

Five killed and others injured in Annapolis, Maryland Capital Gazette shooting

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At least five people were killed, and several others “gravely injured,” in a shooting at the *Capital Gazette* newspaper office in Annapolis, Maryland, according to William Krampf, acting chief of the Anne Arundel County Police Department.

The shooting unfolded before 3 p.m. in the building on Bestgate Road. Arundel County police spokesman Lt. Ryan Frashur confirmed the suspected shooter is in custody and being questioned. The suspect has not yet been named. The suspect was found under a desk with a gun nearby. More than 170 people were inside the building at the time of the shooting.

Law enforcement officials said a shotgun was used in the incident. An explosive device was also recovered from the scene, prompting the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to respond to the incident as well.

Phil Davis, a *Capital Gazette* crime reporter who was in the building at the time of the shooting, said multiple people were shot as he and others hid under desks.

“Gunman shot through the glass door to the office and opened fire on multiple employees. Can’t say much more and don’t want to declare anyone dead, but it’s bad,” Davis wrote on Twitter as he waited to be interviewed by police.

“There is nothing more terrifying than hearing multiple people get shot while you’re under your desk and then hear the gunman reload.”

In a follow up interview, Davis said, “I’m a police reporter. I write about this stuff—not necessarily to this extent, but shootings and death—all the time,” he said. “But as much as I’m going to try to articulate how traumatizing it is to be hiding under your desk, you don’t know until you’re there and you feel helpless.”

Politicians responded to the tragedy with typical empty platitudes and condolences.

President Donald Trump wrote on Twitter that he had been briefed on the shooting prior to leaving his campaign in Wisconsin. “My thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families. Thank you to all of the First Responders who are currently on the scene,” Trump wrote.

Former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, who founded the gun violence prevention organization Giffords after she was wounded in a 2011 shooting, released a statement in response to the shooting, citing Congress’s lack of action in response to gun violence.

“Reporters shouldn’t have to hide from gunfire while doing their jobs. ... We shouldn’t have to live in a country where our lawmakers refuse to take any action to address this uniquely American crisis that’s causing so much horror and heartbreak on what feels like a daily basis,” Giffords said.

However, efforts to reduce the prevalence of mass shootings in America to a question of gun control obscure the social factors promoting gun violence.

Mass inequality and unending war play a key role in the regularity of mass shootings in the United States. It’s no coincidence that the US, the most unequal society in the world, is home to reoccurring mass violence. In his book, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, British social epidemiologist Richard Wilkinson explained that there exists a direct correlation between a country’s level of inequality and the level of social violence it displays.

The United States is also the world’s greatest purveyor of imperialist violence. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the US has been virtually unchallenged in its efforts to offset its relative economic decline with imperialist conquest. The “war on terror,” started 18 years ago, has dominated the political and social culture of the US for nearly two

decades.

So far this year there have been 154 mass shootings, according to the Gun Violence Archive. Such violence finds its roots in the capitalist system. The ever-intensifying exploitation, inequality, and imperialist war translate regularly into the American nightmare that is frequent mass shootings.



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