

# [***Man suspected of beheading his father bought a gun the day before fatally shooting him and abusing his corpse, DA says***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B7P-C2G1-DY7V-G01B-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

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

The man accused of [*showing his father's severed head*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/us/justin-mohn-father-beheaded-biden-video/index.html) during a politically charged online rant this week first shot the federal worker to death using a handgun he'd bought only a day earlier, a Pennsylvania prosecutor said Friday.

Justin Mohn, 32, was arrested hours later Tuesday after breaking into a state National Guard facility about 100 miles away, armed with a [*9 mm SIG Sauer*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/25/us/james-jennifer-crumbley-school-shooting-trial/index.html) handgun that was missing one round, Bucks County District Attorney Jennifer Schorn said.

Mohn told authorities he'd gone to the military installation "in an effort to mobilize the PA National Guard to raise arms against the federal government," Schorn said. Mohn's father had worked for the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Mohn was held without bond on charges including murder and abuse of a corpse, state court documents show. The gruesome, [*14-minute video*](https://bucks.crimewatchpa.com/da/29567/post/man-charged-killing-father-middletown-township-home) he posted [*was removed*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/tech/youtube-decapitation-video/index.html) over its graphic violence, YouTube said, after circulating for hours and garnering 5,000 views.

The horrific 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 this week 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.

Suspect decried federal workers, DA says

During the online diatribe, Mohn rails 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. He also says his father "Michael Mohn is in hell for being a traitor to his country," Schorn said Friday.

At one point, he holds up what looks like a bloodied head inside a clear plastic bag, the video shows.

"America is rotting from the inside out as far left, woke mobs rampage our once prosperous cities," Mohn says in the video, which he titled: "Mohn's Militia - Call to Arms for American Patriots," according to a criminal complaint.

In the video, Mohn broadly calls for violence against federal officials and employees "but exempts state government, state governors and state employees," Schorn noted.

Upon his arrest at the National Guard site, Mohn asked to speak with Pennsylvania's governor "to join forces," the prosecutor said.

A horrific discovery

Around 7 p.m. Tuesday, the suspect's mother - [*who was not home*](https://bucks.crimewatchpa.com/sites/default/files/29567/post/2024/01/justin_mohn_criminal_complaint.pdf) at the time of the killing - discovered her husband's decapitated body.

"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 the suspect.

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," YouTube said.

Alleged National Guard base break-in

Mohn fled 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.

Mohn was arraigned early Wednesday via video, according to CNN affiliate WPVI. A judge ordered him held without bond, court records show. His next hearing is set for February 8.

Mohn had minor encounters with police

The district attorney said Mohn had "no history of diagnosed mental health issues" and - so far - no known instances of voluntary or involuntary commitment to a psychiatric unit or hospital.

But Middletown Township Police did say they had encountered Mohn on three different occasions over the past 15 years.

One incident occurred in 2011 when Mohn was 19. He had an argument in his home driveway, but police found nothing criminal.

Another occurred in 2019, when Mohn reported a threat he said he received from a former employer but just wanted a record taken.

"And then last year, we did not have contact with Justin, but his employer from Philadelphia called one of our officers and just expressed concern about Justin's behavior at work and wanted legal advice on how to go about terminating his employment," Middletown Township Police Chief Joe Bartorilla said.

But the police department doesn't offer help for something like that, the chief said.

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

As far back as 2016, Justin Mohn 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 as 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 Paul P. Murphy, Melissa Alonso, Zenebou Sylla and Amanda Jackson contributed to this report.

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