

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
PENSACOLA DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

Case Number 3:18cr45/RV

CRAIG T. POPE
_____ /

FACTUAL BASIS FOR GUILTY PLEA

The defendant admits that if this case were to proceed to trial, the government could prove the following facts.

Craig T. Pope, the defendant, was serving a sentence in state prison for crimes out of Hillsborough County, Florida. He started sending threatening letters to judges who presided over plea and/or post conviction matters in which he was involved. The first such letter, sent from Suwannee Correctional Institution, was sent to one particular judge. The second and third letters, sent from the Northern District of Florida by the defendant, are the subject of the instant indictment.

On April 26, 2017, the defendant mailed a letter from the Santa Rosa Correctional Institution to “Michelle Sisco Circuit Court Judge” in Hillsborough County for Judge Michelle Sisco. This letter stated, in part: “You have exactly 48 hours to get me back in court or someone in your courtroom will die and not only that, there will be an outbreak of anthrax in your courthouse who knows where I will

send it first . . . time is ticking.” This letter was received and read by an assistant to the Judge.

On May 14, 2017, the defendant mailed a letter from the Santa Rosa Correctional Institution to “Michelle Sisco Circuit Court Judge” in Hillsborough County, once again. This letter stated, in part: “here is a gift of Anthrax and when you receive this letter you will have exactly 4 hours before the courthouse explodes. The bomb is already in place, your security is no match to my brotherhood. Today you will understand that America will never be as powerful as my ISIS Family.” This letter was received and read by an assistant to the Judge. The letter contained a white powder. This triggered the Tampa Fire Rescue Hazardous Materials Response Team to respond to the courthouse and secure the evidence and potential weapon of mass destruction. Testing eventually provided a negative response for a biothreat, but all security protocols were initiated for those who could have been contaminated.

The defendant signed all three letters. A fingerprint of the defendant was lifted from the first letter. A questioned document expert hand writing comparison by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (“FDLE”) confirmed the defendant likely wrote all three letters. The defendant was interviewed by FDLE agents. Post *Miranda*, the defendant admitted to mailing all three letters. He explained that he was upset about his state court plea/sentence. The defendant admitted crushing a

pill into the last letter to look like anthrax. All three letters were caused to be delivered in interstate commerce, the mail system, by the defendant.

Elements of the Offenses

Counts One and Two

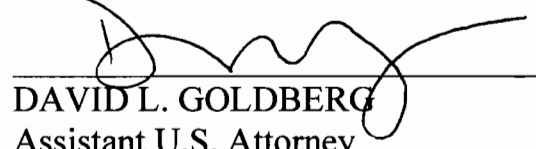
1. The defendant knowingly sent a message in interstate commerce or using a facility of interstate commerce such as the mails;
2. Containing a true threat to injure the person of another.

Count Three

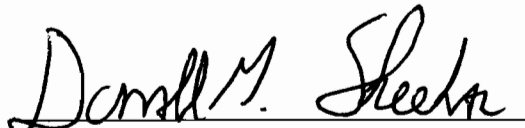
1. The defendant knowingly threatened to use a weapon of mass destruction without lawful authority, herein anthrax; and
2. The defendant knowingly did so against a person or property within the United States and the mail or any facility of interstate or foreign commerce was used in furtherance of the offense or such property was used in interstate or foreign commerce or in an activity that affected interstate or foreign commerce.

CHRISTOPHER P. CANOVA

United States Attorney


 DAVID L. GOLDBERG
 Assistant U.S. Attorney
 Northern District of Florida
 Member of the Maryland Bar
 21 East Garden Street, Suite 400
 Pensacola, Florida 32502
 (850) 444-4000

6/7/18
 Date



DONALD M. SHEEHAN
 Attorney for Defendant
 Florida Bar No. 464724
 1500 West Garden Street
 Pensacola, Florida 32502
 (850) 432-3034

5/31/18
 Date



CRAIG T. POPE
 Defendant
5-31-18
 Date