

# Manafort sentenced to 7.5 years, faces fresh charges

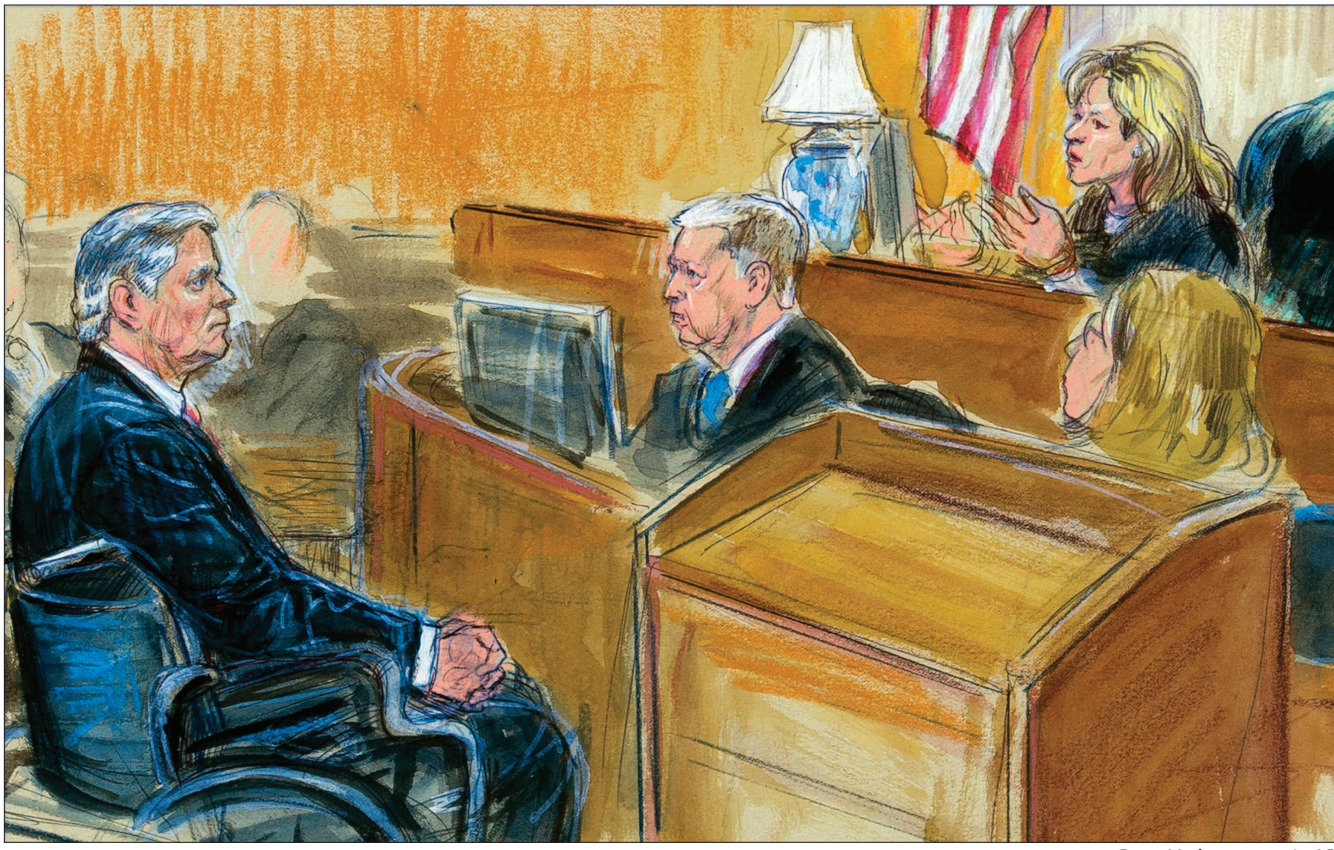
By ERIC TUCKER and CHAD DAY  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort was sentenced to a total of seven and a half years in prison on Wednesday after a federal judge rejected his appeal for no additional time and rebuked him for his crimes and years of lies.

Within minutes of the sentencing, prosecutors in New York brought state charges against Manafort — a move that appeared at least partly designed to guard against the possibility that President Donald Trump could pardon him. The president can pardon federal crimes, but not state offenses.

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson sentenced Manafort to nearly three-and-a-half years in prison on charges that he misled the U.S. government about his foreign lobbying work and encouraged witnesses to lie on his behalf. That punishment is on top of a roughly four-year sentence he received last week in a separate case in Virginia. He is expected to get credit for the nine months of jail time he's done already.

The sentencing hearing was a milestone moment in special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia in the 2016 election campaign. Manafort was among the first people charged in the investigation, and though the allegations did not relate to his work for Trump, his foreign entanglements and business relationship with a



Dana Verkouteren via AP

This courtroom sketch shows Paul Manafort listening to Judge Amy Berman Jackson in the U.S. District Courtroom during his sentencing hearing in Washington on Wednesday.

man the U.S. says has ties to Russian intelligence have made him a pivotal figure in the probe.

Though the judge made clear that the case against Manafort had nothing to do with Russian election interference, she also scolded Manafort's lawyers for asserting that their client was only charged because prosecutors couldn't get him on crimes related to potential collusion with the Trump campaign.

"The no-collusion mantra is simply a non sequitur," she said, suggesting that those arguments were meant for an audience outside the courtroom — presumably a reference to the president, who has expressed sympathy

for Manafort and not ruled out a pardon.

Jackson also harshly criticized Manafort for years of deception that extended even into her own courtroom and the grand jury. She said much of the information he provided to prosecutors after pleading guilty couldn't be used because of his history of deceit.

"It is hard to overstate the number of lies and the amount of fraud and the extraordinary amount of money involved" in the federal conspiracy charges related to his foreign lobbying work and witness tampering.

