

Two McLeansboro, Illinois, Men Arrested On Charges For Actions During Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol Breach

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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WASHINGTON – Two men from McLeansboro, Illinois, located in the Southern part of the state near Mt. Vernon, IL., have been arrested on felony and misdemeanor charges related to their conduct during the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

Their actions and the actions of others are alleged to have disrupted a joint session of the U.S. Congress convened to ascertain and count the electoral votes related to the 2020 presidential election.

Justin LaGesse, 37, and Theodore Middendorf, 36, both of McLeansboro, Illinois, are charged in a criminal complaint filed in the District of Columbia with felony destruction of property. In addition to the felony, LaGesse and Middendorf are charged with misdemeanor offenses of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, engaging in physical violence in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building, act of physical violence in the Capitol grounds or buildings, and parading, picketing, and demonstrating in a Capitol building.

LaGesse and Middendorf were arrested yesterday by the FBI in Illinois and will make their initial appearance in the Southern District of Illinois.

The Architect of the Capitol determined that the window struck by both Middendorf and LaGesse suffered \$41,315.25 in damages.

According to allegations contained in court documents, on Jan. 6, 2021, Justin LaGesse illegally entered the U.S. Capitol building at approximately 2:51 p.m. via a broken window next to the Senate Wing Door. LaGesse then assists Middendorf with his entry through the same broken window. LaGesse carried with him a yellow Gadsden flag, and Middendorf carried an American flag. After entering the building, the two made their way towards the Crypt while carrying their respective flags on their shoulders.

The two then allegedly entered the Crypt and continued south into the House of Representatives side of the Capitol. At about 3:01 p.m. that day, the men passed by the House Wing Door emergency exit while Middendorf appeared to have recorded the events with his cell phone. From there, the two made their way to the Hall of Columns and eventually exited the Capitol via the South Door.

After leaving the Capitol, LaGesse and Middendorf approached a line of Metropolitan Police Department Officers standing behind a bicycle rack barricade. Court documents say that LaGesse called the officers "f— traitors" and "f— communist scum." The two then proceeded around the building to the north side of the Capitol, where they encountered a group of rioters attempting to breach the building via the North door. At about 4:09 p.m., as officers attempted to stop these rioters, LaGesse and Middendorf approached a large window to the left of the North door and used their flagpoles to strike the window numerous times, damaging it in several places. After failing to shatter the window, Middendorf walked east towards another window and struck it with his flagpole once.

This 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 Office for the Southern District of Illinois.

This case is being investigated by the FBI's Springfield and Washington Field Offices. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 36 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,265 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 440 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement, a felony. The investigation remains ongoing.

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

A complaint is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.