

Trump seeks to profit politically from attack in Washington hotel

Patrick Martin
26 April 2026

On Saturday night, 31-year-old Cole Tomas Allen of Torrance, California, was tackled and subdued by Secret Service agents after he broke through the outer security perimeter at the White House Correspondents Association dinner at the Washington Hilton.

There was a flurry of gunshots, some by the gunman, who was armed with a shotgun and a handgun, some by Secret Service agents or other security officers. Only two people required medical attention: Allen himself, and an unnamed Secret Service agent, who was wearing a bulletproof vest and only lightly injured, according to accounts given by federal officials.

Based on the information that is available, neither Trump, Vice President JD Vance nor any of the dozens of cabinet officials and members of Congress were ever in any danger. Each top official was quickly surrounded by a security detail and hustled out of the ballroom to secure rooms set up elsewhere in the hotel.

The gunman Allen is in custody, with US Attorney Jeanine Pirro saying that he would be arraigned Monday on two federal charges, assaulting a federal officer using a dangerous weapon and using a firearm during a crime of violence. Many more charges are expected to be filed as a result of ongoing investigation, she said.

Allen travelled from his home in southern California by train to Chicago and then Washington, suggesting that he was carrying his weapons and wanted to avoid security screening at airports. He checked in at the Hilton on Friday, April 24, the night before the WHCA dinner.

Allen's views on Trump had become increasingly hostile in the course of the past year, according to family members who spoke to the media. Ten minutes before he ran through the initial Secret Service checkpoint, he sent a 1,000-word declaration of his

political views to his family, describing himself as the "Friendly Federal Assassin." A brother living in Connecticut immediately contacted the police, who relayed the information to the Secret Service, although the White House said the tip arrived too late to forestall the attack.

In his political statement, Allen wrote that he was "no longer willing to permit a pedophile, rapist, and traitor to coat my hands with his crimes." He said his "targets" were top government officials, with the sole exception of FBI Director Kash Patel. "Administration officials (not including Mr. Patel): they are targets, prioritized from highest-ranking to lowest," he wrote.

He singled out the Trump administration's crimes against immigrants and his war crimes in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific, writing: "Turning the other cheek is for when you yourself are oppressed. I'm not the person raped in a detention camp. I'm not the fisherman executed without trial." Press reports said that in social media posts Allen had described Trump as a "sociopathic mob boss" and the "Antichrist."

While the statement issued by Allen indicates that he was deeply opposed to the actions of the Trump regime, the course he took serves no progressive purpose. Long historical experience has demonstrated that individual attacks on one or another leader play into the hands of political reaction. In this case, it provides an opportunity for Trump to escalate attacks on democratic rights.

During an appearance on Fox News Sunday, Trump claimed that the attacker "had a lot of hatred in his heart for quite a while... He just, it was a religious thing. It was strongly anti, anti-Christian." Allen's LinkedIn profile, however, identifies him as a member of the Caltech Christian Fellowship.

Trump sought to use the incident both to glorify his own significance, and to press ahead with the construction of the gigantic ballroom that would replace the now-demolished East Wing of the White House. This included an obscene comparison of himself to Abraham Lincoln. Trump declared, “the people that do the most, the people that make the biggest impact, they’re the ones that they go after.”

The response from the political establishment and the corporate media is, as always, reactionary, cowardly and hypocritical. In the various statements from these layers, centered on the theme of “there is no place for political violence in America,” none made the basic point that Trump is himself responsible for escalating brutal violence abroad and within the United States.

It is not even two months since US and Israeli forces carried out the extermination of much of Iran’s political leadership, killing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and many of his family members, advisers and other government officials in a targeted air strike on the first day of the US war with Iran.

The leaders of the European imperialist powers, who have balked at some of Trump’s actions in the Persian Gulf, were at pains to condemn the attack on the WHCA dinner and any suggestion that violence in America was a case of the chickens coming home to roost.

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen tweeted that she was “relieved” Trump and attendees were safe, adding: “Violence has no place in politics, ever.” EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas struck a similar tone, warning that “political violence has no place in a democracy.”

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he was “shocked by the scenes” Saturday night in Washington, while German Chancellor Friedrich Merz tweeted, “Violence has no place in a democracy.” French President Emmanuel Macron was more direct, declaring, “I extend my full support to Donald Trump.”

The hypocrisy is sickening. Trump is himself the greatest threat to American democracy, as these ladies and gentlemen well know. His thugs attacked the Capitol on January 6, 2021 in an effort to overturn his defeat in the 2020 election, and his war against immigrants has left American citizens dead on the streets and immigrants dead in detention camps. To say

nothing of the thousands slaughtered in Iran, Lebanon and Gaza by US bombs and missiles.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact