

(Att. No. 2)

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11/10/17

Greg Scholl, Esq.
Metropolitan Public Defender
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RE: State vs. Jeremy Christian, provisional report prepared for bail hearing

Dear Mr. Scholl:

Thank you for your request that I consult with you regarding your client, Mr. Jeremy J. Christian. You have requested that I provide a provisional report based on my evaluation to date. In performing this consultation, I interviewed Mr. Christian on four occasions for a total of more than 12 hours. I have also interviewed his parents for approximately two hours each and two community friends for approximately an hour each. I have reviewed extensive records, including offense reports, interviews, and video; criminal records; correctional records; and other discovery. I have also consulted scholarly sources. These evaluation procedures are reasonably relied upon by clinical and forensic psychologists in coming to their findings and opinions. Many additional interviews and further records review are pending. Accordingly, I anticipate that my findings will be supplemented and potentially revised by additional information that is made known to me.

Qualifications: I am board-certified in both clinical and forensic psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology, and have decades of experience in these fields. I have authored or coauthored over 60 scholarly publications, including a text, edited book chapters, peer-reviewed articles, commentary, and exemplar case-reports. My research, scholarship, and practice have been recognized with regional and national awards. My practice is national in scope.

Identifying information: Mr. Christian is a 35-year-old man charged with the aggravated murder of two men and the attempted murder of a third. These charges stem from an incident on the Portland MAX train on 05/26/17.

Disclosure: At the outset of my interview of Mr. Christian and third parties, I advised that while retained as an agent of the defense, my findings might not prove favorable to Mr. Christian. I further advised that I would share what I learned with defense counsel and if called to testify by the defense, my findings and opinions, as well as any information I had obtained from any source, may be disclosed. They acknowledged this disclosure.

Biographical summary: Jeremy Christian (dob 05/01/82) is the third of four sons born to the marriage of his parents. His parents separated in 1988, with his father continuing to live nearby. His father returned to the family home in approximately 1997 to provide more structure for his sons, but the marriage continued to be devitalized. Jeremy withdrew from school in 9th grade and was home schooled for a year. He obtained a GED at age 16. He worked at a pizza restaurant as a teen. Mr. Christian was convicted of armed robbery at age 20 and was in the Oregon Department of Corrections for 8 years 4 months. He was released in September 2010. Mr. Christian was arrested on a gun charge in November 2010 and confined in county jail four months. He returned to jail for six months in May 2012 on a weapons charge. In 2013, Mr. Christian served nine months in Sheridan FCI, a federal Bureau of Prisons facility. He has been variously residing in his parents' home or staying with friends when not in custody since his release from the Oregon Department of Corrections in 2010. His brothers also reside in the family home or with extended family.

Findings:

1. Jeremy Christian has been broadly unable to meet expected adult roles for autonomy, occupation, and relationships.

At the time of his arrest in May 2017, Mr. Christian resided in his parents' household or transiently with friends. Though 35-years-old, he has never had his own apartment or lived independently. Mr. Christian has never had a driver's license and expresses no interest in driving or owning a vehicle. Except for working in a pizza restaurant from age 16-20, he has had no competitive employment for longer than a few weeks. Mr. Christian's limited spending money since 2012 has come from selling second-hand comic books on the street or selling plasma. His typical pattern each day was to sell comics from a cart in front of Powell's Books in downtown Portland. The proceeds of this were quite limited for the hours expended and discomforts of weather exposure. Mr. Christian has never married or had a serious romantic relationship. During the past several years he has had two friendships with women who were variously 19 and 33 years his senior. He explained the absence of romantic relationships: "I did not want to date." He has no children.

2. Jeremy Christian rationalizes his failure to establish a functional adulthood with idiosyncratic political beliefs. He had unrealistic plans for future adult roles.

Mr. Christian explained that he has not obtained a driver's license or had any interest in driving because cars pollute the environment. He rationalized that he has not sought employment since 2012 because he is against taxation, which he regards as the government "punking" the citizens. Mr. Christian reported that he has not pursued a serious romantic relationship because he has misgivings about women. These beliefs can be elaborated on in a future report.

