

After murdering unarmed Akron, Ohio worker Jayland Walker, 8 killer cops return to “service”

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In an interview with ABC News 5 Cleveland on Tuesday, October 11, Akron, Ohio Police Chief Steve Mylett announced that the eight killer cops responsible for murdering 25-year-old Jayland Walker in a hail of gunfire in the early morning hours of June 27 would be ending their paid leave and returning to duty.

The decision to bring them back had been made the previous day. Mylett justified their return by claiming that there was a “crisis” in “staffing” within the department and that the cops would be relegated to “administrative tasks” such as “answering phones.”

“I need as many people as I can muster so I don’t have to cut services to the community,” Mylett told ABC 5. “And that’s certainly something I do not want to do,” he added.

None of the eight cops who shot and killed Walker have been charged, or identified, nearly four months after the murder.

According to a medical examiner’s report, Walker, a former Amazon worker and Door Dash delivery driver, was shot 46 times as he was fleeing from police earlier this year. This is the type of “service” Mylett worries the Akron Police Department would not be able to provide to his ruling class bosses in City Hall and in the Chamber of Commerce without his killer cops.

Mylett made his decision the same day the Walker family and supporters held another peaceful march in support of Jayland and against the unending wave of police violence in the United States. Speaking at the rally, Pam Walker, Jayland’s mother, thanked the community and recounted the immense pain she is going through every day.

“Please don’t give up on us, because something needs to be done about the police department killing my son like that,” Pam said. “I would hate for another mother to go through this, and it probably will happen... every 10 to 15 minutes I am thinking about what happened to him.

“Was he in pain?” she said through tears. “What was he thinking? Did he suffer? Why did they do all that?”

In response to Mylett’s reinstatement of the cops, on October 12, nearly 100 anti-police violence protesters staged a march through Akron demanding the police be fired and charged with murder.

An Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) investigation of the shooting of Walker is ongoing. That the police involved in the killing of Walker have been allowed to return to duty before the completion of this investigation—which is supposed to determine if charges should be filed against the cops—completely exposes the “investigation” as nothing more than a cover-up, meant to divert and dissipate social anger.

Demonstrating the BCI’s utility to the police, last month the agency presented its “findings” to a Stark County grand jury, which afterwards decided not to pursue any charges against Canton Police Officer Robert Huber. Huber shot and killed 46-year-old father and husband James Williams through a fence on January 1, 2022 as he was ringing in the New Year with celebratory gunfire in his backyard.

The killing of Walker and cover-up by the Akron Police, the BCI, the FBI and the Department of Justice have taken part in close coordination with Democratic Party officials. This includes Mayor Dan Horrigan, Ohio Democratic Senator Sherrod Brown and President Joe Biden.

After the police released the first limited batch of body camera footage on July 3, confirming that Walker was unarmed and no threat to police when he was killed, Mayor Horrigan instituted a nightly curfew as part of the coordinated campaign between City Hall and the police to stifle dissent and criminalize the First Amendment in the process.

That night, and in subsequent protests, dozens of peaceful protesters, innocent bystanders and even journalists have been arrested, beaten, tear gassed and jailed.

In the midst of the police rampage in Akron, President Joe Biden visited nearby Cleveland and revealed that the Justice Department and FBI were “closely monitoring what happened,” referring to the Walker murder. Biden said that the FBI was “coordinating”

with “state and local” officials to “provide resources and specialized skills.”

In an August 30 press conference held by the Walker family and lawyers, Raymond Greene, the executive director of The Freedom Bloc, reported that police had engaged in a terror campaign of kidnapping and beating peaceful protesters.

“We have non-violent acts of civil disobedience happening in our community, and those people participating in those non-violent acts are being harassed and targeted,” Greene said.

“They are ultimately being beaten up and taken to abandoned locations and off-site locations... They are leaving with broken arms, broken noses, broken faces. They are losing jobs, they are losing their houses. We have several protesters who are now homeless because they have been beaten up by the police and the police have tried to make it their fault.”

The *World Socialist Web Site* has previously reported on the kidnapping and beating of protesters by Akron police.

In a September 22 “Drop the Charges” press conference organized by the Akron Bail Fund, the Akron Democratic Socialists of America, Serve the People Akron and The Freedom Bloc, protesters and community members recounted some of the injuries and charges leveled against them by the Akron Police Department. Unlike the killer cops, who are facing no charges more than 105 days after shooting over 90 rounds at Walker, over 75 protesters and innocent bystanders have been arrested.

One mother described how, for having the audacity to exercise her First Amendment right to peaceably assemble in support of Jayland Walker, she was charged with obstruction of justice and five counts of child endangerment.

She said that after the protest ended, police surrounded her vehicle and drew their guns, pointing them at her and her children.

Her son, who participated in the July 7 protest, confirmed that as they were sitting in the car, unarmed and having committed no crimes, police threatened them, took their property and placed them under arrest.

“They had guns pointed to our faces. They put us in handcuffs and zip ties,” the young boy said. “I was arrested with no shoes on, and they took my phone. I still haven’t got my phone. They took our car and our house keys, and we still don’t have them.

“I’m 12 years old, and I was handcuffed and Akron police zip-tied the rest of my friends.”

Asked to respond to the child’s account by Spectrum News reporter Kristen Anzuini, Police Chief Mylett did not refute the young African American boy’s statements, instead asserting that “there is no threshold for age” when it comes to placing someone in handcuffs.

In the same interview, Mylett said any reports that police were abusive were “absolute crap.”

That Mylett would not hesitate to put a toddler or infant in cuffs accentuates the role of the police in capitalist society. They are soldiers for the ruling financial oligarchy, not impartial protectors of workers and the poor.

Under the growing crisis of capitalism, expressed in the repeated warnings of nuclear “Armageddon” from Biden, the transformation of the Republican Party into a fascist party under the leadership of Trump, the ongoing spread of the coronavirus, which continues to kill over 300 a day in the US, and record inflation and a looming recession, the brutality and violence of the police is accepted and promoted by both political parties.

In Akron, where Horrigan, a Democrat, has been mayor since 2015, the police budget has increased from \$56 million in 2020 to over \$76 million in 2022.

Biden has already added \$37 billion to the federal budget to help local departments hire more police officers this year. As for the Republicans, in his weekly fascist rants Trump venerates the police and Border Gestapo, promising that if he becomes president-dictator, he will let “police do their job the only way they know how.”

According to *MappingPoliceViolence.us*, Walker is one of 908 people who have been killed by police in the US through October 8, 2022. If the current rate of killing continues, 2022 will be the deadliest year for police killings, eclipsing last year’s record.

The solution to ending police violence requires workers and youth break from the two big business parties and their limited and hollow promises of “reform” and instead build a socialist leadership in the working class organized in opposition to the ultimate source of police violence, the capitalist system.



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