

Federal kidnapping and assault charges filed against Paul Pelosi's attacker

Jacob Crosse
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On Monday the US Department of Justice (DoJ) charged David DePape, 42, with attempted kidnapping and assault for his vicious attack last Friday on Paul Pelosi, husband of Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. DePape is currently in custody and is expected to be arraigned on Tuesday.

In the criminal complaint released on Monday, FBI Special Agent Stephanie Minor wrote that the “facts of the investigation to date reveal that DePape was prepared to detain and injure Speaker Pelosi when he entered the Pelosi residence in the early morning of October 28, 2022.”

The complaint notes that DePape brought with him “zip ties, tape, rope, and at least one hammer,” which was used to bludgeon Pelosi.

The DoJ press release announcing the charges states that the “assault of an immediate family member of a United States official with the intent to retaliate against the official on account of the performance of official duties” carries a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison. The charge of kidnapping “of a United States official on account of the performance of official duties,” has a maximum 20-year prison sentence.

In addition to federal charges against DePape, on Monday, San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins announced state charges against DePape that include attempted homicide, assault with a deadly weapon, burglary, elder abuse and several other felonies. In a press conference Monday, Jenkins said she believed that DePape intended to murder Pelosi.

It appears the Pelosis were not the only people DePape was targeting. On Monday, CBS News, citing “law enforcement sources,” said that DePape apparently had a “list” of people he was to assault after the Pelosis.

According to multiple reports, as of Monday afternoon Paul Pelosi remains in the intensive care unit at San Francisco General Hospital. The 82-year-old Pelosi was

struck in the head with a hammer wielded by DePape shortly after police arrived at the Pelosi residence around 2:30 a.m. Friday morning following a 911 emergency services call.

Within eight minutes of Paul Pelosi's 911 call, two San Francisco police officers were at the residence.

It does not appear that the Pelosis had hired any of their own private security. The complaint notes that there was a “Witness 1” who was working private security at a separate nearby residence. This witness saw “an individual in all black, carrying a large black bag on his back, walking near the Pelosi residence,” followed by “banging” and then “sirens within a minute or two.”

Pelosi was knocked unconscious after being struck by DePape's hammer, according to the DoJ complaint. While it is not known exactly when Pelosi regained consciousness, the complaint notes Pelosi was interviewed by a police officer while he was in the ambulance as he was being transported to San Francisco General Hospital to undergo surgery for a skull fracture.

New details revealed in Monday's DoJ complaint demonstrate the fascist political character of the attack. Just as the militia elements and white supremacists who stormed the Capitol on January 6 in furtherance of Trump's coup were specifically targeting Pelosi and Vice President Mike Pence for execution, DePape was similarly fixated on taking Pelosi hostage and likely, beating her to death.

FBI Special Agent Stephanie Minor wrote that during an interview with police, Paul Pelosi said he had never seen DePape before and that he was asleep when DePape came into his bedroom demanding to speak to his wife “Nancy.”

After informing DePape that his wife was in Washington D.C., DePape said he would wait, even it meant staying with Pelosi for several days.

The complaint claims that during his interview with

police, DePape said that if Nancy Pelosi did not tell him the “truth” but “lied” to him, he was “going to break her kneecaps.”

DePape was convinced that Pelosi would not tell him the “truth.”

In the apparently recorded interview with police, DePape claimed that Pelosi was the “leader of the pack” of lies told by the Democratic Party. DePape said that by crippling the 82-year-old Democratic Speaker of the House, “she would then have to be wheeled into Congress, which would show other Members of Congress there were consequences to actions.”

The complaint also revealed that DePape had hoped to “lure another individual” by using Nancy Pelosi as a hostage.

Corroborating Paul Pelosi’s account, DePape said after breaking into the Pelosi residence he found Paul asleep in his bedroom. DePape said that Pelosi “appeared surprised” by his presence in the house.

After talking with Paul and confirming that Nancy was not home, DePape suggested using the rope he brought with him to tie up Paul so that DePape could take a nap until Nancy arrived. DePape admitted to taking out twist ties to cuff Paul Pelosi, at which point Paul tried to evade DePape. DePape claimed that they both went back to the bedroom and it was at this time Paul was able to go the bathroom and call 911.

Upon realizing that Paul had called 911, DePape told police that he did not leave because, “much like the American founding fathers with the British, he was fighting against tyranny without the option of surrender.” This theme, of fighting against “tyranny,” echoed in virtually every Trump rally, by many Republican candidates in 2022 and by the fascists targeting Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, was repeated by DePape throughout his interview.

In the interview, DePape told police that when they arrived at the Pelosi residence he had no plans to surrender and that he would go “through” Pelosi. DePape admitted that after police told him and Pelosi to drop the hammer, he pulled it away and swung it at Pelosi’s head, so that Pelosi ended up “taking the punishment instead.”

The complaint notes that DePape lives in a garage in Richmond, California. A search of his residence on October 29 uncovered two more hammers and a sword.

DePape’s assault on Pelosi was not a random act of criminality, but a deliberate political attack incited and inspired by former President Donald Trump and his Republican allies. In the weeks leading up to the attack

DePape’s social media accounts were dominated by fascistic and anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, including QAnon, “Replacement Theory” and Holocaust denial content, the same themes that dominate Trump’s rallies and increasingly the Republican Party as a whole.

After remaining silent for days after the attack, on Monday in an interview with the conservative Spanish outlet *Americano Media*, Trump said the assault was a “terrible thing” before quickly pivoting to an attack on “defund police” and Democratic-run cities.

“With Paul Pelosi, that’s a terrible thing, with all of them it’s a terrible thing,” Trump said. “Look at what’s happened to San Francisco generally. Look at what’s happening in Chicago. It was far worse than Afghanistan.”

Seeking to blame Democrats for Pelosi’s assault Trump added, “We have to give the police back their dignity, their respect. They can solve the problem.” Trump continued. “We have to give the police back their authority and their power and their respect. Because this country is out of control.”

In an interview with CNN’s Dana Bash on Sunday morning, Florida Senator Rick Scott, like Trump, lamented that Pelosi was assaulted, calling it “disgusting,” but refused to condemn Trump’s violent rhetoric and false claims that the election was stolen, the lies that animated DePape, when asked by Bash.

Likewise on Fox News Sunday, Ronna McDaniel, the chairwoman of the Republican National Committee, said it was “unfair” to accuse Republicans of stoking political violence.

One day after the attack on Pelosi, Trump’s son and self-proclaimed “King of the Deplorables” Donald Trump Jr. tweeted to his 8.7 million Twitter followers: “Imagine how safe the country would be if democrats took all violent crime as seriously as they’re taking the Paul Pelosi situation. They simply don’t care about you.”

He then tweeted several crude memes featuring hammers.



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