

# Police Identify Officer, Alleged Teen Robbed Store

BY DAVID A. LIEB  
AND ALAN SCHER ZAGIER  
Associated Press

FERGUSON, Mo. — Police on Friday identified the officer who fatally shot an unarmed black teenager and released documents alleging the young man had been suspected of stealing a \$48.99 box of cigars from a convenience store in a “strong-arm” robbery shortly before he was killed.

Police Chief Thomas Jackson said the officer did not know the teen was a robbery suspect at the time of the shooting and stopped Michael Brown and a companion “because they were walking down the middle of the street blocking traffic.”

Darren Wilson, a 28-year-old white officer, has patrolled suburban St. Louis for six years and had no previous complaints filed against him, Jackson said.

Brown’s relatives said no robbery would justify shooting the teen after he put his hands up. Family attorneys said Brown’s parents were blindsided by the allegations and the release of a surveillance video from the convenience store.

“It appears to be him,” attorney Daryl Parks said, referring to the footage, which he said was released without any advance notice from police.

The police chief described Wilson as “a gentle, quiet man” who had been “an excellent officer.” He has been on the Ferguson force for four years and served prior to that in the neighboring community of Jennings.

Wilson, who was placed on administrative leave after the Aug. 9 shooting, “never intended for any of this to happen,” Jackson said.

According to police reports released Friday, authorities received a 911 call at 11:51 a.m. on the day of the shooting reporting a robbery at the Ferguson Market. An unidentified officer was



LAURIE SKRIVAN/ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH/MCT  
“I knew Mike and now he’s gone,” said Donez Thomas, 17, who protests for justice for Michael Brown on Friday, Aug. 15, 2014, along W. Florissant in front of the burned QuickTrip in Ferguson, Mo.

dispatched to the store, arriving within three minutes. The officer interviewed an employee and customer, who gave a description of a man who stole the cigars and walked off with another man toward a QuikTrip store.

Descriptions of the suspect were broadcast over the police radio. The officer did not find the suspects either on the street or at the QuikTrip, the reports said.

The robber took a box of Swisher Sweets, a brand of small, inexpensive cigars. The suspects were identified as 18-year-old Michael Brown and 22-year-old Dorian Johnson, according to the reports.

Separately, Wilson had been responding to a nearby call involving a sick 2-month child from 11:48 a.m. until noon, when he left that place. A minute later, he encountered Michael Brown walking down Canfield Drive. The documents contained no description of what happened between Brown and Wilson.

Johnson has told reporters that the officer or-

dered him and Brown onto the sidewalk, then grabbed his friend’s neck and tried to pull him into the car before brandishing his weapon and firing. He said Brown started to run and the officer pursued him, firing multiple times.

Another family attorney, Benjamin Crump, noted that police did not release a photo of the officer but released images from the store’s security video that they say show Brown grabbing a man inside the store. Crump said he had not seen the photos.

Police “are choosing to disseminate information that is very strategic to try to help them justify the execution-style” killing, said Crump, who also represented the family of Trayvon Martin, the teenager fatally shot by a Florida neighborhood watch organizer who was later acquitted of murder.

The Aug. 9 video appears to show a man wearing a ball cap, shorts and white T-shirt grabbing a much shorter man by his shirt near the store’s door. A police report

alleges that Brown grabbed the man who had come from behind the store counter and “forcefully pushed him back” into a display rack.

Johnson, Brown’s friend, told investigators that Brown took cigarillos, his attorney, Freeman Bosley, told MSNBC. Bosley said he was aware of video but had not seen it.

Police have determined that Johnson was not involved in the robbery and will not seek charges against him, Jackson said.

Brown’s uncle, Bernard Ewing, questioned whether Wilson really believed Brown was a suspect. He referred to Johnson’s account that the officer’s only command to the two young men was to get out of the street.

“If he’s a robbery suspect, they would have had the lights on,” Ewing said. “If you rob somebody, you would tell them, ‘Get on the ground’ or something, not, ‘Get off the sidewalk.’”

