

Medical examiner's report confirms Akron, Ohio police shot unarmed Jayland Walker 46 times

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On Friday, Summit County medical examiner Dr. Lisa Kohler released a preliminary autopsy report confirming that Jayland Walker died after being shot 46 times by Akron, Ohio, police officers.

The unarmed 25-year-old worker was gunned down on June 27 by cops who fired more than 90 rounds at their victim following a brief chase. Nearly three weeks later, the police involved in the shooting have neither been identified nor charged.

Dr. Kohler confirmed that Walker did not have any drugs or alcohol in his system at the time of death, and that the cause of death was “homicide” via multiple “gunshot wounds.”

Police body camera footage released on July 3 confirmed that Walker was unarmed and posed no threat to the 13 police officers who were pursuing him after an alleged “equipment” violation. Since the release of the footage, Democratic Mayor Dan Horrigan and Akron Police Chief Steve Mylett have imposed a nightly curfew from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. which, as of this writing, is still in effect.

The curfew zone encompasses the downtown core, which includes the police station, two major hospitals, the University of Akron and several residential blocks. Since the imposition of the curfew, some 56 anti-police violence protesters have been arrested and dozens more have been injured by police, who have used tear gas and deployed armored BearCats, SWAT teams and undercover snatch squads to intimidate protesters, effectively criminalizing peaceful protests against police murder.

At the press conference held Friday morning to announce her findings, Dr. Kohler confirmed that her office recovered 26 bullets from inside Walker's body. She said Walker suffered “several very devastating injuries that would cause death.”

Dr. Kohler said the injuries included “15 gunshot wounds” to Walker's “torso,” and that he had wounds to his “heart, lungs, liver, spleen, left kidney, intestines and multiple ribs.”

She added that “17 gunshot wounds injured the pelvis and upper leg... one bullet struck the face and fractured the jaw... eight gunshot wounds injured the arms and right hand... five gunshot wounds injured the knees, right lower leg and right foot.”

Dr. Kohler said that Walker suffered massive blood loss after receiving 41 entry wounds and five “graze” wounds. She noted there were 15 exit wounds as well, and that some of the bullets fired at Walker may have caused multiple wounds.

At least five of the entry wounds were on Walker's back, but it is unknown if those occurred as he was fleeing from the cops or during the roughly five to six seconds when police shot dozens of bullets at Walker after he had collapsed on the pavement from the initial fusillade.

In a brief question and answer session, Dr. Kohler said she could not determine which bullet wound caused Walker's death, as many of the injuries he suffered were life-threatening. But she did confirm that he arrived to the coroner's office with his hands cuffed behind his back.

Dr. Kohler said she did not find it strange that Walker was still restrained by the cuffs when he arrived, noting that she keeps a handcuff key on hand because, apparently, the practice of Ohio police depositing shackled corpses at the coroner's office is not unusual.

Following the Dr. Kohler's press conference, Jayland Walker's family released a statement through its attorneys stating that the report “confirms the violent and unnecessary use of force by the Akron Police Department on an unarmed young man, who, as the family expected, was not under the influence of drugs or alcohol.”

The statement continued: “That Jayland suffered 46 gunshot wounds to his body is horrific. The fact that after being hit nearly four dozen times, officers still handcuffed him while he lay motionless and bleeding on the ground is absolutely inhumane. The family is devastated by the findings of the report and still await a public apology from the police department.”

The Akron Police Department has confirmed that eight of the 13 cops present during Walker's murder have been placed on paid administrative leave pending the completion of an Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) inquiry. The BCI is not in any sense an “independent” or “fact-finding” organization. It exists to provide a veneer of accountability where none exists.

As is stated on the Office of Ohio Attorney General website: “BCI is committed to serving the law enforcement community,” which it does by “helping Ohioans feel safe in their communities and inspiring trust in law enforcement...”

