

Southern California mass shooting leaves four dead, including nine-year-old boy

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On the evening of March 31, in the Southern California city of Orange, located near Disneyland, the twentieth in a string of mass shootings in the United States took place, leaving four dead, including a nine-year-old boy.

Carrying a backpack with pepper spray, handcuffs and ammunition, and holding a semiautomatic handgun, the 44-year-old shooter, Aminadab Gaxiola Gonzalez, entered a small office complex located on a main boulevard in the usually peaceful suburb, and locked the building's gates behind him. The shooter evidently targeted the owner of the business, Unified Homes, a real estate and manufactured homes business, as well as his family members.

Responding to reports of shots fired, police officers had to use bolt cutters to enter the building courtyard, where they found the boy, already deceased, next to a woman with severe gunshot wounds. As police entered the building, they found the bodies of a man and two other women.

The officers exchanged gunfire with the gunman, who was wounded. As of this writing, it is unclear whether the injury was caused by police officers or was self-inflicted. The woman who survived and the gunman were transported to a local hospital, where they remain in critical but stable condition.

Luis Tovar Jr. confirmed that his father, Luis Tovar Sr., 50, was the owner of Unified Homes and that he was killed by Gonzalez. Tovar Jr.'s sister, Genevieve Raygoza, 28, and half-brother Matthew Farias, 9, were also killed by Gonzalez. His mother, Blanca Esmeralda Tamayo, is the sole survivor of the shooting. The fourth victim was identified as Leticia Solis Guzman, 58, an employee of Unified Homes.

No motive has been announced other than the statement that Gonzalez had a "business and personal

relationship" with the victims. Authorities report that Gonzalez's estranged wife, Aleyda Mendoza, was an employee at Unified Homes two years ago. Mendoza stated that she "can't understand what went through his (Gonzalez's) head to make such a terrifying decision," adding that she and Gonzalez had been estranged for two years. She left Unified Homes to start her own mobile home sales business and was not aware of any prior conflicts or confrontations between Gonzalez and Unified Homes.

A spokeswoman for the neighboring city of Anaheim, where the shooter resided, reported that Gonzalez had been charged in 2015 with several counts, including cruelty to a child, although it is unclear if the child was his. He pled guilty to misdemeanor battery and served one day in jail, while all other charges were dismissed. The conviction was expunged in 2017.

According to the Orange Police Department, Gonzalez was living in an Anaheim motel and driving a rental car. The department released a still photograph from a surveillance camera showing Gonzalez entering the complex dressed in black and gray, with a black hat, sunglasses and a black bandana. The photo shows him carrying a backpack and holding a handgun in his right hand.

Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer called the incident "a horrible, horrible tragedy," adding that "Mr. Gonzalez made a decision to use deadly force to deal with issues he was dealing with in his life. So he will suffer and face the consequences." Spitzer noted that his office will have the option of seeking the death penalty and has laid the basis for seeking capital punishment by alleging "special circumstances." But he added that the decision whether to seek execution has not yet been made.

The Orange shooting followed by only nine days the

mass shooting at a King Scoopers supermarket in Boulder, Colorado perpetrated with an assault rifle by 21-year-old Ahmad Al Aliwi Al-Issa. That event left 10 dead. No motive has been revealed in that case.

Five days before the Boulder shooting, a series of shootings occurred at three separate spas in the Atlanta, Georgia area. Robert Aaron Long, 21, shot nine people with a nine-millimeter pistol, killing eight, including six Asian women. According to local authorities, Long targeted the spas and massage parlors to remove the “temptation” he claimed to be battling because of a sex addiction.

According to CNN, there have been a staggering 20 mass shootings since the Atlanta spa attacks on March 16. Authorities define a mass shooting as “a shooting incident that results in four or more casualties (dead or wounded), excluding the shooter(s).” At least seven mass shootings occurred in the week between the Atlanta and Boulder shootings, and that number more than doubled in the week following the Boulder shooting.

In the aftermath of the Atlanta, Boulder and Orange incidents, Democratic and Republican politicians offered hollow condolences, while seeking to exploit whatever political capital might be available for their immediate purposes.

Democrats, including President Joe Biden, have called for further restrictions on guns and increased background checks, an essentially meaningless reform when the nation is already flooded with firearms and most mass shooters lack significant criminal histories or diagnosed mental illnesses.

Republicans have dismissed the Democrats’ calls for gun control measures, throwing red meat to the deeply disoriented and, in part, fascistic elements that increasingly constitute their base by denouncing even the most minimal measures to control the proliferation of firearms as an “infringement” on the Second Amendment to the US Constitution.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 111 people are killed daily in the United States due to gun-related violence. In 2019, 39,707 people were killed with guns. Brazil was the only country in the world that exceeded that annual total. Furthermore, according to Everytown Research, most incidents involve groups of people who know each other, including family members, acquaintances and

colleagues, or distraught individuals who open fire on coworkers.

Regardless of the precise circumstances surrounding these incidents, the fact that such mass shootings have become regular occurrences in the United States is a reflection of the decay of daily life under American capitalism. This rot has been further exacerbated over the course of the last year by the COVID-19 pandemic, as evidenced by the apparent blitz of mass shootings that have occurred as quickly as significant portions of the US reopened.

The American working class is subjected to the continuous degradation of conditions due to the ruthlessness of the ruling class. Trillions of dollars have been diverted to the coffers of the American elite and to fund imperialist aggression around the world, while the American public has received a mere pittance in financial assistance and is told there is “no money” to fund basic social programs.



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