A robbery “still doesn’t justify shooting him when he puts his hands up,” he added. “You still don’t shoot him in the face.”

## Perry Indicted For ‘Abusing Power’

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A grand jury indicted Texas Gov. Rick Perry on Friday for allegedly abusing the powers of his office by carrying out a threat to veto funding for state prosecutors investigating public corruption — making the possible 2016 presidential hopeful his state’s first indicted governor in nearly a century.

A special prosecutor spent months calling witnesses and presenting evidence that Perry broke the law when he promised publicly to nix \$7.5 million over two years for the public integrity unit run by the office of Travis County Democratic District Attorney Rosemary Lehmberg. Lehmberg was convicted of drunken driving, but refused Perry’s calls to resign.

Perry’s general counsel, Marry Anne Wiley, defended the governor’s action.

“The veto in question was made in accordance with the veto authority afforded to every governor under the Texas Constitution,” she said. “We will continue to aggressively defend the governor’s lawful and constitutional action, and believe we will ultimately prevail.”

The unit Lehmberg oversees is the same that led the investigation against former U.S. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, a Texas Republican who in 2010 was convicted of money laundering and conspiracy to commit money laundering for taking part in a scheme to influence elections in his home state.

## Russia Denies Military Crossed Ukraine

KAMENSK-SHAKHTINSKY, Russia (AP) — NATO on Friday said a Russian military column ventured overnight into Ukraine, and the Ukrainian president said his forces destroyed most of it. Russia denied all of this, but the reports spooked global markets and overshadowed optimism driven by agreement over a Russian aid convoy bound for eastern Ukraine.

The White House said it was looking into what it called unconfirmed reports that Ukraine’s security forces disabled vehicles in a Russian military convoy inside Ukraine.

The Russian aid convoy of more than 250 trucks has been a source of tensions since it set off from Moscow on Tuesday. Kiev and the West were suspicious that the mission could be a pretext for a Russian military incursion into eastern Ukraine, where government forces are battling pro-Russia separatists and clawing back rebel-held territory.

Throughout the eastern crisis that erupted in April, there have been consistent allegations that Russia is fomenting or directing the rebellion. Moscow rejects the allegations and the high-profile aid convoy could be aimed, in part, at portraying Russia as interested in cooling the conflict. Russian President Vladimir Putin appeared to cultivate that perception in a Thursday speech in which he said Russia hopes for peace in Ukraine.

It was not clear what Russia could hope to gain by sending in a military column while world attention was trained on its efforts to get the aid convoy into eastern Ukraine.

## Thousands Attend Pope’s Mass

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of people have turned out for one of the highlights of Pope Francis’ trip to South Korea: a beatification Mass for 124 Koreans killed for their faith over two centuries ago.

The streets leading up to Seoul’s iconic Gwanghwamun Gate were packed Saturday with Koreans honoring the ordinary lay Catholics who founded the church in the 18th century. Korea’s church is unique in that it was founded not by missionaries or priests who brought the faith to the peninsula and converted people — as occurred in most of the world — but by members of Korea’s own noble classes who learned of Catholicism by reading books about it.

Francis was beatifying 124 of these early Catholics who were killed by the Joseon Dynasty, which opposed Western influences.

## Europe Pledges Aid To Kurdish Fighters

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union on Friday forged a unified response to the rapid advance of Islamic militants in Iraq and the resulting refugee crisis, allowing direct arms deliveries to Kurdish fighters battling the Sunni insurgents. Several EU nations pledged more humanitarian aid.

The emergency meeting of the bloc’s 28 foreign ministers in Brussels marked a shift toward greater involvement in Iraq, following weeks during which the Europeans mainly considered the situation an American problem because of the 2003 U.S.-led Iraq invasion.

EU ministers pledged to step up efforts to help those fleeing advancing Islamic State militants, with several nations announcing they will fly dozens of tons of aid to northern Iraq over the coming days.

