

ABC's *Good Morning America*

04/27/26

7:06:57 a.m.

2 minutes and 42 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: New Details; Investigation into Shooting Suspect]

PIERRE THOMAS: Law enforcement sources are describing allegations that point to a suspect who is extremely intelligent and who was meticulous in planning to conduct a mass shooting that was intended to kill top administration officials, including, possibly the President. This morning, ABC News has learned of disturbing new details about the alleged motive of 31-year-old Cole Allen, the man authorities say raced past security, allegedly willing to kill as many people as possible at the White House Correspondents Dinner.

U.S. ATTORNEY FOR D.C. JUDGE JEANINE PIRRO: It is clear, based upon what we know so far, that this individual was intent on doing as much harm and as much damage as he could.

THOMAS: Sources describe a message Cole Allen allegedly sent to his family before the attack. That message allegedly describes grievances against Trump administration officials, expressing how, if necessary, he would kill from the highest ranking to the lowest, including any Secret Service member that got in his way. He allegedly ends the message with a critique of hotel security, noting how his plan to check into the hotel allowed him to have weapons in the building without anyone knowing. Sources telling us that Allen allegedly snuck down ten flights of stairs go undetected before suddenly dashing toward that security checkpoint where he confronted police. In the note, he allegedly refers to himself as "Cole friendly federal assassin Allen." The FBI and Secret Service now launching a nationwide investigation. Within hours, FBI agents and a swat team were at the Allen family home in Torrance, California.

ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL TODD BLANCHE [on ABC's *This Week*, 04/26/26]: We believe that he traveled by train from Los Angeles to Chicago and then Chicago to Washington, D.C..

THOMAS: Allen got an engineering ee from CalTech in 2017 and went on to get a master's from Cal state last year. This interview appears to be the suspect in college, showing an emergency brake he built for a wheelchair.

COLE THOMAS ALLEN [to KABC in 2017]: The wheelchair brakes tend to lock the wheels, but don't actually lock the chair to the ground. The idea with this is to prevent it from moving at all.

THOMAS: More recently, Allen has been working as a tutor even once, winning an award for teacher of the month. We expect to see Allen in court for his first appearance as early as today. Prosecutors say he will face gun charges, including assaulting a federal officer with a deadly weapon, and the FBI is emphasizing, George, that this investigation is far from over.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Pierre, third assassination attempt against President Trump and the domestic terror threat, about as high as it's ever been.

THOMAS: George, this is perhaps the most dangerous threat environment since 9/11. And there has been a surge in politically motivated attacks, like nothing we've seen in decades.

(...)

8:04:20 a.m.

1 minute and 34 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking at 8; Heightened Threat Environment]

MICHAEL STRAHAN: much. You know, experts are calling it a volatile and complex threat environment. Chief investigative correspondent Aaron Katersky is back with more on that. Good morning again, Aaron.

AARON KATERSKY: And again to you, Michael. So when this guy charged the Secret Service checkpoint, he exposed a security vulnerability that law enforcement officials have long feared. Authorities said the suspect was a guest at the Washington Hilton, giving him access to an otherwise secure hotel with unchecked baggage. Same thing happened in 2017, when a gunman loaded bags full of weapons into Mandalay bay in Las Vegas and then committed the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history. Sources told ABC News the suspect in this case booked his room earlier this month and boarded a train from Los Angeles to Chicago. From there on to Washington, the belief is he traveled with his weapons, all suggesting this was no spur of the moment thing. But something thought about in advance. Sources also told ABC News the suspect sent a message to his family just before allegedly rushing the checkpoint, describing himself as a "friendly federal assassin." We're told he did not mention Trump by name, but it does serve as a vivid reminder of the political violence now a feature of American public life. Trump has certainly been targeted before, and so have Democrats, including Pennsylvania governor Josh Shapiro a year ago this month, and June is going to mark a year since the speaker of the Minnesota House and her husband were killed in a politically motivated shooting. There are security questions this morning for upcoming high profile events like the visit beginning today from King Charles, the FIFA World Cup, and in July, America's 250th birthday, Robin.

ROBIN ROBERTS: Rightfully, a lot of concern. All right. Aaron, thank you.