



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on July 23, 2021

January 6 “QAnon Shaman” Diagnosed With Mental Illnesses, Negotiating Plea Deal

Jacob Chansley, the “QAnon Shaman” who became the poster child of the January 6 breach of the Capitol Building is negotiating a possible plea deal with federal prosecutors. This comes after prison psychologists determined what pretty much everyone else already knew: Chansley suffers from a variety of mental illnesses.

Of the 535 people arrested in connection with the events of January 6, Chansley is easily the most recognizable. His American flag face paint, buffalo antler headdress, and tattoo-covered bare chest made him hard to forget. His strange appearance and bizarre behavior — both at the Capitol and at various and sundry protests before January 6 — led him to be trotted out by media as an stereotype of those who participated in the breach of the Capitol Building.



QAnon Shaman (AP Images)

That stereotype is unwarranted, though typical. Adherents to political philosophies on both ends of the spectrum tend to cast the other side in terms of extreme examples. Many conservatives view all liberals as wild-eyed radicals who support BLM and Antifa while many liberals tend to see all conservatives as unintelligent conspiracy theorists drinking deeply from the poisoned well of QAnon.

Like many of the other nearly 500 people charged in the wake of January 6, Chansley was charged with a litany of crimes, including violent entry and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds. If convicted on all charges, he could face up to 20 years in prison. However, a plea deal — if accepted by prosecutors and the court — could reduce that time substantially.

In a [previous article](#), this writer addressed two other cases stemming from January 6. Neither of the men profiled in that article fit the stereotype of “the insurrectionists” pushed by liberal media for which Chansley is the very image. One is a 50-year-old chiropractor; The other is a 38-year-old crane operator. Paul Hodgkins, the crane operator, has just been convicted and received a sentence of eight months in prison with two years of supervised probation to follow his release. The chiropractor, Joseph Hackett, faces a possible 20-year sentence for entering the Capitol Building and spending less than ten minutes inside.

Government records show that about 20 of the nearly 500 people charged in the breach of the Capitol Building have pleaded guilty so far and many of them will likely receive reduced sentences as more serious charges are dropped in exchange for the guilty pleas.

So, it is likely that Chansley’s lawyer is advising his client to take a deal and get a much lighter sentence. But, besides that, Chansley’s defense lawyer, Albert Watkins, told Reuters that his client has



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expressed multiple delusions including a belief “that he was indeed related directly to Jesus and Buddha.” Watkins also said that given Chansley’s prison diagnosis of transient schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression and anxiety, there is a high likelihood of a plea deal. Federal prosecutors do not seem to have an appetite for trying a man who is clearly insane.

Watkins told Reuters that the diagnosis by prison psychologists indicate that Chansley’s mental condition — which was already strained at best — has declined quite a bit as he has been held in solitary confinement 23 hours a day. Watkins said that over his client’s time in solitary confinement “the decline in his acuity was noticeable, even to an untrained eye,” adding, “What we’ve done is we’ve taken a guy who is unarmed, harmless, peaceful — with a pre-existing mental vulnerability of significance, and we’ve rendered him a chocolate soup mess.”

While the actions of Chansley and the others involved in the Capitol Building Breach certainly lacked anything resembling prudence or wisdom, the current administration has claimed they are all “dangerous” participants in an “insurrection” that sought to “destroy democracy” by “overthrowing the government.” Thus, those arrested have been exposed to treatment the Left would claim harsh if meted out to known serial killers or terrorists. Chansley was clearly not mentally well before his placement in solitary confinement. And to place him in a cell, alone, for 23 hours a day — without any human contact — is the very definition of cruel and unusual. That is especially so when one considers that his crime is essentially the same as trespassing.



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