

Far-right US Air Force sergeant charged in slaying of federal officer and local police

By Jacob Crosse
18 June 2020

On Tuesday, the US Department of Justice announced 19 charges, including murder, against current Air Force Staff Sergeant Steven Carrillo, 32, for his alleged role in the killing of Protective Security Officer David Patrick Underwood, 53, on May 29, as well as the injuring of another unnamed security officer.

Underwood and the second officer were shot outside of the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building, a courthouse in Oakland, California, as protests gripped the city. At the time of the shooting, Oakland riot police, less than half a mile away, were teargassing and beating protesters.

Carrillo is currently in custody in the Monterey County Jail after being arrested following an ambush-style shootout with police on June 6 in northern California. Carrillo is alleged to have murdered Santa Cruz County Sheriff Sergeant Damon Gutzwiller and injured two other officers before carjacking a vehicle at gunpoint and eventually being subdued by a homeowner and three firefighters.

It is alleged that Carrillo had an accomplice, Robert Alvin Justus Jr., who is being charged with “aiding and abetting” Carrillo’s actions by serving as a getaway driver during the May 29 killing.

Several of the charges against Carrillo carry a life sentence without the possibility of parole. Federal prosecutors have yet to indicate whether they will seek the death penalty.

Working off of security footage taken during the May 29 shootings, FBI agents determined that the shooter had fired on the federal officers standing outside the courthouse from a 1992 white Ford van. Eight days later an anonymous tipster reported seeing the van nearly 70 miles from Oakland in unincorporated Ben Lomond, near Santa Cruz, with the windows spray painted and the license plates missing.

According to the FBI’s timeline, Sergeant Gutzwiller responded to the tip and, upon locating the van, discovered guns, explosives, ammunition and a “Boogaloo” patch featuring Hawaiian print with an igloo on a ballistic vest inside the vehicle. Words written in Carrillo’s blood observed on the hood of the van read “BOOG,” “I became unreasonable,” and “stop the duopoly.” After obtaining the vehicle identification number, which was registered to Carrillo, Gutzwiller and two other officers went to his home in Ben Lomond.

As officers approached the home, gunfire rang out and Gutzwiller was killed. An explosion went off, believed to be a pipe bomb, which injured two officers.

Carrillo was shot by police and injured. He fled the scene with a

semiautomatic rifle he had built himself that was equipped with a silencer. He stole another vehicle before abandoning it and allegedly scrawling “boog” in blood on the windshield.

Carrillo, badly injured, was spotted by a local homeowner who questioned why Carrillo was in his backyard. Carrillo attempted to steal that person’s vehicle. However, he was eventually subdued after allegedly trying to light another pipe bomb.

Carrillo joined the Air Force in February 2009 and was deployed to Kuwait for four months in 2019. According to the Air Force Personnel Center, Carrillo had no disciplinary action on his record and had been awarded the Air Force Achievement Medal.

Carrillo had been living with his father in Ben Lomond for over two years since his wife, Monika Carrillo, who was also in the Air Force, died by suicide while in South Carolina on a training program. Carrillo has two school-age children who are currently living with his late wife’s parents.

Speaking to the *Mercury News*, Justin Ehrhardt, a former friend of Carrillo’s who served with him in the Air Force, noted a shift in Carrillo’s perspective. Ehrhardt, who knew Carrillo to be a libertarian, noticed that he began sharing “Boogaloo” themed memes on social media more frequently. Ehrhardt pointed to videos of police brutality as the final trigger for Carrillo.

“Excessive use of force on unarmed civilians—that was a huge thing for him,” Ehrhardt told the *News*. “It was a mental tipping point for him.” Ehrhardt imagined it was Carrillo’s way of saying, “If I’m going to fight for something, it’s going to be against the establishment.”

Carrillo has been a member of the “Phoenix Ravens” security force at Travis Air Force Base since 2018. As part of his duties for the Phoenix Ravens, Carrillo has received extensive weapons and explosives training. As a team leader for the 60th Security Forces Squadron, Carrillo’s combat duties mainly consisted of defending the base and its aircraft. Phoenix Raven teams are also deployed as aircrew to safeguard planes from attack “where security is unknown or additional security is needed to counter local threats.”

