

UK neo-Nazis convicted of planning mosque and synagogue race war attack



Antiracism counterprotesters assemble before a potential anti-immigration protest on August 7, 2024, in Walthamstow, UK [Carl Court/Getty Images]

Police say the trio espoused hatred for Muslims and immigrants and discussed attacking

mosques or synagogues.

London, May 15 (RHC)-- Police in the United Kingdom say three men have been convicted of planning to carry out an attack on mosques or synagogues in anticipation of a coming race war.

Brogan Stewart and Marco Pitzettu, both aged 25, and Christopher Ringrose, 34, all pleaded not guilty but were convicted of all charges by jurors at Sheffield Crown Court on Wednesday. Sentencing is scheduled for July 17.

"Stewart, Pitzettu, and Ringrose have today been rightfully convicted of multiple terrorism offences," Detective Chief Superintendent James Dunkerley, head of Counter Terrorism Policing North East, said in a statement. "They were a group that espoused vile racist views and advocated for violence, all to support their extreme right-wing mindset."

The convictions come amid a debate in the UK over immigration rights as the left-of-centre Labour Party adopts increasingly harsh rhetoric on migration amid increasing public support for the far right. Critics said a recent speech by Prime Minister Keir Starmer in which he said immigration threatened to turn the UK into an "island of strangers" helps legitimise a view perpetuated by the far right that immigration is a destructive and dangerous force.

The convicted far-right group was part of a Telegram channel named Einsatz 14, in which they talked about executing former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and torturing imams. "It was their belief that there must soon come a time when there would be a race war between the white and other races," prosecutor Jonathan Sandiford told jurors.

Conspiracy theories that Muslims and immigrants are carrying out a "great replacement" of white people in Western nations have become increasingly widespread on the right in recent years. That conspiracy often involves an anti-Semitic angle, portraying Jews as supporters of pro-immigration policies meant to weaken Western nations from the inside.

All three men were convicted of planning an act of terrorism and multiple firearms offences. They were found guilty of two counts of collecting information that could be useful to someone preparing a terrorist act, and Ringrose was additionally charged with manufacturing a component for a 3D-printed FGC9 firearm.

Prosecutors said the group was preparing for an act of terrorism when they were arrested in February 2024. Their trial began in March. "Some of their defence in court was that it was all fantasy or just part of harmless chat, however all three took real world steps to plan and prepare for carrying out an attack on innocent citizens," Dunkerley said.

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