



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* PENNSYLVANIA

[U.S. Attorneys](#) » [Middle District of Pennsylvania](#) » [News](#)

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Pennsylvania

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, July 14, 2021

Leighton Man Sentenced To 18 Months' Imprisonment For Internet Threats Against The Jewish Community

SCRANTON - The United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania announced that on July 13, 2021, Corbin Kauffman, age 32, of Leighton, Pennsylvania, was sentenced by United States District Court Judge Robert D. Mariani to 18 months' imprisonment for interstate transmission of threats to injure the person of another.

According to Acting United States Attorney Bruce D. Brandler, Kauffman pleaded guilty to a one-count criminal information and admitted that he posted a threatening image on a social media website on March 13, 2019. Kauffman posted a digitally-created image of his own arm and hand aiming an AR-15 rifle at a congregation of praying Jewish men, gathered in a synagogue. The threatening image came in the wake of the October 27, 2018 mass-shooting at Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where 11 died and several more were wounded. On the same day he posted his own threatening image, Kauffman also shared a video of the Tree of Life shooting, as well as another post in support of the shooter. That same day, Kauffman also posted multiple references to "hate crimes" and a photograph of vandalism he committed by defacing a display case at the Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Center in Ocean City, Maryland, with white supremacist and anti-Semitic stickers.

Kauffman used various aliases online to post hundreds of anti-Semitic, anti-black, and anti-Muslim messages, images, and videos. Several of these posts, like the one charged in the information, included threats to various religious and racial groups. Other posts expressed a desire to commit genocide and "hate crimes," and called for or depicted images of the killing of Jewish people, black people, and Muslim people. Kauffman also posted videos combining footage of a mass shooting at a Christchurch, New Zealand mosque with various audio tracks to celebrate the shooting, including video game sound effects and music.

In imposing the sentence, Judge Mariani found that Kauffman had made several threats, and that he intentionally selected the targets of his threats based on their race, religion, or ethnicity.

"While the disturbing and violent images and messages Kauffman posted online were abhorrent, that does not mean they were all criminal. Even abhorrent speech is protected by the First Amendment right to free speech," said Acting U.S. Attorney Brandler. "But when the speech crosses the line into threats, particularly threats directed at vulnerable communities, we will not tolerate that behavior. Vulnerable communities are entitled to feel safe in living their lives and exercising their own rights. Under federal law, when you target a

person or a group because of their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, disability, or sexual orientation, that is a hate crime. And we take hate crimes very seriously in the Middle District of Pennsylvania.”

The case was investigated by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sean A. Camoni.

#

Component(s):

USAO - Pennsylvania, Middle

Updated July 14, 2021