



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 8, 2025

## Prosecutors: Trump Assassination Suspect Tried to Purchase Rocket Launcher

Federal prosecutors allege that Ryan Wesley Routh, the man charged with attempting to assassinate President Donald Trump, also tried to purchase a rocket launcher from Ukraine.

The startling revelation of how badly the would-be assassin wanted to murder the then-GOP presidential candidate is contained in a motion to admit evidence that might otherwise [not be allowed](#) under federal rules of evidence.

The revelation raises a disturbing if not frightening question: Did Ukrainian dictator Volodymyr Zelensky know about the attempted purchase, and not alert American authorities?



AP Images  
Ryan Wesley Routh

The motion also says Routh possessed ammunition for a high-powered sniper rifle and reconnoitered the area months before he attempted to murder the president on September 15.

□BREAKING: The DOJ revealed that Trump assassin Ryan Routh tried to buy military weapons from Ukraine to kill Trump, including a ROCKET LAUNCHER.

Routh asked the Ukrainian Military for a “Stinger or RPG to take out Trump” because Trump would be “Bad for Ukraine”

Routh goes on... [pic.twitter.com/u6qHldOup1](https://pic.twitter.com/u6qHldOup1)

— Benny Johnson (@bennyjohnson) [April 8, 2025](#)

### Travel Evidence

The motion explains that prosecutors introduce evidence that Routh, 58, “traveled from North Carolina to West Palm Beach — an area he had no connection to — in late March and early April 2024 and spent over a week there engaging in apparent reconnaissance for his assassination attempt.”

Routh remained in Palm Beach — where Trump plays golf at his Trump International course — between March 29 and April 5. Then he returned to North Carolina, the motion says:

During this trip, Routh engaged in some of the same conduct as the August-September phase of the assassination plot, including using a stolen license plate to avoid detection, purchasing and using multiple burner phones, and engaging in cash withdrawals, including Western Union transfers at a check cashing store just a quarter mile from Trump



International.

The motion says his “purpose ... is evident” because on returning to North Carolina, he gave a friend a box with burner phones, ammunition, and “copies of his ‘Dear World’ letter,” which “called for President Trump’s assassination and predicted his own imprisonment — a letter that is part-and-parcel of this March and April trip.”

The trip must be admitted because it was a “substantial step” in the plot to murder Trump, the motion continues. The trip is “undeniably necessary context for the jury to understand the significance of Routh’s conduct on September 15 at Trump International because it shows his planning for what happened that day.”

Both trips — March-April and August-September — “strike at the heart of Routh’s long standing criminal intent,” prosecutors wrote.

Another key piece of evidence, prosecutors argue, is Routh’s plan to escape to Mexico after he murdered Trump. Routh had “an extensive WhatsApp conversation with a person Routh saved in his phone as ‘Ramiro’ who lives in Mexico,” the motion argues. Those conversations “show his planned flight from law enforcement after committing the crime — evidence well-settled to be direct evidence of guilt.”

## **Weapons Evidence**

Along with evidence of Routh’s travel and escape plans, prosecutors will introduce evidence of “improvised destructive device components and .50 caliber ammunition that were recovered from the box containing Routh’s ‘Dear World’ letter and his burner phones — all of which proves Routh’s intent to kill and to possess a firearm as a convicted felon.”

That box contained a “a barrel, breech, and spring-loaded firing mechanism” to build a rifle to fire the .50-caliber ammo. The box also contained a manual on making improvised explosives. Prosecutors also say the .50-caliber bullets explain “later attempts, in late August, to obtain a .50 caliber sniper rifle.”

Thereafter comes the most shocking evidence.

Routh attempted “to acquire anti-aircraft weapons.... That month, Routh sought to purchase the devices online from an associate Routh believed to be a Ukrainian with access to military weapons.”

The motion says the pair discussed the attempt on Trump’s life in Butler, Pennsylvania, in July, and that Routh wrote, “‘I wish’ via encrypted messaging app, before the two began discussing Routh’s purchase of a weapon in August.”

The message, prosecutors say, read as follows:

[S]end me an rpg [rocket propelled grenade] or stinger and I will see what we can do...

[Trump] is not good for Ukraine.

Routh asked if the purchase could be shipped, then explained that “I need equipment so that Trump cannot get elected,” the motion continued:

The two then exchanged messages about price and logistics that included Routh writing, “going to the local store for such an item is impossible — however you are at war so those



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items lost and destroyed daily — one missing would not be noticed. Do you think Trump will be good for Ukraine?????” The two continued to discuss the possibility of Routh securing a rocket or missile launcher, with Routh sending his associate an image of President Trump’s plane and writing “Trump’s plane, he gets on and off daily.”

If you think it’s bad that Ukraine never said thank you for everything the United States has done for them, the fact that they seemingly did not tell us that this sociopath literally tried to buy arms from them to assassinate my father seems like a much bigger deal. Wonder why?!? [pic.twitter.com/LUr5mOkPh2](https://pic.twitter.com/LUr5mOkPh2)

— Donald Trump Jr. (@DonaldJTrumpJr) [April 8, 2025](#)

That evidence invites myriad questions about what the government of Ukraine knew, and when it knew it.

Wrote Donald Trump Jr. on X:

If you think it’s bad that Ukraine never said thank you for everything the United States has done for them, the fact that they seemingly did not tell us that this sociopath literally tried to buy arms from them to assassinate my father seems like a much bigger deal. Wonder why?!?

“Did Zelenskyy know about this?” West Virginia GOP candidate Derrick Evans wrote:

Did Zelenskyy support this for the same reasons as Routh, because he knew Trump was NOT going to continue sending BILLIONS of dollars to Ukraine?

□BREAKING: The DOJ has revealed that President Trump’s would-be assassin, Ryan Routh, tried to purchase military weapons from Ukraine—including a rocket launcher—in a plot to kill Trump.

The Ukrainian government was allegedly aware of the assassination plan.

Here are the DOJ... [pic.twitter.com/qcyrqx3u7W](https://pic.twitter.com/qcyrqx3u7W)

— Derrick Evans (@DerrickEvans4WV) [April 8, 2025](#)

## **Aliases, Arrest**

Prosecutors will also introduce evidence that Routh used the alias “Brian Wilson” when he camped at a truck stop and reconnoitered the golf course and Palm Beach International Airport.

Evidence also shows that he called himself “John White” in August to purchase a burner phone, prosecutors say.

The federal indictment against Routh [alleges that](#) he lay in wait for Trump [for 12 hours](#) at the golf course, then was prepared to gun down the 78-year-old president. A Secret Service agent spotted a rifle



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and fired at someone that prosecutors allege was Routh.

Routh fled the scene, and Martin County sheriff's deputies caught and arrested him on Interstate 95. [He was caught](#) with an SKS rifle with a scope.

Routh had a long criminal record prior to being charged with trying to assassinate Trump. His crimes include possessing a weapon of mass destruction, which prosecutors will use as evidence of his readiness to murder Trump.



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