# Actor Robert De Niro Criticises Trump Outside Manhattan Court Amid Swatting Incident



On May 28, 2024, actor Robert De Niro, flanked by Capitol Police officers Harry Dunn and Michael Fanone, appeared outside Manhattan criminal court where former President Donald Trump was undergoing trial for alleged hush money payments. Representing President Joe Biden's campaign, De Niro criticized Trump, calling him a "clown" and engaging in heated exchanges with Trump supporters gathered at the scene.

Trump responded to De Niro’s presence through a post on Truth Social early the next morning, disparaging the actor's mental and physical stature, and accusing him of suffering from "TRUMP DERANGEMENT SYNDROME." Trump further claimed De Niro, who has voiced criticism in Biden’s campaign ads, looked "pathetic and sad."

De Niro’s criticism of Trump included accusations of the former president perpetuating violence and lies, referencing the January 6 Capitol riot. Around the same time, Michael Fanone, one of the officers present with De Niro, disclosed that his mother’s Virginia home was "swatted" due to his outspoken stance against Trump. An anonymous individual falsely claimed to have killed Fanone’s mother and threatened to shoot people at his old high school.

Fairfax County police are investigating the incident. Fanone, who voted for Trump in 2016 but has since supported Biden, attributes the attack on his mother’s home to his critical public appearances against Trump. The spate of swatting incidents targeting high-profile figures has led U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland to denounce these threats as a menace to democracy.