

Citizen's Arrest of War Criminal George W. Bush: Court Case in Canada

Anti-Bush Protester Handed Fine, One-Year Probation

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CALGARY — A Chase, B.C., man will not go to jail after being convicted of obstructing a peace officer while protesting former U.S. president George W. Bush's visit to Calgary last year.

Provincial court Judge Manfred Delong handed a conditional discharge Monday to John Pasquale Boncore, 58, and placed him on probation for a year.

Boncore — who also goes by the name of Splitting the Sky — must make a \$1,000 donation to a charity of his choice and pay a \$50 victim fine surcharge as conditions of his probation.

Court heard Boncore, who wanted to have Bush arrested as a war criminal, tried to cross a line of city police officers providing security as the former president spoke at the Telus Convention Centre on March 17, 2009.

Boncore told the judge before sentencing that if being fined \$1,000 "for trying to apprehend a war criminal of the Bush administration, and possibly stop torture and murder," then "bring it on."

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who has worked for many years in aboriginal rights with Boncore, a former resident of Buffalo, N.Y., gave a strong character reference on the man's behalf during Monday's hearing.

Outside court, Clark condemned the Bush administration for "the most unspeakable aggression" since the Second World War in starting conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. He insisted there shouldn't be a problem with protesting something you believe in.

"It's important people see that side of (Bush's regime)," said Clark. "If (the U.S.) continued this war aggression, it's going to be a short and difficult future for everybody."

A defiant Boncore told the judge before sentencing he wasn't there to incite violence but that he "(believes) in my heart that George W. Bush is a war criminal."

Crown prosecutor Tracy Davis, who did not seek any jail time, nevertheless called Boncore's actions that day a well-planned and deliberate action.

Defence lawyer Charles Davison had sought a discharge for his client, who had no prior

criminal record and has a good standing in his community.

Delong said the issue did not have anything to do with Boncore's beliefs but rather what he had done that day.

He called the obstruction a relatively minor offence compared to similar cases.

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