Mr. Christian also attributed aspects of his failure to establish a functional adulthood as deliberate. He explained that society marginalized him as an "ex-con" upon coming out of prison, so he determined "not to participate in a society where I was marginalized." He specified that he would not have a bank account and would not hold employment where taxes would be withheld. Friends of Mr. Christian, however, attributed his avoidance of adult roles to his underlying sense of inadequacy and associated fears.

Mr. Christian's plans for future adult roles were naïvely childlike and unrealistic. He described that he had planned to amass a sufficient comic book collection that he could sell for \$10,000. With this money, he would immigrate to Brazil and live among an aboriginal tribe on the Amazon. He exhibited no insight regarding the practical impediments of this plan. Mr. Christian described alternative scenarios for his life in Brazil of getting some farmland and growing hemp and marijuana. He admitted that he has no knowledge of farming, but explained that there are plenty of Germans and indigenous people there who know how to farm; "all you need is money." Mr. Christian detailed an alternative plan of going to Argentina, because there are no copyright laws there. This would allow him to print comic book images on t-shirts, products which would then be sold worldwide in countries not having intellectual property protection laws. The logistics of this seemed to be an irrelevant detail.

Mr. Christian had taken no practical steps to operationalize this improbable enterprise of immigrating to South America, such as beginning to learn Portuguese or Spanish. He reported that he had accessed Brazil's constitution on the Internet.

3. Jeremy Christian has a longstanding obsessive focus on comic books.

Mr. Christian reported that his interest in comic books began at age 13. He described that as a teen, he would shoplift videogames to sell so that he could purchase comics. Mr. Christian recalled that when he went to prison at age 20, he had approximately 500 comic books. Since his release from prison in 2010, by buying/selling/trading, his collection has grown to 15,000 comic books. Much of his time has been organized in this pursuit. He described frequenting Goodwill and garage sales for high demand paperback books, which he would then sell on Amazon. With the proceeds, he bought comic books. Mr. Christian has an encyclopedic knowledge of comic books and described having an eidetic

memory for their covers. Mr. Christian acknowledged that his amassing of comic books reflects hoarding behavior, as these were stacked in his bedroom and filled the living room in his parents' home. He rationalized, though, that at least he was hoarding something of value.

Mr. Christian's obsession with comic books appears to have met a number of psychological needs. Because Mr. Christian has significant limitations in interpersonal fluency (discussed subsequently), discussion of comic books provided structure for his social interactions and conversation. His encyclopedic expertise on this topic supported his self-esteem, which was otherwise fragile in the face of the obvious inadequacy of his adult functioning. Mr. Christian's hoarding provided an external structure for his identity and an associated defense against anxiety.

4. Jeremy Christian's social impairments also take the form of idiosyncratic, improbable, and conspiratorial beliefs.

Mr. Christian espouses a number of eccentric beliefs that are quite resistant to alternative perspectives. Examples of these beliefs include his reasons for refusing to pay taxes and his strong feelings against monotheism and circumcision. Mr. Christian exhibited a number of other beliefs that reflected little critical appraisal. These included criminal activity by the Clintons, a prison-industrial complex, alien visitations, implications of the Van Allen Belt, and the failure of the Bible (in contrast to the Book of Mormon) to reference North and South America.

Mr. Christian reported that in 2014-2015, he became increasingly focused on "free speech." He described free speech as the most important right possessed by Americans. He asserted that if this right is not exercised, it will be lost. Mr. Christian explained that he exercised his right to free speech by deliberately saying things that were not politically correct and were calculated to violate cultural taboos, upset religious sensibilities, or challenge political positions. He expressed perceptions that those on both the right and left of the political spectrum were similarly intolerant. Mr. Christian asserted that both the left and the right were hypocrites, as each desired their own freedom of expression but did not extend this to the opposing position.

Notably absent from Mr. Christian's fervent espousal of beliefs and opinions was any semblance of assertions of "white supremacy." Quite the contrary, he asserted that persons holding beliefs that one group, race, religion, or political system is superior are the fundamental problem with fascism, communism, and monotheism – leading to intolerance, war, and genocide. Mr. Christian reported that he is virulently anti-fascist, though he noted that the communists have exterminated larger numbers of people than the Nazis. Friends characterized Mr. Christian as quite opinionated on a variety of topics, but these have not included espousing white supremacy or racism in any form. Mr. Christian's only apparent sense of "superiority" is a self-perception that he recognizes fallacies, conspiracies, and hypocrisies that others do not.

