

Dallas suspect amassed arsenal at home

By **WILL WEISSERT**
Associated Press

DALLAS — An Army veteran killed by Dallas police after the sniper slayings of five officers amassed a personal arsenal at his suburban home, including bomb-making materials, bulletproof vests, rifles, ammunition and a journal of combat tactics, authorities said Friday.

The man identified as 25-year-old Micah Johnson told authorities he was upset about the fatal police shootings of two black men earlier this week and wanted to exterminate whites, “especially white officers,” officials said.

He was killed by a robot-delivered bomb after the shootings, which marked the deadliest day for U.S. law enforcement since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. In all, 12 officers were shot.

In Georgia, Missouri and Tennessee, authorities said gun-wielding civilians also shot officers in individual attacks that came after the black men were killed in Louisiana and Minnesota. Two officers were wounded, one critically.

President Barack Obama and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott asked for the public’s prayers. In a letter posted online Friday, Abbott said “every life matters” and urged Texans to come together.

“In the end,” he wrote, “evil always fails.”

Johnson was a private first class from the Dallas suburb of Mesquite with a specialty in carpentry and masonry. He served in the Army Reserve for six years starting in

2009 and did one tour in Afghanistan from November 2013 to July 2014, the military said.

After the attack, he tried to take refuge in a parking garage and exchanged gunfire with police, Police Chief David Brown said.

The suspect described his motive during negotiations and said he acted alone and was not affiliated with any groups, Brown said.

Johnson was black. Law enforcement officials didn’t disclose the race of the dead officers.

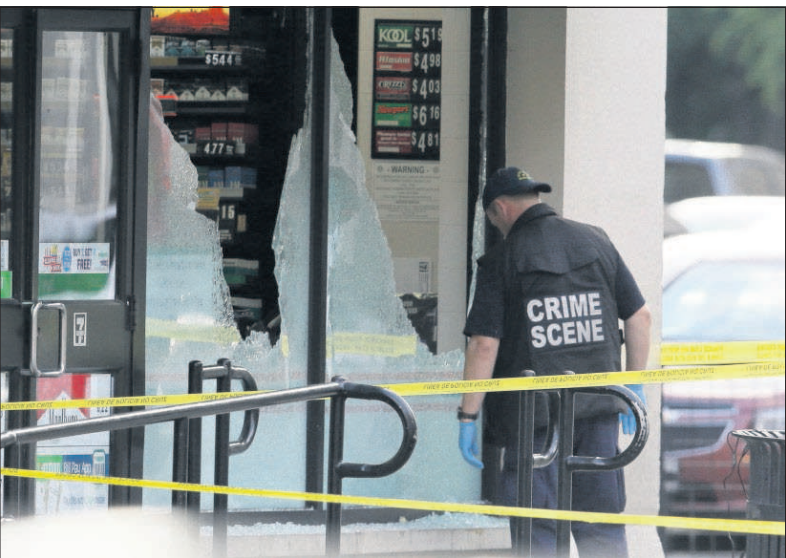
The bloodshed unfolded just a few blocks from where President John F. Kennedy was slain in 1963.

The shooting began Thursday evening while hundreds of people were gathered to protest the killings in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and suburban St. Paul, Minnesota. Brown told reporters that snipers fired “ambush-style” on the officers. Two civilians were also wounded.

Authorities initially blamed multiple “snipers” for Thursday’s attack, and at one point said three suspects were in custody. But by Friday afternoon, all attention focused on Johnson, and state and federal officials said the entire attack appeared to be the work of a single gunman.

With the lone shooter dead, Mayor Mike Rawlings declared that the city was safe and “we can move on to healing.” He said the gunman wore a protective vest and used an AR-15 rifle, a weapon similar to the one fired last month in the attack on an Orlando, Florida, nightclub that killed 49 people.

When the gunfire began, the mayor said, about 20 people in the crowd were carrying rifles and



A crime scene investigator looks a shot out windows after a shooting in downtown Dallas, Friday.

wearing protective equipment. That raised early concerns that they might have been involved. But after conducting interviews, investigators concluded all the shots came from the same attacker.

A Texas law enforcement official identified the man killed in the parking garage as Johnson. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because he said he was not authorized to release the information.

Around midday, investigators were seen walking in and out of a home believed to be Johnson’s in Mesquite.

In Washington, the nation’s top law enforcement official, Attorney General Loretta Lynch, called for calm, saying the recent violence can’t be allowed to “precipitate a new normal.”

Lynch said protesters concerned about killings by police should not be discouraged “by those who use your lawful actions as a cover for

their heinous violence.”

The other attacks on police included a Georgia man who authorities said called 911 to report a break-in, then ambushed the officer who came to investigate. That sparked a shootout in which both the officer and suspect were wounded but expected to survive.

In suburban St. Louis, a motorist shot an officer at least once as the officer walked back to his car during a traffic stop, police said. The officer was hospitalized in critical condition.

And in Tennessee, a man accused of shooting indiscriminately at passing cars and police on a highway told investigators he was angry about police violence against African-Americans, authorities said.

Video from the Dallas scene showed protesters marching along a downtown street about half a mile from City Hall when shots erupted and the crowd scattered, seeking cover. Officers crouched beside

Killer robot used by police opens ethical debate

By **MICHAEL LIEDTKE**
and **BREE FOWLER**
AP Technology Writers

When Dallas police used a bomb-carrying robot to kill a sniper, they also kicked off an ethical debate about technology’s use as a crime-fighting weapon.

In what appears to be an unprecedented tactic, police rigged a bomb-disposal robot to kill an armed suspect in the fatal shootings of five officers in Dallas. While there doesn’t appear to be any hard data on the subject, security experts and law enforcement officials said they couldn’t recall another time when police have deployed a robot with lethal intent.

The strategy opens a new chapter in the escalating use of remote and semi-autonomous devices to fight crime and protect lives. It also raises new questions over when it’s appropriate to dispatch a robot to kill dangerous suspects instead of continuing to negotiate their surrender.

“If lethally equipped robots can be used in this situation, when else can they be used?” says Elizabeth Joh, a University of California at Davis law professor who has followed U.S. law enforcement’s use of technology. “Extreme emergencies shouldn’t define the scope of more ordinary situations where police may want to use robots that are capable of harm.”

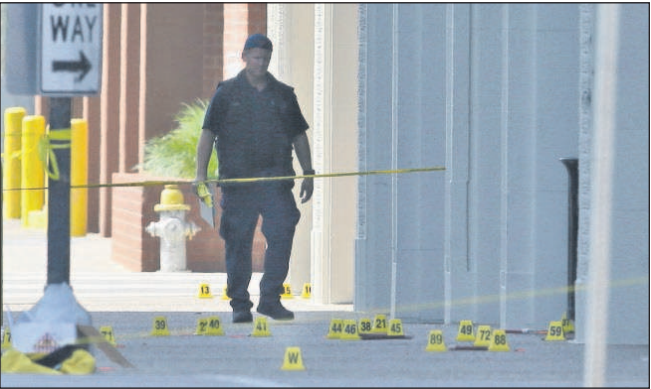
Dallas Police Chief David Brown defended his department’s decision. “Other options would have exposed our officers to great danger,” he said.

Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings applauded Brown for making “the right call” and said he would have no qualms about resorting to the same strategy in the future. “When there’s no other way, I think this is a good example,” he said. “The key thing is to keep our police out of harm’s way.”

ROBOTS, SOLDIERS AND POLICE

Police have been using such robots for decades to dispose of suspected bombs and in hostage standoffs and fires. Meanwhile, militaries around the world have come to rely on their robotic friends to disable improvised explosive devices — a need that only increased with the U.S. occupation of Iraq following its 2003 invasion.

Many of the robots joining police forces are coming from a U.S. Department of Defense program transferring surplus equipment



An investigator walks the scene of a shooting in downtown Dallas, Friday. Snipers opened fire on police officers in the heart of Dallas during protests over two recent fatal police shootings of black men.

from the military. These exchanges have provided law enforcement agencies with robots such as Packbot made by Endeavor Robotics, the Talon from QinetiQ and the MARCbot made by Exponent.

But military experts said ground-level robots are rarely used to kill the enemy. Their main purpose is to detect and defuse bombs to save lives. Military robots are “fairly clunky and used best for reconnaissance rather than the offensive,” said Tom Gorup, an infantry veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan who’s now an official at the IT-security firm Rook Security.

Airborne robots are another matter. The U.S. military has sent remotely piloted drones to kill hundreds of people, including civilians, in counterterror attacks launched overseas since 2009, based

on estimates released last week by the Obama administration.

HOW IT (PROBABLY) WORKED

The robots working for police departments across the country range in size from devices as small as a dog bone to others as large as a truck. Some are little more than a mechanical arm mounted onto a vehicle and equipped with a video camera and two-way audio communications, according to William Flanagan, a retired deputy police chief from New York’s Nassau County who now does law enforcement and technology consulting. The most versatile robots can climb stairs and navigate other tight spots, such as this one made by Icor Technology.

Many models used by police are about the size of a backpack.

Flanagan speculated that

police in Dallas probably equipped their robot with a low-powered explosive — possibly one similar to what bomb squads use to blow up suspicious packages — that would only disable what’s closest to it.

Dallas police didn’t respond to a request for further information about their use of the robot.

MACHINE VS. HUMAN

Robotics expert Peter W. Singer, of the New America Foundation, said the killing marked the first instance he’s aware of in which police have used a robot to lethal effect. But when he was researching his 2009 book “Wired for War,” a U.S. soldier told him troops in Iraq sometimes used surveillance robots against insurgents, he added in an email Friday.

William Cohen, a former Exponent employee who helped design the MARCbot, said that robot was built to save lives instead of ending them. Although he was relieved the killing of the armed suspect in Dallas assured that no other police officers or bystanders would be harmed, Cohen says he’s worried about what might happen next.

“It opens a whole new set of questions of how to deal with these kinds of situations,” Cohen said. “Where are the police going to draw the line when trying to decide between continuing to negotiate and doing something like this?”

Woman who was shot at protest shielded four sons

DALLAS (AP) — A 37-year-old Texas woman threw herself over her four sons when a gunman opened fire on a downtown Dallas protest march, leaving her with a shattered leg and one of the boys spattered in blood, her family said Friday.

Shetamia Taylor generally shied away from marches and rallies, but she took her sons — ages 12, 13, 15 and 17 — to the protest because she was “fed up” after two black men were fatally shot by police, her family said.

Then someone opened fire.

“She jumped on top of them to cover them when the bullets started flying everywhere,” her sister Theresa Williams told The Associated Press outside of Baylor Medical Center, where Taylor, who is black, was recuperating from an early-morning surgery on her shattered right tibia.

Taylor’s 15-year-old son, Andrew, was spattered with her blood, Williams said, and after Taylor fell from the impact of the shot, he ran to her and cradled her neck.

“She’s got four boys who she just wants to be able to be peacefully out here in the world,” Williams said.

Andrew and 13-year-old Jauan went to the hospital

with Taylor on Thursday, but 12-year-old Jamar and 17-year-old Kavion were separated from their family amid the chaotic aftermath of the shooting, and fled to a downtown hotel to take cover. They were stuck behind a police barricade until around 4 a.m., when their father was able to pick them up, Williams said.

The gunfire left five Dallas officers dead and seven injured, along with Taylor and another civilian. Authorities have said that 25-year-old Micah Johnson, a black man who lived in the Dallas suburb of Mesquite, acted alone in the shootings. He was killed by police after a standoff.

Sherie Williams, Taylor’s other sister, could hardly believe it when she heard late Thursday that her sister had been shot, a little more than a year since her 26-year-old son, Kavaarian Williams, was shot in a drive-by in downtown Minneapolis, where the sisters grew up.

Her four adult children “can’t sleep because of what’s going on,” and worry about their own children, she said.

“They can’t take them to the park because they’re not sure who’s going to be shooting,” Sherie Williams said.



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