“First of all, we need to make sure that we alleviate humanitarian suffering,” Dutch Foreign Minister Frans Timmermans told reporters. “Secondly, I believe we need to make sure that (Islamic State) is not in a position to overrun the Kurds or to take a stronger hold on Iraq.”

# Iraq: Al-Maliki Steps Down, Gives Up Post To Rival

BY SAMEER N. YACOB AND  
QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA  
Associated Press

BAGHDAD— Iraq’s embattled Nouri al-Maliki has stepped down as prime minister, caving in to international and domestic pressure to give up his post to a rival politician.

The move defuses a political deadlock that has plunged Iraq into uncertainty and opens way for the formation of a new government that could take on a growing insurgency by Sunni militants that has engulfed much of the country.

Al-Maliki made the announcement on national television late Thursday, standing alongside senior members of his Islamic Dawa Party, including rival Haider al-Abadi. He said he was stepping aside in favor of his “brother,” in order to “facilitate the political process and government formation.”

The premier-designate al-Abadi, a veteran Shiite lawmaker, now faces the immense challenge of trying to unite Iraqi politicians. The country’s major political factions deeply distrust each other and the army seems unable to regain territory in the north and west taken by militants from the Islamic State group.

Al-Maliki had been struggling for weeks to stay on for a third four-year term as prime minister amid an attempt by opponents to push him out, accusing him of monopolizing power and pursuing a fiercely pro-Shiite agenda that has alienated the Sunni minority.

The United States, the U.N. and a broad array of political factions in Iraq had backed al-Abadi, saying only a new leader could unify a country under siege from the Islamic State extremists who have captured large swaths of Iraqi territory.

Al-Maliki said his decision reflected a desire to “safeguard the high interests of the country,” adding that he would not be the cause of any bloodshed.

His refusal to give up the post after eight years in power had provoked a political crisis that escalated this week in

Baghdad. The pressure intensified when his Shiite political alliance backed al-Abadi to replace him, and President Fouad Massoud nominated al-Abadi on Monday to form the next government. Al-Maliki threatened legal action against the president for what he said was a violation of the constitution.

But in a meeting of his party earlier Thursday, al-Maliki agreed to endorse al-Abadi, two senior lawmakers from his State of Law parliamentary bloc — Hussein al-Maliki and Khalaf Abdul-Samad — told The Associated Press. The two said al-Maliki also agreed to drop a suit before the constitutional court challenging al-Abadi’s nomination.

The White House commended al-Maliki’s move and expressed hope that the power shift “can set Iraq on a new path and unite its people” against the threat from Islamic militants, national security adviser Susan Rice said in a statement.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said the move “sets the stage for a historic and peaceful transition of power in Iraq.”

Al-Maliki had grown increasingly isolated as he was deserted not only by his Shiite

allies but also top ally Iran, the United States and the U.N. backed al-Abadi, who has 30 days to put together a Cabinet for parliament’s approval.

The U.N. Security Council urged al-Abadi to work swiftly to form “an inclusive government that represents all segments of the Iraqi population and that contributes to finding a viable and sustainable solution to the country’s current challenges.”

Iraqis of all sects welcomed Thursday’s announcement.

“Now, all we want is a government that respects the people and does not discriminate against them,” said Youssef Ibrahim, 40, a Sunni government employee in Baghdad.

Adnan Hussein, 45, a Shiite in Sadr City, said he believes al-Maliki is to blame for much of Iraq’s troubles. “The years he ruled were the worst in Iraq’s history and he bears that responsibility,” Hussein said.

The U.S. and other countries have been pushing for a more representative government that will ease anger among Sunnis, who felt marginalized by al-Maliki’s administration, which helped fuel the dramatic sweep by the Islamic State extremist group.

Islamic State extremist group.

The militants’ lightning advance across much of northern and western Iraq since June has driven hundreds of thousands of people from their homes, and last week prompted the U.S. to launch aid operations and airstrikes as the militants threatened religious minorities and the largely autonomous Kurdish region.

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