

US police killings update: Veteran with PTSD shot and killed

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7 March 2016

Last Thursday, a 36-year-old man named Travis Boyd Bradley was shot and killed outside of Baltimore, Maryland by Harford County Sheriff deputies. Bradley is the fourth person to be killed by US police forces this month.

Bradley was suffering from PTSD and was a military veteran. According to his ex-wife's sister, Nicole Heider, Bradley had struggled with alcohol and the death of a good friend who died while deployed to Iraq. She told the *Baltimore Sun*, "He has been deemed not deployable because of his PTSD. ... He had been in programs before."

It seems that Bradley tried to take his own life by provoking the police. Police were alerted to Bradley's intention by his girlfriend, who warned them that he was suffering from PTSD and "was possibly armed with a handgun."

Bradley fired two rounds of an assault rifle outside of his house, after police came and cordoned off the area. Later, according to police, Bradley "came out of the house and presented himself in a threatening manner, gave indication he was armed." The police immediately shot and killed him; however, he was, in fact, not armed at this time.

Bradley has two children, both of whom now live with his ex-wife. The anniversary of the death of his good friend was this week; this may have played a role in his suicidal grief and despair. According to Heider, Bradley was on the phone with his ex-wife during the standoff, "going on about his friend ... telling her he just wanted to die."

Heider told the *Sun*, "I just feel like our government has abandoned so many of their veterans. I think this is a result of that."

Police also killed a 39-year-old man on March 1 in Palm Bay, Florida. The man, Dimitri Corcino, had

threatened a construction crew around 9:30 am because of the loud noises coming from a house renovation they were doing.

Later, as Corcino left his house, police shot him because he was holding a pistol in a "threatening manner." The police chief, Mark Renkens, stated, "At that point the officer felt he had no choice but to fire his weapon." The police also suggested he may have been intoxicated.

In Euless, Texas, police shot and killed a 22-year old methamphetamine addict last Tuesday. Jorge Gonzales was killed by police after having shot and killed an officer. Gonzales's family blamed the police for releasing him from jail, knowing that he was still a methamphetamine addict. Gonzales's 17-year-old sister, Jennifer, told the *Dallas News*, "My brother didn't mean what he did, but that doesn't make it OK, because it's not going to bring nobody's life back. My brother wasn't a bad person unless he was under the influence."

Also on Tuesday, police killed Mickey Sweatt, 37, after exchanging fire with him in Gautier, Mississippi. Police had been called to the scene on a domestic violence call.

Since the beginning of March these four people have been shot and killed by police in the United States. According to the *Washington Post*, 171 people have been shot dead this year. In 2015, 1,205 people were killed by police, according to killedbypolice.net.

In another development, on March 1 the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) released a report describing when police officers fired their weapons in 2015. The report found that 37 percent of those shot at by police showed some kind of mental illness. This is an increase from 2014, when 19 percent of those shot showed signs of mental illness. Of the 38 people hit by LAPD gunfire

in 2015, 22 were Hispanic, eight were African-American, five were white and two were Asian or Pacific Islander. The LAPD has shot 223 people between 2011 and 2015—killing 97 of them.



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