

After lengthy delay, DC cop goes on trial for protecting fascist Proud Boys

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After a lengthy delay, on Monday US Attorney Joshua Rothstein delivered his opening arguments in the trial of former D.C. Metropolitan Police Lieutenant Shane Lamond.

Lamond, an over 20-year-long police officer and former supervisor of the Intelligence Branch in the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department's Homeland Security Bureau, was arrested last year on one charge of obstruction and three counts of providing false information concerning an investigation into Proud Boy leader and "prolific" FBI informant Henry "Enrique" Tarrio.

The Proud Boys, above all of the other human dust gathered in D.C. on January 6, played a central role in the day's events. The violent anti-communist group, riddled with informants, was personally called to Washington by then-President Donald Trump during a September 30, 2020 debate with Joe Biden.

Asked by moderator Chris Wallace to condemn "white supremacists and militia groups" and "to say that they need to stand down," Trump asked Wallace "who he would like me to condemn?" to which Biden responded, "The Proud Boys."

Trump did the opposite, declaring, "Proud Boys, stand back and stand by." Ecstatic Proud Boys, including Tarrio, immediately began selling merchandise online with the phrase, as they organized in private and on social media for the attack.

In Monday's opening statement, Rothstein said Lamond had leaked "sensitive police information to a criminal suspect, and lied about it to investigators," the *Washington Post* reported. Rothstein told US District Judge Amy Berman Jackson that the "evidence will show that the defendant was a Proud Boys

sympathizer," who was providing information to "a right-wing hate group."

Lamond began a relationship with Tarrio in 2019, by which point the Proud Boys had already garnered a reputation for engaging in violent street brawls with Trump's political enemies, as well as with anti-police violence protesters and students on college campuses.

The "face" of the heavily infiltrated organization in the lead-up to Trump's coup was Tarrio, a rabid anti-communist of Cuban descent from Miami and associate of longtime Republican operative Roger Stone. Tarrio is currently serving a 22-year prison sentence after being convicted of several felonies, including seditious conspiracy for his leading role in rallying hundreds of Proud Boy foot soldiers to spearhead the assault on Congress on January 6, 2021.

The current trial is narrowly focused on Lamond's actions in obstructing an investigation into Tarrio's burning of a Black Lives Matter banner on December 12, 2020. Prosecutors have accused Lamond of acting as a "double agent" for the fascist organization, providing intelligence to Tarrio on upcoming police actions against him, including potential charges, in the lead-up to Tarrio's arrest on January 4, 2021.

In their arguments Monday and Tuesday, prosecutors largely repeated what was previously reported in their indictment. They alleged that between November 2020 and January 2021, Lamond and Tarrio shared hundreds of text messages and phone calls, many of which were destroyed after Lamond urged Tarrio to set his messages on Telegram to "self-destruct."

Following Trump's electoral defeat on November 7, 2020, Lamond reached out to Tarrio to bond over their shared loss, saying, "Hey brother, sad, sad news today.

You all planning anything?” Tarrío responded, “Yep,” after which Lamond urged him to “switch to encrypted” and continued: “Alerts are being sent out to law enforcement that [social media website] accounts belonging to your people are talking about mobilizing and ‘taking back the country.’ Getting people spun up. Just giving you a heads up.”

Lamond added, “Please keep this between you and me.”

“Always,” Tarrío replied.

After the violent December 12, 2020 “Stop the Steal” rally in Washington D.C., Lamond is alleged to have tipped off Tarrío that police were considering “hate crime” charges over the burning of the banner, but that he argued against it on behalf of the group, telling fellow police that the Proud Boys were not racist because some of their members were Latino and some were black.

In one text exchange shared in the seditious conspiracy trial of Tarrío, Lamond is alleged to have given locations of alleged “Antifa” protesters and then asked Tarrío if he wanted Lamond to keep that information between the two of them or share it with “other uniformed officers.”

Even after Tarrío’s arrest on January 4, 2021, Lamond and the fascist continued to exchange friendly messages. Prosecutors allege that two days after the attack on Congress, about which Tarrío gloated on social media, he asked Lamond his opinion of the group. Lamond replied, “Of course I can’t say it officially, but personally I support you all and don’t want to see your group’s reputation dragged through the mud.”

The close relationship between Lamond and Tarrío is indicative of the relationship of police to fascist militia groups. That the violent group was able to penetrate the Capitol at all testifies to the free pass they, and many other right-wing groups, were given by law enforcement across the country. Despite a history of assault, in the period between the election and January 6, Proud Boys, including Tarrío, participated in “Stop the Steal” protests and rallies with their Republican handlers and other Trump fanatics, some of which turned violent.

Members of the group appeared on right-wing online programs, such as Alex Jones’ *Infowars*, to advance Trump’s “stolen election lies” and gin up support for overturning the election. On the day of the attack itself, hundreds of Proud Boys led Trump’s mob in overrunning the deliberately undermanned Capitol Police. In a tactic repeated several times, Proud Boys incited the crowd to storm police lines until the mob reached the Capitol, at which point Proud Boys such as Dominic Pezzola brought the mob into the Capitol by breaking through a window and opening the door from the inside.

The leading and violent role the organization played in the attack is reflected in the prosecutions. Out of over 1,500 people charged with a crime for participating in Trump’s coup, at least 100 have been Proud Boy “leaders, members and associates,” according to *Just Security*. As of October 9, 2024, at least 73 Proud Boys had been charged with “one or more felonies.”

This week’s trial was delayed in large part due to questions over Tarrío’s willingness to testify on behalf of Lamond. On Monday, Judge Jackson revealed that Tarrío was willing to testify now that the election has been held with Trump returning to the White House. *The Hill* reported that Tarrío is expected to take the stand on Thursday.

At his election rallies and on social media, Trump has repeatedly promised to pardon his fascist foot soldiers. Following Biden’s pardon of his son Hunter on December 1, Trump posted on social media, “Does the Pardon given by Joe to Hunter include the J-6 Hostages, who have now been imprisoned for years? Such an abuse and miscarriage of Justice!”



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