

11-year-old Mississippi boy shot by police after calling emergency services

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In the early morning hours on May 20, an unarmed and harmless 11-year-old boy was shot in his Mississippi home by a police officer.

Police arrived at the residence of Nakala Murry in Indianola, Mississippi in response to a report of a domestic disturbance. Murry instructed her son Aderrien to contact the police after the father of another of Murry's children arrived and became "irate." Murry, whose daughter and two-year-old nephew were also present at the house, felt threatened and hoped that the police would "stop it right there."

According to the family's attorney, Carlos Moore, two Indianola Police Department officers arrived at the scene, with one kicking on the front door until Murry opened it. Murry said that one of the officers, subsequently identified as Greg Capers, "had his gun drawn at the front door and asked those inside the home to come outside."

Murry exited the home before Aderrien, after which, as she told ABC's Good Morning America, she "heard a shot, and I saw my son run out towards where we were." (The father, according to Murry, had left the home by then.)

Moore said that Capers "shot him immediately when his hands were up" and as he came "around the corner" in the house to walk out. Murry said that she ran to her son, who asked her in shock, "Why did he shoot me? What did I do?"

An ambulance was dispatched, and Aderrien was treated at the scene. He was then airlifted 100 miles (161 km) southeast to the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi and rushed to an intensive care unit (ICU).

Aderrien was shot in the right side of his chest; the bullet collapsed his lung, fractured multiple ribs and lacerated his liver. He was placed on a ventilator and a

chest tube had to be inserted to treat his wound. He was released from the hospital four days later. The Mississippi Bureau of Investigation (MBI), which is investigating the shooting, stated that, "No officers were injured during the incident."

Moore informed reporters of the existence of body camera footage taken by the officers during the incident. However, the Mississippi Department of Public Safety has stated that the "MBI is currently assessing this critical incident and gathering evidence," and that "upon completing the investigation, agents will share their findings with the Attorney General's Office."

Moore has responded to the delay in releasing the body camera footage, telling CNN, "This 11-year-old child was about 4 feet 10...so he could not have been confused" with the father, who, according to Moore, is "over 6 feet tall." He continued, "So we don't know what happened, but we do know this officer's actions were reckless, very reckless, and could have led to the loss of life."

At a press conference two days after the incident, Moore responded to the indifference Indianola Mayor Ken Featherstone initially displayed towards the shooting, saying, "Mayor Featherstone, this is not a laughing matter."

Referring to a previous violent encounter involving Capers, in which, according to local news, Capers "choked, tased in the neck and arrested" an individual, Moore said that Police Chief Ronald Sampson "didn't do anything against Capers when he first tased that person in handcuffs. You let the man run wild. What are you waiting on?"

Moore reiterated his demand that the city terminate both Greg Capers and Chief Sampson "within 48

hours.” He said that if his demands were not met that there would be “a sit-in at City Hall” on May 25.

Later on the same day of the press conference, the Indianola Board of Aldermen voted unanimously to put Capers on paid administrative leave, with Mayor Featherstone adding that Capers was being “suspended pending a psychological examination and to talk about his readiness.”

On Thursday (May 25), Murry herself confronted the indifference of the town’s City Hall. “This was the worst moment in my life, and I feel like nobody cares. That’s my child,” she said. She later stated that the mayor and town officials showed “no sympathy” towards her.

This event serves as another object lesson of the role of the police, which is one of the many repressive mechanisms furnished and sustained by the political representatives of the capitalist state to police social inequality.

It is on the basis of widening inequality between the working class and ruling class that police departments around the country and around the world are being militarized, especially in working class and low-income neighborhoods. The median household income in Indianola (population less than 10,000) is \$32,043, and 31 percent of the population lives in poverty.

As with the police killing of Tyre Nichols in January and countless others like it, the parties involved in Indianola—Murry, Aderrien, Capers, Sampson, Featherstone and Moore—are all the same “race,” in this case, African American. This exposes the bankruptcy of identity politics in both explaining and providing a solution for the root cause of police violence.

As of this writing, Mapping Police Violence has recorded over 300 people killed by cops in 42 US states and Washington D.C. so far this year, or two per day. Statista has recorded 344 fatal police shootings. The *Washington Post*’s database has recorded “8,504 fatal police shootings since 2015.”

While all databases acknowledge that people who are black, Hispanic, Native American and native Pacific Islander are disproportionately killed by police with regard to the overall population of the US, it is in fact white people that, year after year, comprise the higher number of police fatalities. (For example, Mapping Police Violence has recorded 129 white people killed so far this year, as compared with 61 black people and

42 Hispanics.)

Responding to the deepening crisis of the capitalist system, the ruling class, carrying out the reactionary orders of the financial oligarchy, slashes social spending and implements ever-greater austerity measures while increasing the budget of the military-intelligence-police apparatus. This has found the latest expression in Biden’s \$1 trillion budget for world war against Russia and China, part of which has allotted tens of billions of dollars for the FBI, Department of Justice and local police departments for fiscal year 2024.



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