

Suspect Shoots Two Officers And Escapes

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Two New York City police officers were shot and wounded yesterday morning - one of them critically - as a murder suspect with a history of violence against police officers burst through the door of a Brooklyn apartment and, the police said, opened fire.

Though police reinforcements sealed off the Bedford-Stuyvesant block for six hours, the suspect apparently escaped and was being sought in an intensive manhunt that involved helicopters and bloodhounds.

Surgeons at Kings County Hospital said last night that Officer William T. Gunn, 28 years old, had suffered extensive tissue damage to the right side of the brain and was in critical condition. The director of surgery at the hospital, Dr. John Kral, said Officer Gunn had been shot in the top of the head at close range.

His partner, Detective Louis R. Rango, 51, was in serious but stable condition with a shoulder wound. Both were assigned to the 67th Precinct.

The incident marked the first serious police shootings this year.

But earlier yesterday, Officer James Laskowski suffered a grazing bullet wound to the head when he was set upon by two muggers as he walked to work in the management information systems division at Police Headquarters.

The police said the muggers stole about \$20 before shooting Officer Laskowski with a small-caliber revolver.

Last year, seven officers were killed on duty in the city, five by gunfire. Eighteen were wounded in shootings.

Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward said the shooting in Brooklyn erupted just before 9 A.M., soon after the two officers and a third member of their plainclothes team, acting on information they had received, entered 82 Hancock Street looking for the suspect, Ralph Richardson, 20, a former convict. The officers had a warrant charging him with murder in Harrisburg, Pa., and another warrant for questioning in a homicide in Brooklyn. Mr. Ward said the officers learned from the landlord that a man fitting Mr. Richardson's description was staying in a second-floor apartment. Detective Rango, a decorated 28-year member of the force, sent the third officer, Sgt. John Sheehan, to summon backup support from an emergency services unit and then started up the stairs, followed by Officer Gunn.

Mr. Ward said Detective Rango had told him that Mr. Richardson knew the police were there and shouted, "I'm coming out!"

Detective Rango reportedly shouted back, "No, don't come out!" He was apparently waiting for the backup units. But Mr. Richardson opened the door and came out firing a .25-caliber automatic gun, Mr. Ward said. Detective Rango said he fired back, but was hit and fell on the landing.

Mr. Richardson then placed his pistol to the officer's head, Mr. Ward said, and grabbed his service revolver. Building Was Dark

Mr. Ward, who spoke to reporters at the hospital, said Mr. Richardson then leaned over a bannister and shot point-blank at Officer Gunn, who was coming up the stairs. It was not clear which weapon was used in the shooting.

Officer Ezra Dilbert of the 79th Precinct was among the first five officers to respond to Sergeant Sheehan's call. He said the building, a three-story brownstone, was dark, with its electricity apparently cut off.

As he made his way up the stairs with a flashlight, he found Officer Gunn lying unconscious and head down on the stairs. He said that as he helped carry Officer Gunn out of the building, he heard footsteps.

But police could not find Mr. Richardson in the building. He apparently "got out of the building in the chaotic moments after the shootings," said Deputy Commissioner Alice T. McGillion.

The police found a .25-caliber pistol behind a radiator in a third-floor apartment from which the suspect appeared to have made his way to the roof. Blood was found on the roof, but it was not known whether Detective Rango wounded the suspect, Mr. Ward said.

A spent .38-caliber shell and a .25-caliber shell were recovered at the scene, the police said last night. Detective Rango's .38-caliber service revolver was not recovered, said a police spokesman, Sgt. Raymond O'Donnell. Flak Jackets and Canine Unit

Both officers were wearing bulletproof vests, the police said. A second bullet, found in Officer Gunn's groin area, was deflected by the vest; the vest would not have protected his head.

Nearby streets were blocked, and an apartment-by-apartment search for the suspect was mounted. After six hours, the police removed the cordons.

Still, the police kept looking. Even after nightfall, officers with flak jackets and carrying rifles checked out floodlit courtyards on the block of Hancock Street near Bedford Avenue. A canine unit used bloodhounds and German shepherds.

At the hospital, a solemn Mayor Koch visited Detective Rango before telling reporters that the shooting was a "very clear illustration of the danger that cops are in when they become involved with criminals who have guns."

"I can envision a situation," he said, "in which a cop can shoot a guy and people would be screaming about police brutality. I am very supportive of the cops. I would hope people would be supportive of cops and understand the danger that they face." History of Violent Crimes

As the search for the suspect grew beyond the immediate neighborhood, the police issued bulletins describing him as a black man 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighing about 150 pounds. They said he had gold caps on his front teeth, each bearing the initial "C," which they believed stood for his street name, Caprice. He was believed to be wearing a long black wool coat, a dark gray ski cap and greenish pants.

Mr. Richardson had a history of arrests in violent crimes. In New York, he was convicted of armed robbery in 1984 and received a sentence of one to three years in prison. He also had a record of convictions for assault and fraud. In June 1987, a

bench warrant was issued charging him with attempted murder for pointing a pistol at an officer who saw him brandishing the weapon.

One warrant that the officers were trying to carry out yesterday was on charges that Mr. Richardson killed Ralph Bellamy on July 8 in Harrisburg in what the police said was a fight over a woman. The other warrant had been issued to question him in connection with the killing of Jeffrey Marriott, 21, who was shot in the chest Sunday in an argument in front of 425 East 26th Street in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn. Mr. Marriott was killed with a .25-caliber gun.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation in Philadelphia lists Mr. Richardson as a person "known to assault police."

The block where the shooting occurred has tidy brownstones and a large West Indian population. But the surrounding blocks are filled with abandoned and burned buildings.

One resident, who would allow himself to be identified only as James, said that on Friday nights people were often fearful of muggers as they walked the long block with their pay envelopes. "People are probably feeling safe here tonight," he said, gesturing to the police units.

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