

Four dead in workplace shooting in Maryland, the third mass shooting in the US in 24 hours

By Adam Mclean
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On Thursday morning, a gunman opened fire at a Rite Aid distribution center in Aberdeen, Maryland, killing three people and injuring three more. The suspected shooter, Snochia Moseley, was found dead at the scene and is believed to have fatally shot herself.

According to accounts of coworkers given to police, Moseley was a disgruntled employee at the distribution center. Previously a security guard at the facility, she was working as a temporary worker at the same location at the time of the shooting. Her exact motives remain unclear.

The Rite Aid distribution center is a large warehouse, sitting next to an Amazon warehouse of similar size. While the conditions at Amazon warehouses are particularly egregious, the same exploitation, in different degree, exists in other warehouses.

Politicians responded by piously lamenting the tragedy without providing any explanation of the regularity of mass violence in the United States. Republican Governor Larry Hogan tweeted “Our prayers are with all those impacted, including our first responders. The State stands ready to offer any support.”

Democratic Senator Ben Cardin echoed this in his own tweet, saying “Details are still emerging, but I've met with the Harford County Executive and Sheriff to offer my sincere condolences. I wanted to be there in person to thank them, as well as the many first responders and federal law enforcement on the scene for their swift responses.”

He also put forward gun control as a palliative for these shootings. Cardin continued, “There is no rational reason we should not close the loophole that allows some gun purchases to occur without a background

check or reinstate the assault weapons ban,” but had no other ideas for combating gun violence.

Images and video of police raiding the warehouse with shotguns and assault weapons and of police individually patting down employees appeared on the *Washington Post*.

Shootings also occurred this week in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. In Wisconsin, software developer Anthony Tong shot four people at his office on Wednesday, seriously wounding three, before being killed himself in a shootout with police. He had worked at WTS Paradigm, and his motive remains unknown. A nearby shopping center was placed on lockdown at the request of the police.

The Middleton police chief responding to the shooting said, “I think a lot less people were injured or killed because police officers went in and neutralized the shooter.”

In Pennsylvania, Patrick Dowdell shot three people at a courthouse where he was due to appear for domestic violence charges on Wednesday. He was shot and killed by police at the scene as well.

These recent episodes of gun violence are only the latest in a long line of mass shootings in America. That three separate shootings occurred in the space of two days is not exceptionally rare is a testament to the frequency of gun violence in the US.

According to the Gun Violence Archive, “There have been 262 American mass shootings (4+ shot or killed in the same incident, not including the shooter) in the 263 days of 2018.” There have been 1,800 mass shootings in the US since 2013.

That mass shootings have become a near-daily phenomenon is a symptom of a society in deep crisis.

Political figures issue the standard laments after each tragedy, accompanied by inevitable calls for increasing the powers of the state. These eruptions of violence, however, cannot be separated from the glorification of militarism and the general brutalization of social relations in America, promoted by the entire political establishment.

In the most unequal country in the world, the most psychologically fragile snap and erupt in violence. Mass shootings are only one of the more palpable consequences of this larger trend.

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