

Was Alex Pretti the subject of a targeted assassination?

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28 January 2026

Emerging evidence strongly indicates that the murder of ICU nurse Alex Pretti by federal agents on January 24 in Minneapolis was a targeted assassination carried out by the Trump administration's paramilitary forces in order to terrorize Minneapolis citizens opposing and recording its criminal activities.

According to a CNN report published Tuesday, Pretti was involved in a confrontation with federal agents about a week before his murder. "The earlier incident started," CNN reported, "when he stopped his car after observing ICE agents chasing what he described as a family on foot, and began shouting and blowing his whistle, according to a source who asked not to be named out of fear of retribution."

CNN added that Pretti told the source "that five agents tackled him and one leaned on his back—an encounter that left him with a broken rib. The agents quickly released him at the scene. 'That day, he thought he was going to die,' said the source." The source added that Pretti was "known to federal agents," according to CNN.

This revelation that ICE and CBP agents identified Pretti as an opponent sheds new light on what actually happened on January 24. The video shows Pretti intervening to protect a woman who had been shoved to the ground. He is then tackled and beaten, face down on the ground. One agent removes a legally carried gun Pretti had in his possession but was not holding. Another agent, who was not involved in the initial assault on Pretti, then pushed this agent away and fired four shots in Pretti's back, as Pretti's arms were pinned to the ground. That agent and a second agent then fired six additional shots into Pretti's motionless body.

The murder of Pretti came just over two weeks after the killing of 37-year-old Renée Nicole Good. It is evident from the video of that murder that the shooter, Jonathan Ross, was acting like someone who was carrying out a job, deliberately placing himself in a position to fire on Good through her car window at point-blank range.

One revealing moment in the video of Renée Good's murder comes just before the shooting, when her wife says,

"we don't change our plates every morning ... it will be the same plate when you come talk to us later." This shows both women knew they were being tracked. ICE and CBP agents, working with firms like Palantir, have been compiling lists of protesters and those filming their operations. A DHS memo obtained by CNN orders agents to collect license plates, IDs and photos of "agitators" for a centralized surveillance database.

Both Pretti and Good were acting as legal observers when they were killed, filming and documenting the actions of ICE and CBP. Their killings serve the specific function of intimidating those exposing the criminal actions of ICE and CBP agents. In this sense, the "weapon" that the agents who shot Pretti were concerned about was not a gun but a cell phone.

The response of the Trump administration to the murders, first of Good and then of Pretti, was not only the immediate declaration that those killed were "terrorists" but the elaboration of a fascistic theory that asserts the absolute right of the state to murder citizens.

Vice President JD Vance stated this openly after the murder of Good, declaring that the killer was "protected by absolute immunity ... he was doing his job." This is a chilling and entirely false statement. There is nothing in American law that grants government agents "absolute immunity" from prosecution for killing someone.

Vance claims that the agents of the state carry a secret designation that places them above the law and that they will not be held accountable for their acts. They have a "license to kill." It is an extension to the agents of the state of the ruling of the Supreme Court in July 2024 (*Trump v. United States*) that the president is immune from prosecution from actions carried out as chief executive.

The principles proclaimed by Vance are not those of American law but Nazi jurisprudence. In justifying Hitler's dictatorship, the fascist theoretician Carl Schmitt developed the concept of the "state of exception." According to Schmitt, "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception." In the name of preserving order, the "sovereign" can suspend

the law itself and replace it with the arbitrary rule of executive power. Legal norms are abrogated, rights are stripped and individuals are placed outside the protection of the law—what Schmitt called “unmediated justice,” in which the leader alone determines guilt and punishment.

According to this framework, those targeted by the state are treated not as citizens but as enemies, as “*homo sacer*,” (a Roman law term meaning literally “sacred man” but signifying the opposite, “cursed man”). They are individuals who are without legal protection and can be killed. The ICE operations, according to the Trump regime, take place on this basis. They operate, for all intents and purposes, as a death squad.

In these events, the real criminality of the Trump regime is revealed. Such a regime has historical precedent—in the juntas of Videla’s Argentina and Pinochet’s Chile and, above all, in Hitler’s Germany and Mussolini’s Italy. In each case, the transition to dictatorship was marked not only by escalating violence but by a transformation of the legal order itself.

Under these conditions, those now hailing the tactical maneuvering of the Trump administration over the past two days as a major shift are peddling complacency and lies. Nothing fundamental has been resolved. The Trump administration is not backing down, it is buying time, regrouping and recalibrating.

In reality, the so-called “agreement” between Trump and local Democrats in Minnesota amounts to nothing more than public relations cosmetics. Trump has made no commitment to withdraw federal agents. A leaked internal memo from Customs and Border Protection, posted by journalist Ken Klippenstein, makes the real situation clear: “The deployment to Minneapolis is steady state and expected to continue as planned.”

Superficial changes have been accompanied by new outrages. On Tuesday, a video circulated on social media showing a federal immigration agent in Minnesota threatening to murder a resident: “If you raise your voice,” the agent said, “I will erase your voice.” The same day, ICE agents attacked protesters in Eugene, Oregon, and they are presently carrying out a terror campaign in Maine.

Representative Ilhan Omar was attacked during a town hall in Minneapolis on Tuesday night, when a man rushed the stage and sprayed her with an unknown substance. The assault followed a fascistic tirade by Donald Trump at a rally in Iowa, where he singled out Omar by name and denounced immigrants rounded up in Minnesota as “hardened, vicious, horrible criminals.”

The “peace” proclaimed by the Democrats with Trump is directed not at constraining the fascist threat but at suppressing popular opposition. Former President Barack

Obama summed it up when he urged the administration to “work constructively” with Walz and Frey to “avert more chaos.” What does Obama mean by “chaos”? Not the murders of Alex Pretti or Renée Nicole Good. Not mass roundups, indefinite detention or the suspension of constitutional rights. “Chaos” is the eruption of resistance from below. The Democratic Party’s overriding concern is to stabilize the state and preserve the illusion of a functioning two-party system.

Trump’s conspiracy for dictatorship—of which the events in Minneapolis are only one component—is continuing. The president speaks and acts as the representative of the capitalist oligarchy, which, confronted with an escalating series of economic, political and social crises, is breaking with all democratic and legal norms. The Democrats’ role is to conceal this fact, to chloroform the population and to block the emergence of any independent movement from below.

Any celebrations of a “victory” in Minneapolis are naive, premature and unwarranted. The so-called “tactical retreat” is a maneuver. The danger of dictatorship has not receded, it is intensifying. The federal occupation of Minneapolis continues, and there will be new attacks—not just in Minnesota but throughout the country.

The developments of the past month have shown that no opposition to Trump’s dictatorship can be waged through maneuvers within the state apparatus. It can be stopped only through the development of a conscious, organized movement of the working class, armed with a socialist program, fighting not just against Trump but against the capitalist system that has produced him. The work of building this movement—through the formation of rank-and-file committees, the mobilization of workers across industries and the development of a general strike—must go forward.



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