

Reports: Police Were Stationed Below Trump Shooter, Who Was Allegedly Spotted Nearly 30 Minutes Before

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A local police counter-sniper team was stationed inside the building that Thomas Crooks crawled on top of to fire at and nearly kill former President Donald Trump, according to a shocking report.

The building was a “watch post” for local police snipers to scan for threats, law enforcement sources told the New York Post.

Sources told the Post that the local police sniper team was inside the building, but not on the roof — where Crooks climbed and waited for Trump to begin speaking before firing off eight shots, hitting Trump in the ear, killing a rally-goer, and wounding two others.

It is not clear which local law enforcement agency was inside the building. The Post reported that the building was swept by cops before the event and that the local sniper team used the building as a staging and lookout post.

According to the outlet, an officer from the Butler Township Police had climbed on a fellow officer’s shoulders to check out the roof of the building moments before the shooting, but backed away after Crooks pointed the rifle at him.

According to the Washington Post, Butler County Sheriff Michael T. Slupe told reporters the officer was gripping the edge of the roof and was not able to access a gun so he had to drop down with the shooter aimed his weapon at him. “He lets go because he doesn’t want to get killed,” Slupe reportedly said.

It is not clear which agency was in charge of the building.

The Butler County Police said the building was not under their jurisdiction.

A Butler City Police Department dispatcher told the Washington Post that the Pennsylvania State Police was in charge of securing the building, but the state police did not respond to a request by the newspaper for comment.

Immediately after the shooting on Saturday, Pennsylvania State Police Deputy Commissioner of Operations Lieutenant Colonel George Bivens had blamed the Secret Service. “Secret Service always has the lead on securing something like this,” he said.

The report appeared to support a claim from an unverified source posted on X by journalist and Air Force veteran Brian Kimber that said a local SWAT team was inside the building instead of the roof because it was hot outside.

The source also suggested a “guy with a weapons case” was reported to local police, but it is not clear whether that is Crooks, and who had reported him. The source also alleged the Secret Service sniper who killed Crooks did not take the shot immediately at Crooks because he knew the local sniper team was supposed to be on that roof, and he had to “deconflict.”

“Complete shit show and failure,” the source wrote in the text.

Another shocking report from local news station WPXI Channel 11 News said law enforcement spotted Crooks on the roof nearly 30 minutes before he fired at Trump.

A source told Channel 11 that a member of the Beaver County’s Emergency Services Unit — which had eight members at the rally, including snipers and spotters — noticed a suspicious man on a roof near the rally at 5:45 p.m. and called it in and took a picture of the person. It is not clear who was informed.

Channel 11 also reported that a law enforcement officer had also previously seen Crooks on the ground and called him in as a suspicious person with a picture prior to 5:45 p.m. Sources told Channel 11 that an officer checked the grounds for Crooks at that point, but did not see him where the first picture was taken.

Beaver County District Attorney Nathan Bible has previously confirmed to reporters that an emergency services unit in his county was also called in for event security.

An executive at AGR International, who owns the building the local sniper team and shooter were at, told the Washington Post that the company had worked with local police before the event on security matters and that police had blocked off access to the company’s parking lot and that space was available for law enforcement use.

The executive, William Bellis, told the outlet that there was no way to access the roof unless there was a ladder. Aerial footage later showed a ladder propped up against the building.

Other neighbors next to the event grounds told the New York Post they were never contacted by law enforcement to set up security in days preceding the event. The Post added that gates into the area where the shooter sneaked in were merely zip-tied shut.

While former presidents have a Secret Service detail, it is not as robust as for current presidents, and it must rely on support from local law enforcement for special events, such

as the one the Trump campaign held on Saturday, according to former Secret Service agents.

Secret Service spokesman Anthony Guglielmi told the Washington Post the agency had two of its counterassault agents on the scene, and filled out the rest of the typical platoon with at least six members of Butler County tactical units. He also said two Secret Service counter-sniper teams were on the scene, but that two additional teams that had been recommended for adequate protection at the rally were staffed by local units.

However, the Secret Service was ultimately responsible for the overall security of the event.

Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle said in an interview with ABC News the “buck stops with her,” but also said she will not step down.