Travis Air Force Base, located 50 miles northeast of San Francisco, currently houses a fleet of transport and refueling planes: 26 C-5 Galaxies, 27 KC-10 Extenders, and 13 C-17 Globemaster III aircraft. Known as the “gateway to the pacific,” the base serves as a massive transport and logistics hub for US imperialism. Prior to the end of the Cold War, it was utilized as a headquarters for the Strategic Air Command. SAC was responsible for coordinating the US nuclear “triad,” composed of

intercontinental ballistic missiles, strategic long-range nuclear bombers and submarine-based ballistic missiles.

The charging of Carrillo and Justus contradicts claims made by President Donald Trump and Attorney General William Barr, who have sought to blame violence against police and others during the protests against police killings on “anarchists” and “Antifa terrorists” instead of the real culprits: known far-right groups, militias and current and former members of the US military.

Earlier this month, three Nevada men—Stephen Parshall, Andrew Lynam and William Loomis—were arrested on conspiracy, explosives and terrorism charges after allegedly planning to use Molotov cocktails and fireworks during a Las Vegas protest on May 30. Police allege to have found semiautomatic rifles and shotguns in their vehicles the night of the protest. All three have claimed allegiance to the Boogaloo movement and all three had prior military training. Lynam is a current member of the Army Reserves, Parshall was a Navy sailor, while Loomis was enlisted in the Air Force.

On May 1, FBI agents executed a search warrant and arrested 53-year-old Bradley Bunn, a member of several Boogaloo-themed Facebook groups, on possession of destructive devices. According to agents, he was planning to attend a “reopen” rally in Denver that same day. Upon executing the search warrant, agents discovered in Bunn’s vehicle four pipe bombs along with two one-pound containers of .308 caliber cartridge reloading gunpowder, which can be used to make bombs.

While not directly linked to the Boogaloo movement, Steve Baca, 31, was arrested by Albuquerque police on Tuesday morning, nearly 12 hours after he shot at an antiracist protester during a demonstration at the “La Jornada” sculpture. Baca was allowed to assault, intimidate and harass protesters under the watchful eye of the police and a right-wing militia dubbed the New Mexico Civil Guard, which protected Baca after he opened fire on protesters.

In a report released by National Public Radio, based on court documents on 51 individuals currently facing federal charges in relation to the protests, none were affiliated with “antifa” or any left-wing movement. The only mention of links to any extremist group concerns the three Nevada men and the Boogaloo movement.

Despite this, Barr and Trump have continued to single out “antifa” as the primary “agitators,” going so far as to try to designate the amorphous ideology as a “terrorist organization.”

These facts have not stopped Barr from repeatedly lying to serve the ruling class agenda of cracking down on left-wing dissent. In a June 9 Fox News appearance with Bret Baier, Barr refused to name the Boogaloo movement, stating: “Some of it relates to antifa; some of it relates to groups that act very much like antifa. As I said, there’s a witch’s brew of extremist groups that are trying to exploit this situation on all sides.”

Boogaloo bois first started appearing at antilockdown protests across the country in March, including those held at the Lansing, Michigan capitol building in April and May. They are among the far-right and fascistic elements whom Trump incited to stage protests, often armed, against state coronavirus lockdown orders as part of his drive to “reopen” the economy and force workers back

to work in factories and workplaces rife with the deadly virus.

In April, following an anti-lockdown protest in Lansing at which armed militia members stormed the capitol building, Trump tweeted, “Liberate Michigan! Liberate Minnesota! Liberate Virginia and save your great 2nd Amendment. It is under siege!”

Within the last three weeks, boogaloo bois followers have been spotted at anti-police violence protests brandishing military grade weaponry and gaudy Hawaiian-style shirts. While in some cases feigning support for the protests, adherents of the movement admit that their goal is to provoke a race war and “revolution” that will lead to the creation of an authoritarian state.

The boogaloo movement began as a meme inspired by the unsuccessful film sequel *Breaking 2: Electric Boogaloo*, shown on internet forums 4/chan and Gab in the early 2010s. The Southern Poverty Law Center documented the first use of boogaloo phraseology on Iron March, the most widely read Nazi internet forum on the planet in March 2013. The post included the phrase “Breivik 2: Islamist Boogaloo,” a reference to Anders Breivik, the Norwegian fascist who carried out the mass murder of Labor Party youth in July 2011. Boogaloo phraseology, including variations of the word such as “blu igloo” and “boog,” have proliferated in the last three months on far-right and conservative Facebook groups, which have swelled in membership.

Memes and posts typically shared among group members combine far-right libertarian, militaristic and nationalist iconography with calls to incite homicidal violence against US state agencies such as the FBI, Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms and the Transportation Security Administration.

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