As Mr. Christian recounted his beliefs during my interviews of him, his voice volume increased and his speech became more pressured. The content he described had a scripted quality, as if he had expressed the same ideas with the same wording many times before. One of his friends similarly described that Mr. Christian would get “loud and passionate” about “enlightening” her. She further characterized that as Mr. Christian engaged in discussion with her, it was not a reciprocal conversation. Rather, when you “light the fire” Mr. Christian is “off and running.” He would get on a soapbox or tangent, interrupting any attempt to interject. Another female friend characterized that Mr. Christian would “light his own fire,” with his passion increasing as he continued talking about one of his beliefs.

5. In the face of his fundamental sense of inadequacy and lack of social fluency, Jeremy Christian relates to others as a provocateur.

Mr. Christian is broadly deficient in his social fluency, an outgrowth of marked limitations in “theory of mind.” Stated more simply, Mr. Christian has difficulty recognizing, understanding, and anticipating the emotions, needs, agendas, and reactions of others. For this reason, social-emotional reciprocity is difficult for him. He can respond to queries or preach, but is unable to sustain a casual conversation of mutual inquiry – much less intimacy. His inability to successfully engage in courtship behaviors (i.e., dating) illustrates this impairment.

Mr. Christian retains needs for social contact and some sense of interpersonal significance, but is simply too socially dysfluent to meet these in a normal well-socialized fashion. Instead, Mr. Christian exhibits two social engagement strategies. First, he relates to others by preaching to them about one of his beliefs – to “educate” them. This allows him to demonstrate his superior knowledge/perspective while employing a well-practiced verbal sequence. In this way, he compensates for feelings of inadequacy and avoids the improvisation demands of reciprocal conversation. Though viewing himself as engaging in a form of “preaching,” Mr. Christian acknowledged that his discussions with others challenging their beliefs have rarely, if ever, persuaded his listeners.

Second, Mr. Christian deliberately espouses beliefs that he knows will disturb his audience. This provocation meets a number of agendas. It validates his right to free speech, one of the few expressions of adult autonomy he can demonstrate. The disturbed reaction of the listener illustrates the hypocrisy of claiming to support American liberty – until it crosses some politically correct or sacrilegious line. The reaction of the listener is also a demonstration of Mr. Christian’s interpersonal significance, an otherwise near vacant arena of self-esteem.

To illustrate his provocateur role, Mr. Christian described that while in front of Powell Books at his comic book cart, he would announce: “You are going to hell if you don’t support Bernie Sanders!” Others would respond that he could not preach fire and brimstone. He replied that he could preach whatever he wanted. He advised his audience

that if they did not support free speech, they could go live somewhere else. Mr. Christian recalled that the police were subsequently called on a couple of occasions.

Mr. Christian lacks insight into the degree of reaction his verbal provocations may stir in others. This is another feature of his deficiencies in social understanding. As a result, he does not anticipate that others may respond to him with physical aggression. One of Mr. Christian's female friends recalled warning him that potential physical confrontations could put him in legal jeopardy, advising it was not smart to "piss people off" when you are an ex-con and asserting unpopular positions. However, this did not appear to inform a risk-benefit analysis of whether to verbalize in a highly provocative fashion. Mr. Christian regards that because he has the right to free speech, whatever confrontation follows is the fault of those seeking to silence him.

6. Jeremy Christian's provocative behaviors become more pronounced when under the influence of alcohol.

Mr. Christian reported that his provocative behaviors become more socially intrusive, louder, and persistent when he has been drinking. On Thursday 05/25/17, he described consuming 4-8 ounces of Vello Sangria before departing for the MAX. He carried with him a 32-ounce Gatorade bottle he had filled with Sangria, and had consumed approximately half of this at the time of his confrontation on the MAX with an African-American woman who accused him of being a racist. He also recalled that he had been smoking marijuana all day.

Mr. Christian recalled that on Friday 05/26/17, he began drinking Sangria at 2:00-3:00 p.m. and estimated he had consumed 20 ounces before departing for the MAX. He described again carrying the wine with him onto the MAX, consuming an additional 15 ounces there. Mr. Christian characterized that he was "buzzed" at the time of the offense.

