



Quick-Look Report: Holocaust Museum Shooting, 10 June, 2009

Who:

- James W. von Brunn, a Holocaust denier reported to be in his late 80s, walked into the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC and shot a security guard with a .22 caliber rifle on 10 June 2009
- In 1981 von Brunn served six years in prison for attempting to kidnap members of the Federal Reserve board due to anger over high interest rates
- Von Brunn has been charged with murder and killing in the course of possessing a firearm at a federal facility, both capital offenses under federal law
- The Department of Homeland Security has categorized the shooting as a criminal incident and said it does not appear to have a connection to terrorism. The attack is being investigated as a hate crime

Museum shooting

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum was crowded with schoolchildren and other tourists at the time of the attack.



Source: Times reporting



DOUG STEVENS Los Angeles Times

What:

- Just prior to the attack, von Brunn double-parked his car in a lane of traffic outside the main entrance to the museum. He walked towards the entrance where a security guard held the door open; von Brunn then raised the rifle and shot the security guard. He then proceeded into the entrance of the museum where additional security guards returned fire
- The security guard who opened the door, Stephen T. Johns, was killed and a second guard was wounded. von Brunn was shot and disabled
- US Park Police SWAT team checked the building following the attack searching for accomplices, but the gunman appeared to have been acting alone

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- Authorities searched his vehicle for explosives, but none were found
- Officers found a notebook in von Brunn's car with a handwritten note saying, "You want my weapons — this is how you'll get them. The Holocaust is a lie. Obama was created by Jews"
- As soon as witnesses reported the attack, the museum was evacuated and nearby streets closed



When:

- The attack occurred shortly before 1pm EST on Wednesday, 10 June 2009. No threats were made prior to the shooting

Where:

- The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is located near the National Mall and the Potomac River. The museum has heavy security with guards located inside and outside the building. All visitors are required to pass through metal detectors and bags are screened

Notes:

- Current reports do not indicate that the shooting was intended to imitate any previous attacks. Washington, DC Mayor Adrian Fenty has called the attack “an extremely isolated incident”

Sources:

New York Times
Washington Post
Associated Press
Sky News
Los Angeles Times
USA Today
CNN
United States District Court Complaint

Additional Resources can be found on TRIPwire at <http://www.tripwire.dhs.gov>

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