

BLACK GUN OWNERS WORRIED BY ACQUITTAL IN CASTILE SHOOTING

DETROIT: Gerry Martin isn't sure he will ever tell a police officer during a traffic stop that he has a concealed-weapon permit - and possibly a weapon - on him. The acquittal of a Minnesota officer in the death of a licensed gun owner who volunteered that he had a gun seconds before being fatally shot during a traffic stop adds to the worries of African-American gun owners about how they are treated by police and society. Acknowledging that they have a weapon, they said, can open them up to violence from police, who can then claim they feared for their lives simply because of the presence of a gun, even a legal one.

"As soon as you say, 'I'm a concealed carry holder. This is my license,' they automatically are reaching for their gun thinking you're going to draw your gun on them, once again not realizing you're a good guy," said Martin, who lives in Glenside, Pennsylvania. Philando Castile was fatally shot by the officer July 6 in a St Paul suburb seconds after he told the officer he was armed. Officer Jeronimo Yanez, who is Latino, was acquitted Friday of manslaughter and two lesser charges. During the stop, Castile volunteered, "Sir, I have to tell you, I do have a firearm on me." Yanez told Castile, "OK, don't reach for it then" and "Don't pull it out." On the squad-car video, Castile can be heard saying, "I'm not pulling it out," as Yanez opened fire. Prosecutors said Castile's last words were, "I wasn't reaching for it." The verdict "tells African-Americans across the country that they can be killed by police officers with impunity, even when they are following the law," said Rep. Cedric Richmond, a Louisiana Democrat who is chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The verdict also tells blacks that "the Second Amendment does not apply to them" because Castile "was honest with the officer about having a weapon in the car, and there is no evidence that he attempted to or intended to use the weapon against the officer," the Louisiana Democrat said. Outside the courthouse, Castile's mother said Yanez got away with murder. Her son was wearing a seatbelt and in a car with his girlfriend and her then-4-year-old daughter when he was shot. "I am so very, very, very ... disappointed in the system here in the state of Minnesota," Valerie Castile said.

Licensed gun owner and open-carry advocate Rick Ector of Detroit said stereotypes can cloud the minds of some officers when dealing with black gun owners. Officers may have had previous encounters with people carrying guns illegally - especially young black men. And that experience can carry over, Ector said. Once they find out that a black American has a gun permit, "they are not necessarily going to relax, but they now have an idea about your

character," Ector said.

Phillip Smith, head of the National African American Gun Association, said police need additional training to remind them that Second Amendment rights apply to black gun owners as much as anyone else. Like several similar cases, Castile's death was shared worldwide on social media. His girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, livestreamed the aftermath of the shooting on Facebook because, she said, she wanted to make sure the truth was known.

Few convictions

But videos of black people dying at the hands of police have led to few convictions. "I'm sure people of color are going to say, and rightfully so, what is the burden of proof for an officer to be convicted?" asked Dwayne Crawford, the executive director of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. Eric Garner died in July 2014 in New York City after a white officer placed him in a chokehold during an arrest for selling loose cigarettes. Garner complained that he couldn't breathe on video captured by onlookers. A grand jury declined to indict that officer or any others involved in the arrest.

Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old boy with a pellet gun tucked into his waistband, was fatally shot by a white Cleveland police officer in Nov 2014. But a grand jury declined to indict patrolman Timothy Loehmann, who fired the fatal shot, or training officer Frank Garmback. The city settled Rice's family's lawsuit for \$6 million. Michael Brown, an unarmed 18-year-old, was fatally shot by a white officer, Darren Wilson, in Aug 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri. Their confrontation was not captured on video. A grand jury declined to indict Wilson, and the Justice Department opted against civil rights charges. Wilson later resigned.

Only one police officer in recent publicized cases is facing jail time. South Carolina officer Michael Slager, who is white, shot black motorist Walter Scott in the back as he fled from a traffic stop. Slager pleaded guilty in May to a federal charge of violating Scott's civil rights, and a judge will determine his sentence, which could range from probation to life in prison without parole.