7. Jeremy Christian described being in his provocateur role on the MAX preceding the 05/26/17 offense.

Mr. Christian described intending to do his "free speech thing" on the MAX on 05/26/17, as he was still angry from the incident on the MAX the preceding evening. He was carrying two books: the *Book of Mormon: Another testament of Jesus Christ* and *The Vinland Sagas: The Norse Discovery of America: "Graenlendinga Saga" and "Eirik's Saga" (Classics)*, having recurrently utilized each as a prop in challenging others. Mr. Christian reported that if he has been drinking, he tends to "talk politics" on the MAX to see if he "can get someone's goat."

Mr. Christian has viewed video with defense counsel of the events involving him on the MAX on 05/26/17. His recollection may have been supplemented by this review. With that caution, Mr. Christian recalled that he began by announcing to his fellow passengers

that if they desired a good history of America, they should read the *The Vinland Sagas*. He recalled that he then took his *Book of Mormon* text out of his bag and asked: “

If your omniscient God created the whole world in seven days, why does it not say anything about North and South America? Why is the Book of Mormon the only one that says anything about North and South America? Why didn't God send His prophets over here?

Mr. Christian reported asserting these positions to see if anyone was willing to debate him. He recalled that as he was talking about the *Book of Mormon*, people were shaking their heads. He responded to this dissent by announcing that he had free speech. Mr. Christian recalled “some lady” telling him that he did not have free speech on the MAX. He described a male passenger was shaking his head [now identified as Shawn Ford], so Mr. Christian said to him: “You don't like free speech? Move to Saudi Arabia and see how that works – get your head cut off!” He recalled that this man kept shaking his head.

Mr. Christian recalled that he then turned to circumcision, announcing that circumcision of children is now illegal in Norway and that you have to be at least 16-years-old to consent to it. He asserted that in time circumcision would be illegal here as well. Mr. Christian recalled saying that the Supreme Court does not want to hear a case involving circumcision because it would be forced to make it illegal. He recalled explaining that because female circumcision is illegal, the Supreme Court would be forced to make male mutilation illegal too. Mr. Christian recalled further announcing that circumcision would become illegal here because it's sodomy. He recalled repeating his remedy: “If you don't like free speech, then get out!”

Mr. Christian reported that at that point the whole MAX was in an uproar, telling him that he could not say that. He described that he had never gotten that degree of reaction before. Mr. Christian reported that previously one person might engage in arguing with him, but not a whole MAX car. Despite this uproar and its potential escalation, Mr. Christian described that he dropped his “bomb,” loudly announcing:

You guys want to hear my plan for world peace? If you want world peace, all you have to do is get one billion Christians and one billion Muslims to kill each other, then all the Jews will kill themselves because they will have no one left to manipulate!

At odds with accounts in the media, Mr. Christian reported that the two girls on the MAX did not cross his mind. He recalled that they were on their headphones and cell phones. He reported that he did not speak to them or direct any of his remarks specifically to them. Mr. Christian recalled that the girls were 15 feet away and moved at some point. Mr. Christian also denied that he made any reference regarding faggots, Africa, Iran, or hating Asians. He noted in my interview: “Half my family are Vietnamese” [in-laws of a

brother]. Mr. Christian reiterated that his reference to Saudi Arabia was in regard to free speech. He denied that he has white supremacist beliefs.

The sequence of events leading up to the physical confrontation as described by Mr. Christian is consistent with video taken within the MAX.

8. In the escalating confrontation that followed, Mr. Christian described misperceptions of imminent attack by three or more assailants.

As detailed above, Mr. Christian is deficient in his ability to accurately anticipate the reactions of others. This deficit may have been aggravated in the escalating confrontation that followed his verbally provocative pronouncements, as he feared a physical attack by a group of passengers. There is also the potential that a context of multiple potential assailants activated survival responses from his prison experience.

