

Questions emerge about police security for high-level lawmakers in wake of assault on Paul Pelosi

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Within the last 24 hours, several developments concerning last Friday's attack on Paul Pelosi, husband of Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, have shed new light on the lack of security afforded to the Pelosis.

Despite the constant threats faced by the speaker and her family, there is considerable evidence that police ignored the deluge of verbal menacing and did not take obvious security precautions in advance of the attack.

The 82-year-old Paul Pelosi is still in the hospital after suffering a skull fracture after he was bludgeoned with a hammer wielded by 42-year-old David DePape early last Friday morning. The hammer blow left Pelosi unconscious in a pool of his own blood for several minutes, according to police and medics.

On Tuesday, the *Washington Post* reported that more than eight years ago the US Capitol Police (USCP) installed security cameras around the Pelosis' home. These cameras provided a constant live feed of the residence directly to a Capitol Police command center in Washington D.C.

This command center has access to 1,800 camera feeds around the Capitol and outside D.C. It is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by police officers.

According to the *Post*, last Friday, as DePape was using a hammer to smash through a window at the Pelosi residence, police inside the command center were not aware of the break-in. In fact, according to the *Post*, it does not appear that the Capitol Police knew that a man was attempting to kidnap Pelosi until after local San Francisco Police had already arrived at the residence.

The *Post* reported that one cop inside the D.C. command center only became aware of the attack upon catching the lights from police cars flashing in front of the Pelosi residence on one of the camera feeds.

Upon seeing the commotion, the police in D.C. pulled up "additional camera angles" and rewound the footage, which showed a man on camera "with a hammer, breaking a glass panel and entering the speaker's home."

The *Post* reported, citing two people close to the ongoing investigation, that the Pelosis' home is protected by a private security system. When an alarm is triggered, such as when a window is smashed with a hammer, the system is supposed to trigger an alert and automatically notify the San Francisco Police Department and then the Capitol Police.

According to the one of the *Post*'s sources, the Capitol Police never received an alert on Friday during the break-in. The same source could not confirm if the security system was activated beforehand. Officials within the San Francisco Police Department did not confirm with the *Post* if they had received an alert from the Pelosi private alarm system last Friday.

Voluminous online postings made in the months prior to the attack, as well as interviews with police following the beating, have unequivocally shown that DePape's assault on Pelosi was politically motivated and animated by Trump and the Republican Party. His online posts are filled with antisemitic, QAnon, "groomer" and "Replacement Theory" rhetoric, the same filth spewed at every rally held by Trump and his self-proclaimed "Christian nationalist" allies.

For decades, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has been vilified and targeted by the Republican Party for her allegedly "liberal" politics. This found expression during the assault on Congress on January 6. Pelosi, along with Vice President Mike Pence, were the top two politicians targeted by the violent right-wing mob seeking to capture and kill lawmakers to prevent the certification of Joe Biden's victory in the Electoral College.

Unburdened with any criminal consequences for attempting a coup nearly two years after the fact, Trump's attacks against his political enemies, especially Pelosi, have only increased in vitriol and violent incitement leading up to the midterm elections. In his weekly fascistic rallies, the ex-president calls on his supporters, which included DePape, to "end Nancy Pelosi... once and for all."

According to the Capitol Police, the speaker of the house receives the most violent death threats out of all members of Congress. Pelosi is also one of 10 members of the House and Senate

leadership who receive constant 24-7 police protection, although this apparently does not extend to her immediate family members or the residence in her congressional district.

Troubled by the inaction of the Capitol Police leading up to Friday's attack on Pelosi, and their apparent lack of communication with the San Francisco Police during the assault, on Wednesday, the chairperson of the House Administration Committee, Zoe Lofgren, wrote a letter to Capitol Police Chief Tom Manger requesting information on the security measures and communications plans implemented by the agency prior to the attack.

In her letter, Lofgren noted that this past July a program was implemented that allowed for advanced security measures, including "window contacts" and "glass break sensors," to be installed at congressional leaders' residences.

"Has USCP reviewed whether such security features or upgrades are in use at residences of congressional leaders who are in the presidential line of succession?" Lofgren asked.

Also on Tuesday, San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins added several state felony charges against DePape. These include attempted murder, residential burglary, assault with a deadly weapon, elder abuse and false imprisonment. If convicted, DePape faces a minimum of 13 years and eight months in prison and a maximum life sentence.

In her "Statement of the Facts," Jenkins wrote that after smashing through the window of the Pelosi residence, DePape confronted a sleeping Paul Pelosi in his bedroom and demanded to know, "Where's Nancy? Where's Nancy?" After Pelosi informed DePape she was not home and would not be back for several days, DePape threatened to tie up the 82-year-old until she returned, telling him that all the Democrats were corrupt and "we've got to take them all out."

After DePape prevented Pelosi from escaping in an elevator at his residence, Pelosi was able to convince DePape to let him use the adjacent bathroom where he had access to a phone which he used to call the San Francisco Police. While on the phone, Pelosi asked to speak to the Capitol Police, telling the operator it is the agency that usually protects his wife, whom DePape was attempting to kidnap and "break her kneecaps."

Jenkins wrote that after DePape forced Pelosi off the phone with emergency services, he attempted to hit Pelosi with the hammer, telling him, "I can take you out." To protect himself, Pelosi was forced to grab the handle of the hammer.

While DePape and Pelosi struggled over the hammer, San Francisco Police arrived at the residence and, according to Jenkins, Pelosi opened the door with his left hand while his other hand remained on the hammer.

Jenkins wrote that after police determined both men were holding the hammer, they ordered them to drop it. DePape allegedly responded, "Um, nope," and proceeded to pull the hammer free from Pelosi's grip and "immediately stepped back and lunged at Mr. Pelosi, striking Mr. Pelosi in the head at full force with the hammer, which knocked Mr. Pelosi unconscious."

Confirming the political character of the attack, Jenkins wrote that "without any questioning" DePape told officers and medics at the scene, "I'm sick of the insane fucking level of lies coming out of Washington D.C. I came here to have a little chat with his wife."

DePape added that he "didn't really want to hurt him, but you know this was a suicide mission. I'm not going to stand here and do nothing even if it cost me my life." DePape said, "I told him before I attacked him, that he's escalating things, and I will go through him if I have to."

Asked by police if he had other plans beyond kidnapping and assaulting the Pelosis, DePape named "several targets, including a local professor, several prominent state and federal politicians and relatives of those state and federal politicians."

Rejecting any political responsibility for the attack, in an interview Tuesday morning with conservative radio host Chris Stigall, Trump repeated one of the many right-wing conspiracy theories that have emerged following the attack and claimed that Pelosi's house was never actually broken into.

"It's weird things going on in that household in the last couple of weeks," Trump said. "You know, probably, you and I are better off not talking about it. The glass, it seems, was broken from the inside to the out and, you know, so, it wasn't a break-in, it was a break-out."

Lending succor to future fascist terrorist attacks, Trump said he was "not a fan of Nancy Pelosi."



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