his orders, just as Liz Cheney said: “Trump summoned the mob, assembled the mob, and lit the flame of this attack.”

The “following orders” defense didn’t work, but it painted a bullseye on Trump and helps explain his increasingly erratic behavior. Fox’s Marc Thiessen called Trump “unhinged” for attacking former press secretary Kayleigh McEnany. “He’s losing control,” said Thiessen, “lashing out at anyone and everyone who does not tow his line.”

Trump feels the walls closing in. Everyone knows he was the reason the insurrectionists were in Washington DC. He told them to go, and they went.

Joanne Levitan  
Leland