Mr. Christian recalled that after he dropped his world peace “bomb,” a man [now identified as Taliesin Myrddin Namkai-Meche] approached to make a cell phone recording from two feet away. He described a vague recall that the camera cell phone was in his personal space so he slapped it away. He recalled that another man [now identified as Micah Fletcher] then got in his face along with Mr. Namkai-Meche. Mr. Christian reported he had thought Mr. Fletcher pushed him first, but the video reflected all three being chest to chest. Mr. Christian recalled that he began challenging Mr. Namkai-Meche and Mr. Fletcher: “What are you going to do? What are you going to do? What are you going to do?” He reported he pushed one of the men in the chest. Mr. Christian recalled that Mr. Fletcher was telling him to get off the MAX. He recalled that Mr. Fletcher grabbed him and then pushed him down onto a seat multiple times. This sequence of interactions as recalled by Mr. Christian is consistent with video of the incident.

Mr. Christian recalled an expectation that he was about to be beaten up by several men or even a larger group of people on the MAX. He recalled this vulnerability as “feeling like prison,” describing that prison is the only context where he has had to fight multiple assailants – detailing a number of instances where this had occurred. Mr. Christian recalled thinking he needed to “take care of business” as rapidly as possible to keep from being beaten by a group. In the rapid escalation of the confrontation, particularly under the influence of alcohol, it is improbable that Mr. Christian had conscious associations with prison or a logical consideration of how to respond. These are likely to be a product of post-hoc reconstruction. This does not negate, however, his experience of acute physical vulnerability and the triggering of prison survival responses.

Mr. Christian described being on “auto-pilot” as the stabbings occurred. He described not recalling the sequence of events of the other stabbings, learning of this as he viewed the video. He described believing he had been grabbed from behind by the third man he stabbed, and was surprised when this was not reflected in the video. He reported he had not known how this man went down until viewing the video. Mr. Christian recalled that

he was barely conscious of his actions until he heard people yelling: “He’s stabbing them! He’s killing them!” He recalled then realizing that there was no immediate threat – “snapping out of a fight or flight response.”

9. When fearful or angry, Jeremy Christian exhibits brittle control over his emotions/behavior, as well as an associated “kindling” pattern characterized by impairment in his ability to calm himself.

Post-arrest, Mr. Christian exhibited a sustained period of agitation, verbal abuse, and bizarre verbalizations. These behaviors are demonstrated by audio recording of Mr. Christian while being treated by emergency room personnel and video of his confinement in a holding cell immediately post-arrest. Mr. Christian exhibited fragmented memory for this period of time and could not explain some of his more bizarre verbalizations. The severity, disorganization, and duration of his affect and associated behavior point to his lacking capacities to calm himself and reestablish equilibrium when highly activated.

Mr. Christian’s sustained agitation and disorganization following his arrest also point to sharply limited coping capabilities and brittle control over his emotions and behavior when frustrated or under threat. Consistent with such brittle control, Mr. Christian reported that after being pushed down the third time, he simply reacted on autopilot.

10. Jeremy Christian was deteriorating psychologically in the months preceding the offense and was particularly stressed by the events of the preceding day.

Mr. Christian reported increasing feelings of vulnerability in the months prior to May 2017, as the political polarization in the country increased. He responded by beginning to carry a knife.

One of Mr. Christian’s friends reported her observation that in the six months preceding the stabbings, Mr. Christian “became different.” She characterized that he seemed more extreme and uptight, as if stressed about something that he was not talking about. She was quite surprised that he was going to a free speech rally in April, as this was a “180 degree turn” for him. She explained that previously he had refused to attend rallies or protests with her because of the associated police presence. She described his explanation that he was going to the 82nd Avenue parade because they were “messing” with his hometown and that he needed to “standup” for his city. She recalled that on Wednesday, 05/24/17, two days before his arrest, they had a verbal confrontation over his making particularly outrageous statements about Christians and Muslims – culminating in her slapping him. He gave her back his key to her apartment.

Another female friend also observed Mr. Christian to be more frustrated and “wound up” about politics in the six months preceding the stabbings. She characterized that he seemed to be “riding the larger social wave” of political tension and dissidence in the country. She recalled that he became even more agitated in March, asserting that Antifa (i.e., anti-

fascist) were in fact acting like fascists in wearing masks and trying to bar expression of other views. She described being surprised that he was ranting on the MAX, as it was not his pattern to harass anyone. This friend also recalled that in April 2017, Mr. Christian's mother began pressing her sons to move their things out of the parents' home and into storage. Mr. Christian was unhappy about the prospect of his comics being less safe and accessible, as well as the prospect of losing all of them if the storage fee went unpaid.

