

# [***Man arrested after video post showed severed head of his father, police say, amid political rant that stayed online for hours***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B77-TFW1-JBSS-S01X-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

January 31, 2024 Wednesday 1:13 PM GMT

Copyright 2024 Cable News Network All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 1193 words

**Byline:** By Melissa Alonso, Holly Yan, Caroll Alvarado, Danny Freeman, Chris Boyette and Paul P. Murphy, CNN

**Dateline:** (CNN)

**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; **Editor's note:** This story includes graphic descriptions some readers may find disturbing.

A man accused of decapitating his father and showing the federal worker's severed head during a politically charged tirade online is charged with murder after he was arrested with a gun at a National Guard base, according to officials and court documents.

The gruesome video circulated for hours on YouTube - garnering more than 5,000 views - before it was taken down. Justin Mohn, 32, now is being held without bond, also charged abuse of a corpse and other crimes, Pennsylvania court documents show.

During the online diatribe, Mohn railed against the Biden administration and [*the border crisis*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/27/us/texas-eagle-pass-us-mexico-border/index.html) while declaring himself the new acting US president under martial law and decrying his father as a traitor. The victim, Michael Mohn, worked for the US Army Corps of Engineers Philadelphia District, the agency told CNN.

The video [*was removed*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/tech/youtube-decapitation-video/index.html) over its graphic violence, YouTube said.

The horrifying case comes amid [*a fraught national political environment*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/01/politics/2024-whats-at-stake/index.html) and as social media executives - who were [*grilled Wednesday by Congress*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/tech/big-tech-executives-senate-hearing-teens/index.html) - have been under fire for allowing graphic and sometimes violent videos to be posted and remain on their sites.

"The bigger picture is extremely concerning, I think, as we go into what will be an incredibly heated political season," CNN Law Enforcement Analyst and former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe said.

How the grisly discovery unfolded

Middletown Township Police were dispatched at 7 p.m. Tuesday after a report of a deceased male, the Bucks County District Attorney's Office said.

"The call to emergency dispatchers came from the victim's wife. When officers arrived, they located the male deceased in the bathroom," the prosecutor's office [*said in a statement*](https://bucks.crimewatchpa.com/da/29567/post/homicide-investigation-underway-middletown-township?fbclid=IwAR20r594bpSsn6Rzd1EyJWIHf5Y2jPvGUzlmM_itOVKB0dF5IfE-nsIlIeo). "The victim's adult son was not present when police arrived and left the area in his father's vehicle."

A machete and a large kitchen knife were found in the bathtub, according to the probable cause affidavit obtained by CNN.

"Officers also located the deceased male's head inside of a plastic bag which was inside of a cooking pot in a first floor bedroom next to the bathroom," the affidavit says.

In the affidavit, police cite t he video posted on YouTube by Justin Mohn, the son of the victim and alleged killer.

In it, the man identifies himself as Mohn and apparently reads from a written statement and at one point holds up what appears to be a bloodied head inside a clear plastic bag. He says his father, who was a federal employee for over 20 years, was a traitor to his country.

"America is rotting from the inside out as far left, woke mobs rampage our once prosperous cities," he says in the video.

Investigators also found "clear rubber gloves with what appeared to be blood on them." After viewing the YouTube video, investigators confirmed "the gloves, decapitated head, and room are the same as depicted in the video," the affidavit says.

YouTube in a statement Wednesday told CNN it "has strict policies prohibiting graphic violence and violent extremism."

"The video was removed for violating our graphic violence policy and Justin Mohn's channel was terminated in line with our violent extremism policies. Our teams are closely tracking to remove any re-uploads of the video," it said.

After fleeing the home, Mohn drove more than 100 miles, then broke into a Pennsylvania National Guard base with a gun, state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs spokesperson Angela Watson told CNN.

He was taken into custody at the Fort Indiantown Gap base - home of the Pennsylvania National Guard headquarters - shortly after 9:25 p.m. Tuesday, Watson said.

"He was armed at the time but did not resist arrest," Watson said.

It's unclear what connection, if any, Mohn has to the base. He was not in the National Guard, Watson said.

It's not clear whether Mohn has an attorney; CNN has reached out to the Bucks County public defender for comment. He was arraigned early Wednesday via video, according to WPVI. A judge ordered him held without bond, court records show. His next hearing is set for February 8.

The victim's employer is "deeply saddened about the tragic death of our teammate Michael Mohn," the Army Corps of Engineers Philadelphia District said in a written statement. "He served with our Geo-Environmental Section. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Mohn family and we are focused on supporting our grieving employees at this time."

Ex-roommate: Mohn thought the government was after him years ago

As far back as 2016, JustinMohn had shown signs of paranoia and believed the government had been "out to get him," his former roommate Davis Rebhan told CNN.

Mohn and Rebhan met in 2016 when they were assigned to be roommates at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, Rebhan said.

"Even back then he had very clear issues. He would always talk about how the government was out to get him, and it was always like these vague stories about it. He would never give specific examples," Rebhan said. "He would tell me these stories that always seemed exaggerated, so it was hard to take anything he was saying seriously or know what he was saying the truth about."

"I thought he was just a weird kid who had some issues," Rebhan said. "But I obviously (wasn't) thinking he would do this or was dangerous."

Rebhan said they first lived in student housing for a few months before moving into an apartment off-campus for six months.

"At one point he had a hysterical fit and smashed the apartment," Rebhan said. "I wasn't home when he did it, so I don't know what triggered it. But we had a long conversation after that, and he told me had undiagnosed PTSD."

Rebhan reported the incident to property management and moved out in November 2016, he said.

'Deeply politicized, extreme rhetoric'

As authorities work to understand the motive behind the alleged crimes, "you can make some assumptions based on his claims in the video that he's been motivated by ***politics***," said McCabe, the former FBI deputy director.

"The bigger picture here is that this is another example of the fact that the kind of overheated, deeply politicized, extreme rhetoric that you hear sometimes in this country from politically elected officials and leaders actually has an impact on these marginalized people with extremist views who might be ... driven to embark in acts of violence," he said.

"Some of the things that he has said on the video - allegedly referring to woke mobs and things like that - that's not dissimilar from rhetoric that you hear from some politicians that we've heard recently in the primary season," McCabe said.

"So this kind of language has an effect on the ... most vulnerable, most potentially dangerous part of our population. And I think it's something that most security officials are really concerned about."

This story has been updated with additional information.

CNN's Zenebou Sylla and Amanda Jackson contributed to this report.

By Melissa Alonso, Holly Yan, Caroll Alvarado, Danny Freeman, Chris Boyette and Paul P. Murphy, CNN

TM & © 2024 Cable News Network, Inc., a Time Warner Company. All rights reserved.

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2024

**End of Document**