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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

15cr10153-WGY

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United States vs. David Wright \* JUDGE'S FINDINGS  
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BEFORE: Honorable Judge William G. Young

Richard H. Romanow  
Official Court Reporter  
United States District Court  
1 Courthouse Way  
Boston, Massachusetts 02210

December 19, 2017

1           THE COURT: Mr. David Wright, pursuant to 18  
2 United States Code, Section 3553A, the information from  
3 the United States Attorney, your attorney, the probation  
4 office and yourself, this Court sentences you to 28  
5 years in the custody of the United States Attorney  
6 General. You'll have credit towards the service of that  
7 sentence from June 2nd, 2015 to the present. The  
8 specific sentence on each count is as follows: Counts  
9 1, 3, and 5, 20 years. Count 2, 5 years. Count 4, 28  
10 years. The sentence on each count to run concurrent,  
11 one with the other. There will be no fine due to your  
12 inability to pay a fine. Thereafter, when you are  
13 released, you will remain on supervised release for the  
14 rest of your life. Supervised release will have all the  
15 general conditions and the following special conditions  
16 of supervised release.

17           You will have nothing to do with the victim,  
18 Pamela Geller, no contact, communication, no physical  
19 proximity of any sort. You will be available for mental  
20 health counseling at the discretion of the appropriate  
21 probation officer, and to the extent of your ability to  
22 pay, you will pay the costs of that counseling. I  
23 decline to exercise a recommendation as to where you  
24 will serve this sentence.

25           Let me explain this sentence to you, Mr. Wright.

1 In one sense this case follows a familiar arc -- they've  
2 got graphs of all these things, there was superb law  
3 enforcement activity here to protect us all, your case  
4 came on reasonably promptly for trial, fair procedures  
5 throughout, a guilty verdict on overwhelming evidence,  
6 and a severe sentence. But if I stop there, I have not  
7 fully explained the reason for the sentence and we miss  
8 out on the larger issues, and they seem to me to be  
9 these.

10 You are not a monster, yet you embrace a monstrous  
11 evil. You stand before this Court a convicted  
12 terrorist, no doubt in my mind about that. You've got  
13 to live with the fact that you sent your uncle out there  
14 to be killed, laughing and chortling in the hope  
15 obviously that he would kill or maim someone else.  
16 That's on your conscience.

17 At the same time this case -- you see trials  
18 matter, and jury trials matter especially, they really  
19 are both a test and a celebration of a free people  
20 governing themselves. Thomas Jefferson said "The jury  
21 is the greatest anchor humankind has ever conceived for  
22 holding the government to the principles of its  
23 Constitution." And so it is here.

24 For the first time I, as a presiding officer, as a  
25 citizen, came to understand what it meant to be

1 "radicalized." A couple of clicks on the computer, the  
2 dark web, and all this material is there. And like the  
3 jurors -- and the government properly provided me with  
4 the full record of the evidence and I have reviewed all  
5 of it before this hearing, I have sat and watched with  
6 horrified fascination, and I admit it, of the monstrous  
7 evil that you embraced.

8 Now ISIS is just about done, it's about to be  
9 relegated to the dust bin of history, forgotten and  
10 reviled, and whatever you say now that's what you chose,  
11 at the same time we are a society awash in vicarious  
12 violence and what these -- the evidence here is they  
13 have the hideous attraction of a snuff video. And  
14 there's always going to be restless young men in search  
15 of a cause. You made the wrong choice, a terrible  
16 choice, and in my mind you made it knowingly and this  
17 sentence reflects it. But I cannot sentence you without  
18 acknowledging that we're not going to arrest our way out  
19 of this situation. There's going to be other young men,  
20 restless, on the web, ISIS will be gone, looking for a  
21 cause, and I have searched my conscience as to what we  
22 do about that, and the best I can come up with is that  
23 the life's work of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who  
24 challenges us to understand American democracy, that's a  
25 challenge, that's where heroism and self-sacrifice and

1 struggling against the odds, that goes on day by day.

2 Have you ever heard of Humayun Khan, Captain  
3 Humayun Khan, First Infantry Division, fought and died  
4 for the men he marched among? You come from Everett.  
5 Have you ever heard of the 54th Massachusetts? A young  
6 man from Everett served in that regiment. Or the 9th?  
7 The 10th Cavalry? The 24th Infantry? And I don't need  
8 military examples, there's heroism throughout this  
9 society, building, shaping American democracy.

10 Have you ever heard of Crispus Attucks?

11 THE DEFENDANT: No.

12 THE COURT: Have you heard of Frederick  
13 Douglass?

14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

15 THE COURT: Harriet Tubman? Leila Robinson?  
16 Martin Luther King? Thurgood Marshall? And I don't  
17 have to go back to history. And you've acknowledged it  
18 -- you know you have acknowledged it, everyone has  
19 treated you with the utmost fairness, and you're right  
20 to acknowledge it.

21 There's heroes right here in this courtroom, I can  
22 name them for you, people who love this country, not in  
23 some sort of blind authoritarian way, but who look at  
24 that flag and have an understanding, a nuanced  
25 understanding of the republic for which it stands.

1 Ms. Seigmann. Mr. Gonzalez. Mr. Tumposky. Ms. Hedges.  
2 And every single one of the jury that carefully  
3 considered this evidence and convicted you. Those are  
4 the heroes.

5 This is a fair and a just sentence. You have the  
6 right to appeal from any findings or rulings the Court  
7 has made against you. Should you appeal and should your  
8 appeal be successful, in whole or in part and the case  
9 remanded, you'll be resentenced before another judge.

10 Think about this. Two days from now everyone will  
11 have forgotten about this. There's going to be other  
12 things on the news. It will all be forgotten. But some  
13 things endure. 28 years from now -- I'll be gone, but  
14 there'll be a judge sitting here in this courtroom and  
15 we won't care about her faith or lack of faith, we won't  
16 care what race she is, but she'll be younger than I am  
17 and she'll be stronger than I am and she'll be so much  
18 smarter than I am, and she will sit here and reach out  
19 for justice. That flag will still fly here and we will  
20 yet be free.

21 Now you made your choice. In the hearts of all  
22 Americans, all Americans who know the story, it will  
23 shine the name of Humayun Khan, combat infantryman.  
24 Think about that. That's the sentence of the court.  
25 Stand him down, Mr. Officer.

1 MS. SIEGMANN: Your Honor?

2 THE COURT: Yes.

3 MS. SIEGMANN: The Count 4 has to run  
4 consecutive to the remaining counts, and you have said  
5 they were going to run concurrently?

6 THE COURT: I did and therefore I will, um,  
7 since the -- I will make that an 8-year count, so that  
8 the total sentence is 28 years. And that's the sentence  
9 of the court. And I thank you for the correction.

10 MS. SIEGMANN: Thank you, your Honor.

11 THE COURT: He's remanded to the custody of  
12 the marshals.

13 (Ends, 3:25 p.m.)

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