

Honorable Dabney L. Friedrich
United States District Judge
333 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Judge Friedrich,

I understand it is very difficult to formulate a proper perception of a person when only seeing them via video conference, so I will try my best to give you an accurate depiction of myself and my actions. My name is Jackson Kostolsky and I am the only son of Robin and Thomas Kostolsky. I love my parents more than anything else in the world. They have been loving and supportive of me throughout my entire life and have been there for me since my arrest. They know me better than anyone else on earth and know I would never commit violence or vandalism or do anything contradictory to my character. If there is any silver lining in this case, I feel it has brought me and my parents closer together.

I could not have asked for better parents or a better upbringing. They raised me right. In my 32 years on this earth I have never been in serious trouble before. I have never committed any sort of violence or vandalism or belonged to any extremist groups or gangs. I abhor groupthink in all forms. I am an individual.

On the date of January 6th, I was invited to go along with a friend to Washington D.C. for a protest. I had initially declined. I would not consider myself a political person at all and never would have gone if I had to drive myself or did not have a ride to go there. I had no idea what was going to transpire that day. The text messages in my phone prove that I did not go there with any ill intent or to commit violence. When we arrived in Washington it was a giant block party. Patriotic people of all races and backgrounds gathered together to support their President. It was a fun experience initially. I even purposely wore an outfit that would undoubtedly stand out and make obvious I was there for fun and not violence.

We weren't close enough to even hear the President speak, but we heard he was going to lead a march towards the Capitol building. Just like many others on that day, I got caught up in the experience of it all and followed along to the Capitol, still ignorant of any intent to do anything more than simply protest.

I came upon the Capitol grounds unimpeded. I did not knock over a barricade or force my way through. I didn't even see a fence to keep people away. Not once was I defiantly resisting police orders. When on the Capitol grounds I did not act violent, in fact I got in line with several others to use the portopotty restroom. For merely standing in line to use the restroom, me and several others were hit with tear gas. I did not, and never even thought about reacting violently to what had just happened to me, I just took it in stride and proceeded to wait to use the restroom. I did not see who threw the tear gas but it certainly was not made obvious it was thrown by police. It crossed my mind it could have been done by counter protestors because I did not see any police in my immediate vicinity.

I can't fully explain why I did what I did. I got caught in a momentary lapse of judgement. I saw a large group of people walking through an open door (that was completely unguarded) to the inside of the Capitol. I foolishly followed the group inside a few feet and proceeded to take a video of the surrealness going on. I did not force my way inside or break a door to get inside.

Unlike many of the people who kept on walking further, I only remained inside for mere seconds. Once I was back outside the Capitol, I made no attempt to re-enter the building and just observed for a couple minutes. Shortly thereafter, I witnessed a man next to me start to break windows and that was when I got out of there. I didn't want anything to do with destroying property or violent behavior and I vacated the premises as quickly as I could and left.

This is the story I told my parents afterwards. This is the story I told investigators. This is the truth. I was forthright from the beginning and admitted my actions on that day to investigators when I was approached. I accept full responsibility for what I did on that day and then in court. I plead guilty to my crime of entering the Capitol and I accept my outcome.

All I ask for Your Honor is to be treated fairly and be treated for my individual actions that day apart from what else took place. I fully understand how reprehensible some of the acts committed on that day were. Anybody who commits violence against police or vandalizes should be punished accordingly in any situation. I did not partake in any violence and I left the scene when I saw it was going on around me. I have never been a violent person and I have many who can attest that I am a kind, caring, thoughtful, considerate person who doesn't deserve to be labeled the same as other violent protestors from that day. I appreciate the opportunity to explain my situation.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jackson Kostolsky