Mr. Christian's mother reported that on the evening prior to his arrest, she had called a family meeting to advise her sons that they needed to remove all of their belongings from her home. She indicated that she would pay for the first two months of storage. She recalled that Mr. Christian protested, saying that his things might not be safe there. This announcement is viewed as a significant stressor for Mr. Christian. As noted earlier, Mr. Christian had hoarded approximately 15,000 comic books, stacked in his bedroom and in the living room. The hoarding is a defense against anxiety. The prospect of losing this insulation between the hoarder and the dangers of the world produces significant distress and even panic.

11. Mr. Christian's prison experiences had an exacerbating impact on his social dysfluency.

Mr. Christian's deficits in social understanding/fluency and reciprocal social-emotional interactions appear to have familial origins that predated his incarceration at age 20. To illustrate, a number of aspects of the robbery resulting in his imprisonment reflected blatant failures to accurately anticipate the perceptions/reactions of others. These included robbing a convenience store where he was well-known and where wearing a mask could be an inadequate disguise, leaving the scene on a bicycle, having his ski mask protruding from his back pocket when contacted by the police, still having the robbery proceeds on his person rather than planting this to retrieve later, and beginning to draw a gun when being actively challenged by a police officer. The latter resulted in his being shot in the face.

Mr. Christian entered prison as a socially impaired 20-year-old from a middle class suburban background with no prior gang, juvenile custody, or adult criminal history. His associated vulnerability is obvious. Responding to confrontation or potential victimization with sudden, serious violence was an effective survival strategy, particularly for someone whose alternative social response range was limited. As a result, Mr. Christian spent much of the next eight years in solitary confinement. This isolation had an additional benefit of allowing him to withdraw from the challenges of interacting with staff and other inmates. Solitary confinement, however, has well-established psychologically injurious impacts that may endure long after release from this confinement. Mr. Christian recalled feeling suicidal in solitary, considering ripping the veins in his wrists with his teeth.

Mr. Christian recalled that it took him several years to get “climatized” to being out of prison. He described that selling comic books was a way to force himself to get out and interact socially. He described an incident of being “cold-cocked” at a party, and “every prison fight I had been in came rushing back.” He described broadly being more vigilant regarding his surroundings. A female friend described Mr. Christian as exhibiting odd behaviors around food preparation and eating, as if still in prison.

Mr. Christian was likely to have had significant challenges establishing a functional adulthood under the most benevolent and supportive of circumstances. Instead, his early adult socialization was in prison, where he missed critically important developmental steps such as establishing responsible independence and autonomy, selecting and preparing for a career, practicing with adult roles and relationships, establishing a network of pro-social relationships, and identifying as a participant in the community. In many important respects, he did not “grow up.” Consistent with this observation, one of his female friends characterized that Mr. Christian was like a “big kid” – still focused on “comic books and super-heroes.”

Violent interactions, solitary confinement, and aborted socialization associated with his eight years in prison served to exacerbate Mr. Christian’s pre-existing psychological vulnerabilities. Already impaired in his ability to navigate life demands and interactions as an adult, he now labored under a label of being an ex-con as well. Mr. Christian responded by withdrawing further from the adult social mainstream. One of his female friends described: “He had fears and confidence issues he did not want to admit.”

12. Mr. Christian exhibits symptoms implicating a number of psychological disorders.

Formal diagnosis of Mr. Christian awaits additional family history, collateral interviews of third parties, and records review. That said, his deficits in social fluency, theory of mind, and interpersonal interactions are on a socialization disorder spectrum. This may also account for his limited abilities to calm himself and the brittleness of coping resources. There appears to be a familial vulnerability to the socialization disorder continuum. Mr. Christian’s amassing and stacking of comic books implicates a hoarding disorder, a variant of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Hoarding is also generationally present in his family system. Mr. Christian appears to have self-medicated his anxiety with substance abuse. Mr. Christian also exhibits reactions consistent with posttraumatic stress disorder.

Please advise me if I may provide any additional information or perspective at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark D. Cunningham", written in a cursive style.

Mark D. Cunningham, Ph.D., ABPP