Washington D.C. police officer facing murder charge in killing of motorist in moving car

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On March 7, Enis Jevric, a sergeant with Washington D.C.'s Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) was charged in federal court in the police killing of 27-year old An'Twan Gilmore in 2021. The sergeant faces three charges: second-degree murder, deprivation of rights under color of law, and using a firearm to commit second-degree murder. These charges carry a possible maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

The charges stem from an incident which occurred in August 2021. Police were called to the intersection of New York Avenue and Florida Avenue Northeast at around 2:45 a.m. on August 25 of that year in response to a call about a person either sleeping or unconscious at a traffic intersection.

Police chief Robert Contee claimed in a press conference eight days after the killing that officers saw a gun in Gilmore's waistband.

A video released by the MPD shows at least eight police officers surrounding Gilmore's car, several holding ballistic shields. The officers knocked on the windows and talked about a gun. Gilmore, waking up in a running vehicle and seeing nearly a dozen armed men surrounding his car, lurched forward, stopped and then continued onward. When the car took off again, Jevric fired ten shots into the automobile, hitting Gilmore.

The car stopped one block later, crashing into a tree. Gilmore, fatally wounded, was taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead. Chief Contee noted that when police found the severely wounded man, the firearm "was still in the right side of his waistband area."

The police chief acknowledged that firing into a moving vehicle was a violation of MPD policy. It was "very difficult to see through the lens of the officer, the one officer in this case that fired, it's very difficult to see what that officer was seeing" that justified the shooting, he stated.

Jevric was placed on paid administrative leave after the shooting, continuing to draw a salary for more than a year afterwards. According to the *Washington Post*, after being charged, Jevric was placed "in the court system's High Intensity Supervision Program, with a nightly curfew and GPS monitoring. [Magistrate Judge G. Michael] Harvey said he agreed with defense attorney Barrett Schultz that Jevric did not pose a flight risk."

It was the second shooting that evening, hours after police fatally shot George Watson in the Cardozo neighborhood of Northwest Washington, just over a mile away. Watson was shot several times by MPD sergeant Jonathan Nelson after the officer claimed to see the man holding a gun. This turned out to be an airsoft pellet gun. Nelson remains on paid administrative leave as well and has not been charged.

Several protests broke out after Gilmore's death, including one in the city where 150 people—friends, family and activists—marched along the busy U Street corridor where Gilmore's killing took place, ending at the spot where Watson was shot and killed. Family and friends at the protest in September 2021 spoke of Gilmore highly.

"We are angry, we are hurt but we are hopeful that our justice system won't fail us and can make things right," LaShunna Grier, Gilmore's cousin, said after Jevric was charged earlier this month, according to DCist. "We want the Metropolitan Police Department to know who he took away from us. He took a friend, a brother, an uncle, a cousin and a great man."

Gilmore's and Watson's killings were two of the more than 1,000 by the police across the US in 2021. As police killings have surged, Democratic President Joe

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Biden and the Democratic Party have signed off on vast funding increases to the police, whose job is to defend private property.

If convicted, Jevric would only be the third Washington D.C. police officer found guilty of murder. In December, officers Terence Sutton and Andrew Zabavsky were convicted of murdering motorist Karon Hylton-Brown in 2020 and falsifying reports about the incident.

Meanwhile, incidents of police violence and killings have continued throughout the region. On March 18, 17-year old Dalaneo Martin was fatally shot by a US Park Police (USPP) officer near 34th and Baker Street in Northeast D.C. Martin had been found sleeping in a vehicle that was determined to have been stolen.

According to a USPP spokesperson, the officer who killed Martin had been “trapped in the vehicle and was unable to get out of the car” as Martin took off. “It is unclear why the officer was inside the vehicle,” notes a local CBS report on the incident. Another Park Police officer claims to have been “dragged by the vehicle as it fled the scene.'

On Tuesday, Virginia authorities released video showing almost a dozen police officers and hospital staff smothering 28-year old Irvo Otieno to death as he lay on the floor at Central State Hospital in Petersburg earlier this month. Otieno suffered a mental health crisis at his home and had first been brought to a hospital where he had allegedly gotten physical with police.

After this, he was arrested and brought to jail. There, Otieno was beaten by police and denied medication, later causing him to be transported again to a medical center where he was killed. Seven police and three hospital staff have been charged in his death.

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