On Friday, Clay Cozart, the president of the Fraternal Order of Police Akron Lodge 7, confirmed in an interview with Fox 8 that the eight police officers who shot at Walker had given statements to BCI investigators. Cozart confirmed that some of the cops spoke to investigators last week, while others only gave their statement

this week.

Walker family lawyer Bobby DiCello has stated repeatedly that none of the police who shot at Walker on June 27 gave a statement that night or prior to viewing the body camera footage that was aired on July 3. This appears to be confirmed by Cozart's statement.

Upon completion of the BCI investigation, a report will be commissioned that will be reviewed by far-right Ohio Republican Attorney General David Yost, an ardent defender of the police, who will then decide whether to convene a grand jury and bring charges against one or more of the cops.

At a press conference held Thursday, Akron Police Chief Steve Mylett confirmed that the eight cops who shot at Walker are still on paid administrative leave. He reiterated his refusal to release their names. Mylett claimed, without providing any evidence, that the entire police department was receiving "death threats," and that there were "bounties" on "officers' heads."

Mylett said that on the basis of these alleged and unsubstantiated threats, he had authorized every single Akron police officer to "take their name tags off." He complained that "people were getting their [the police officers'] names off of their uniforms, getting on social media and elsewhere and going into our Facebook page here in the police department to identify, get a picture, send that picture and that image out into the public."

He said that if a cop was asked by a person for his "identifying information," the officer should "give their employee number." He continued, "If the person was not satisfied with that, the supervisor would be summoned to the scene and deal with the situation."

While Mylett claims the motive for concealing the names of officers is "safety concerns," the real motive is to give the cops even freer rein to beat and kill people.

It is also a response to the fact that local anti-police violence protesters have uncovered a fascist police gang known as Tango-22 that is operating within the Akron Police Department.

Last year, local Akron residents forced an investigation into Akron cop Phil Senior, after noticing his III Percenter tattoo on police body camera footage. The III Percents, like the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys, are a fascist militia group that recruits police and military elements. At least eight III Percents have been arrested for participating in the January 6 coup, one of whom, Texas III Percenter Guy Reffitt, was found guilty on five felony counts earlier this year.

The Tango-22 fascist gang includes Akron police officers Todd Stump, Wallace Lytle, the aforementioned III Percenter Phil Senior, and Nate Milstead.

As part of their research into Senior, Akron anti-police violence researchers discovered that the Tango-22 gang had its own website, which until recently featured photos and names of the gang members, as well as short biographies confirming that they all had military experience and had all worked in "law enforcement."

In addition to the usual glorification of guns and nationalism, the Tango-22 website features a recent social media update that reads, in part: "[W]e have temporarily unpublished our social media due to baseless accusations by sham activist groups. We all know they are a cancer to our society, and will eventually go away."

Prior to the deletion of photos posted to their social media accounts, this author was able to save some of the images. They show not only their police equipment, but also their far-right politics.

Some of the memes posted on the Tango-22 Instagram page downplay the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, while others seem to indicate support for honorary Proud Boy and fascist killer Kyle Rittenhouse.

When the same Akron residents who exposed Senior tried to get the Akron City Council to investigate the Tango-22 gang, they received no support from the local capitalist media or the political establishment.

One Akron resident told this reporter that an Akron Council person told him, "off the record," that the "Department of Justice should investigate this." That was over a year ago.

In an interview with PBS on July 13, Kathleen Belew, an associate professor of history at Northwestern University and author of *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America*, spoke about the growth of far-right militia elements in the military and police prior to and after January 6, 2021.

She said that it was "very typical for the white power movement to target active duty members and service members for recruitment because they want those skills that those people bring."

She noted the indifference of the US government to the growth of fascist and white supremacist movements within the military and the police.

"The Department of Defense has only in the last two years or so begun the process of taking a tally of how many people have this kind of belief system within the armed forces," she said.

"But plain and simple," she continued, "we don't know how big a problem this is because nobody has been keeping an accurate count. And it's even worse in police officer record keeping, because there is no centralized record keeping there at all."



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