

Failed mass shooting at Illinois Hindu temple latest in growing wave of fascist political violence

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In the latest act of fascist terror in the United States, on Sunday, October 11, law enforcement in suburban Chicago arrested 19-year-old Alexandros Paporakis following an attempted mass shooting at a Hindu temple in Aurora, Illinois.

According to charges filed by the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, Paporakis drove to the temple carrying a rifle, ammunition and tactical gear with the intention of carrying out a mass killing. Democratic US Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi said he and his family were at the temple that day. It is not yet known if Paporakis knew of Krishnamoorthi's presence or if he was an intended target.

According to police sources, the shooting was averted when the weapon jammed as he attempted to open fire. Then, Paporakis drove off the temple grounds in his vehicle and returned to his residence in Palatine. Once home, he called a coworker from the Taco Bell restaurant where he was employed as a cashier. During the call and through messages, Paporakis stated that he had attempted to carry out the shooting, explained that his rifle had jammed, sent photographs of weapons and tactical gear and declared his plan to fix his weapon and return to the temple.

Coworkers told police that Paporakis had previously espoused white supremacist views in the workplace, having told them the preceding day that Sunday would be "special" and explicitly stating that he intended to kill Indian people. The coworker immediately called the police informing them of the threat, resulting in Paporakis's arrest outside his residence on Sunday evening by local police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

During a subsequent search of Paporakis's residence, investigators found a rifle, extensive amounts of ammunition, tactical gear and a manifesto espousing neo-Nazi ideology that called for the elimination of Indian immigrants and described Jewish and black people as "sub-human." Paporakis is being held without bail and has been charged with felony counts of making a terrorist threat and

unlawful possession of weapons.

Treating Paporakis as an isolated "lone wolf" obscures the political forces cultivating such violence. Right-wing publications like the *New York Post* have jumped on a court order to allow Paporakis to continue to receive hormone treatment for an ongoing gender transition as well as medication for severe depression, anxiety and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), in a sinister attempt to associate the crime with transgender people.

These non-explanations obscure the real social roots of the event. The attempted shooting in Aurora is not an inexplicable product of individual psychology, but a product of the systematic cultivation of fascist and xenophobic politics at the heights of American society.

Paporakis's actions developed in a political environment where fascist ideology is broadcast from the White House. On September 9, the Department of Homeland Security posted racist propaganda targeting Sikh truck drivers: "Get off our roads, you don't know how to drive Mr. Singh." Trump has described Somali immigrants as "garbage" and repeatedly claimed that immigrants are "poisoning the blood of our country," echoing Hitler's racial doctrines.

This agitation serves a definite class purpose: to scapegoat immigrants for the inequality, poverty and war produced by capitalism, divide workers across racial and national lines, and cultivate support for presidential dictatorship.

Central to this agitation is the fascist "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory, which claims that immigrants are being brought into the country to displace the white population, with Jews cast as the organizers of the supposed plot. Republican politicians and right-wing media have promoted versions of this lie for years. In November 2023, multibillionaire Elon Musk endorsed an antisemitic post accusing Jewish communities of encouraging hatred of whites and the influx of minorities, replying: "You have said the actual truth."

This ideology has animated massacres targeting black

people, Latinos, Muslims and Jews, including the attacks in Buffalo, El Paso, Christchurch and Pittsburgh. The Buffalo gunman explicitly promoted replacement theory in his manifesto, while the Pittsburgh synagogue murderer targeted Jews over their support for refugees.

Trump's racist agitation against immigrants has accompanied direct state repression. On October 8, he claimed Minnesota was being "taken over by Somali Immigrants" and urged supporters to "Fight back." On October 12, the day after the attempted temple massacre, federal agents raided Representative Ilhan Omar's home. The administration is seeking to strip her citizenship and deport her.

That evening, at his Youngstown, Ohio, rally, Trump attacked Somali and Haitian immigrants, mocked Omar's assertion of constitutional rights and provoked chants of "Deport!" Trump's grunts were accompanied by violence inside the arena. Multiple supporters assaulted a young woman wearing a "Release the Epstein files" shirt, grabbing her hair and striking her in the face. Trump called her a "paid protester" and "scum," then praised law enforcement as police dragged her away.

The Aurora attempt must be understood within this political context. An increasingly fascist ruling class is cultivating racist hatred and political violence as it moves to establish a presidential dictatorship. Whether perpetrators act alone or within organized networks, their ideology is being promoted by forces at the summit of the state.

While the threat of far-right violence continues to expand, the response of the Democratic Party has been defined by political accommodation and cover-up.

In October 2020, when members of the fascist Wolverine Watchmen militia were arrested for plotting to kidnap and execute Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, following Trump's public call to "LIBERATE MICHIGAN!," the Democratic Party treated the conspiracy as a localized criminal matter rather than an organized fascist network connected to the national political establishment.

Similarly, following the January 6, 2021 assault on the US Capitol, which sought to overturn the certification of the presidential election, the Biden administration and congressional Democratic leaders emphasized the need for "unity" with their "Republican colleagues" while subordinating opposition to the coup to the courts and congressional proceedings.

This pattern recurred in October 2022, when David DePape forced entry into the San Francisco residence of then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, demanding her whereabouts before assaulting her husband, Paul Pelosi, with a hammer. The Democratic leadership treated the assassination attempt primarily as a personal tragedy, consistently avoiding any

political confrontation with the fascist networks and media operations promoting such attacks.

The Democrats' refusal to wage a political struggle against the far right is rooted in their class position. As a party representing Wall Street and the military-intelligence apparatus, the Democrats fear that exposing the extent of far-right networks within the state and mobilizing popular opposition would set into motion a broader social movement of the working class that would threaten the rule of both capitalist parties.

To obscure the growth of far-right extremism and justify state repression, the political establishment and media have promoted the claim that "left-wing violence" constitutes the primary threat to public safety.

The record of extremist violence contradicts this narrative. A study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) found that right-wing perpetrators accounted for 57 percent of terrorist attacks and plots in the United States between January 1994 and May 2020. The massacres in Charleston, Pittsburgh, El Paso, and Buffalo demonstrate the specific character of far-right terror, which systematically targets ethnic and religious minorities for mass killings.

Nevertheless, the state apparatus and corporate media routinely invert these findings to direct police measures against left-wing, socialist and anti-war sentiment. The New York City Police Department (NYPD) has deployed its militarized Strategic Response Group (SRG) against demonstrations opposing the Gaza genocide and federal immigration raids. NYPD Deputy Commissioner for Intelligence and Counterterrorism Rebecca Weiner explicitly characterized "left-wing terrorism" as a principal security threat while Mayor Zohran Mamdani, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, stood nodding in agreement.

Further investigation is needed to establish Paporakis's political contacts and whether authorities had received earlier warnings about him. But the defense of immigrant workers and democratic rights cannot be entrusted to the police and politicians who uphold the system producing this violence. Preventing further fascist attacks requires the independent mobilization of the working class against Trump's drive toward dictatorship, inequality and war, and against the capitalist system that produces fascism.



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