Reading from a three-page statement, Manafort asked for mercy and said

the criminal charges against him have "taken everything from me already." He pleaded with the judge not to impose any additional time beyond the sentence he had received last week in a separate case in Virginia.

"I am sorry for what I have done and all the activities that have gotten us here today," Manafort said in a steady voice. "While I cannot undo the past, I will ensure that the future will be very different."

The 69-year-old, who arrived in court in a wheelchair, said he was the primary caregiver of his wife and wanted the chance for them to resume their life together.

"She needs me and I need

her. I ask you to think of this and our need for each other as you deliberate," Manafort said. "This case has taken everything from me already — my properties, my cash, my life insurance, my trust accounts for my children and my grandchildren, and more."

His plea for leniency followed prosecutor Andrew Weissmann's scathing characterization of crimes that the government said spanned more than a decade and continued even while Manafort was awaiting trial. The prosecutor said Manafort took steps to conceal his foreign lobbying work, laundered millions of dollars to fund a lavish lifestyle and then, while on house arrest,

coached other witnesses to lie on his behalf.

"I believe that is not reflective of someone who has learned a harsh lesson. It is not a reflection of remorse," Weissmann said. "It is evidence that something is wrong with sort of a moral compass, that someone in that position would choose to make that decision at that moment."

Defense lawyer Kevin Downing suggested Manafort was being unduly punished because of the "media frenzy" generated by the appointment of a special counsel.

"That results in a very harsh process for the defendant," Downing said.

After the hearing, Downing criticized Jackson's sentencing as "callous," "hostile" and "totally unnecessary" as he was shouted down by protesters.

"I think the judge showed that she is incredibly hostile toward Mr. Manafort and exhibited a level of callousness that I've not seen in a white-collar case in over 15 years of prosecutions," Downing told reporters, noting that he was "disappointed" by the sentence.

Wednesday's sentencing comes in a week of activity for the investigation. Mueller's prosecutors on Tuesday night updated a judge on the status of cooperation provided by one defendant, former national security adviser Michael Flynn, and are expected to do the same later in the week for another.

Mueller's investigation has shown signs of coming to a close and he is expected to soon deliver a report to the Justice Department.

# School rampage in Brazil leaves 9 dead, many wounded

By MAURICIO SAVARESE AND ANNA JEAN KAISER  
Associated Press

SUZANO, Brazil — Two masked men armed with guns, knives, axes and crossbows descended on a school in southern Brazil on Wednesday, killing five students and two adults before taking their own lives, authorities said.

The men, identified as former students at the school in a suburb of Sao Paulo, also shot and killed the owner of a used car business nearby before launching the attack on the school, authorities said.

Besides the five students, the dead included a teacher and a school administrator, said Joao Camilo Pires de Campos, the state's public secretary. Nine others were wounded in the school attack and hospitalized, he said.

"This is the saddest day of my life," de Campos said, speaking to reporters outside the school in the Sao Paulo suburb of Suzano.

Authorities identified the attackers as Guilherme Tauci Monteiro, 17, and Henrique de Castro, 25.

"The big question is: What was the motivation of



Futura Press via AP/Mauricio Sumiya

Police officers guard the entrance of the Raul Brasil State School in Suzano, Brazil, on Wednesday.

these former students?" de Castro said.

Monteiro's mother, Tatiana Tauci, offered a possible answer, telling Band News while hiding her face from the camera that her son had been bullied at the school.

"Bullying, they call it. ... He stopped going to school ... because of this," she said.

She said she was surprised by his involvement and found out about the attack from the television like everyone else.

Minutes before the attack, Monteiro had posted 26 photos on his Facebook page, included several with guns and one that showed

him giving the middle finger as he looked into the camera.

In some of the photos, he wore a black scarf with a white imprint of a skull and cross bones. No text accompanied the posts.

By Wednesday afternoon, Facebook had taken down Monteiro's page.

During the attack, Monteiro opened fire with a .38 caliber handgun and de Castro used a crossbow, de Campos said, adding that forensics would determine how each of the victims died.

The attackers were also carrying Molotov cocktails, knives and small axes,

authorities said

"In 34 years as a policeman, it's the first time I see someone use a crossbow like that," police Col. Marcelo Salles said. "It is horrendous."

The assailants were trying to force their way inside a room at the back of the school where many students were hiding when police arrived. Instead of facing police, they turned their weapons on themselves, authorities said without elaborating.

Students gathered outside the school recounted harrowing attacks and seeing several bodies lying in pools of blood.

Kelly Milene Guerra Cardoso, 16, said she and other students took refuge in the school's cafeteria, locked the door and lay on the floor.

"We stayed there until the door was opened. We thought it was the shooters coming to get us, but it was the police," she said. "They told us to start running."

Horacio Pereira Nunes, a retiree whose house is next to the school, said he heard shots around 10 a.m.

"Then a lot of kids started running out, all screaming," he said. "It didn't take long until police arrived."

The Raul Brasil Professor public school has more than 1,600 students from elementary to high school grades, teachers gathered outside said.

Latin America's most populous nation has the largest number of annual homicides in the world, but school shootings are rare.

In 2011, 12 students were killed by a gunman who roamed the halls of a school in Rio de Janeiro, shooting at them.

President Jair Bolsonaro ran on a platform that included promises to crack

down on criminals, in part by expanding public access to guns. Soon after his Jan. 1 inauguration, Bolsonaro issued a decree making it easier to buy a gun.

"A monstrosity and cowardness without equal," Bolsonaro wrote in a tweet expressing his sympathies for the families of the victims of Wednesday's attacks.

Similar to arguments made by proponents of less gun regulation in the United States, Bolsonaro and his supporters argue that expanded access to guns will combat crime.

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