Scott's shooting in April 2015 was captured on cellphone video seen worldwide. It contradicted Slager's original statement that Scott had attempted to grab his Taser. "This was a clear-cut case of unnecessary, fatal police violence," Rashad Robinson, executive director of Color Of Change, said of the Castile case. "District attorneys around the country, from Tulsa to Cleveland to now St. Paul, must be held accountable for their failures to secure justice for victims of police violence." —AP



CLEVELAND: Dinesh Chawla walks with his dogs outside his home on June 9, 2017. — AFP

IMMIGRANT BUSINESS HELPS TO SELL TRUMP NOSTALGIA

FAMILY BUSINESS TO HELP LAUNCH NEW CHAIN OF HOTELS

CLEVELAND: Dinesh Chawla is a key part of the latest venture for the Trump hospitality brand. The American of Indian descent plans to use the family business to help launch a new chain of budget hotels dubbed "American Idea" and inspired by Donald Trump's victorious presidential campaign. On a sunny day in June, the medium-built, short-haired Chawla appeared weary and was fighting a stubborn cough, having returned to this small suburban town only three days earlier from New York, where he had joined Donald Trump Jr in announcing the partnership.

"I feel like Kelly Clarkson or Carrie Underwood when they won 'American Idol,'" the 52-year-old said at the offices of Chawla Inc., the company created by his late father that he now runs with his brother Suresh. But as an immigrant, he can tell you about being shoved around and suffering racist taunts. And in interview after interview, one question keeps coming up: How could he go into business with the Trump Organization, when its founder is pushing a highly controversial ban on travel from predominantly Muslim countries?

Strictly business

His answer seems readymade: "We're not invest-

ing in his presidency, his policies on refugees and all that stuff," he told AFP. "We are investing in technology, expertise, intelligent administration." President Trump was not involved in the deal, Chawla continued, adding that his brother had briefly met Trump once during the political campaign, when the idea for the hotel chain was born, but that they were barred from seeing him for several years for ethics reasons.

Still, the Chawlas and the Trumps have a history: Years ago, the future president had offered their father advice on securing financing for his first hotel. "People would always question motives," said Chawla. "I realize there is some concern. Our decisions were strictly business." He pauses. "If they are using us, people might have to consider that we are using them a little bit too," said Chawla, citing the larger scale of the Trump Organization's operations.

Chawla describes himself as a Republican on economic matters and a Democrat on social questions. He favors adoption by gay parents and promotes gender equality in his business. Fully half of management at Chawla Inc., which employs 400 people, is African American. "I liked some of the things Trump was saying for business," said Chawla. "I respected Hillary Clinton's competence." "If I had a

daughter, I would tell her, that's your role model there," he said, adding that he voted for Barack Obama in 2008 but did not vote in 2016.

Since the announcement of the Trump partnership, Dinesh, who arrived in the United States from Canada in 1977 at age 12, has had anonymous calls and threats. "All the conservative people are really for it," said Chris, who tends bar in town at Hey Joe's on Cotton Row, the town's main thoroughfare. "But the liberal-like college-educated people around here...are all really unhappy," Judson Thigpen, head of the local chamber of commerce, hopes the new American Idea hotel will help draw tourists and spur growth in a town already home to Delta State University, which specializes in the arts and recently added the only Grammy's museum outside Los Angeles. "It could help," he said. "But there is a huge stigma about who is behind it."

Campaign nostalgia

In January 2018, the local Comfort Inn will be transformed into an "American Idea" hotel. On the edge of Route 61, which links Tennessee and Louisiana, it is an ordinary hotel. In the lobby, the reception desk sits opposite a simply furnished dining room. — AFP

ACTIVISTS HOLD SECOND RALLY OVER US SHOOTING VERDICT

MINNEAPOLIS: Minnesota activists held a second rally against police violence Saturday following 18 arrests during a night of protests after a policeman was acquitted over the shooting of a black motorist. Angry protesters had blocked a major highway in the state capital of St Paul early Saturday after Friday's acquittal of

Officer Jeronimo Yanez, 29, of all charges he faced in the shooting death of 32-year-old Philando Castile during a traffic stop.

Demonstrators held a smaller, more reflective rally and march Saturday evening "against injustice and to raise awareness that we will not stand for laws and policies that

allow police to kill with impunity," organizers wrote on the event's Facebook page. About 200 people turned out for that demonstration in Minneapolis - the state's largest city that borders St Paul - according to the Star Tribune newspaper. Castile's death was part of a series of high-profile shootings of African-Americans by police. Americans were stunned to see the video, livestreamed on Facebook, of his panicked girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, as blood spread on Castile's shirt.

Yanez fired repeatedly at Castile, testifying later he thought the man was reaching for a gun. Reynolds said he was reaching for his wallet. The verdict had sparked outrage among many in the St Paul area. An estimated 1,500 people marched through the city, then poured onto interstate highway I-94, shutting it down. When some marchers ignored repeated police orders to disperse, state and local officers arrested 18 of them shortly after midnight, a state police spokesman said. The Star Tribune said those arrested included two reporters for other Minnesota newspapers who were covering the march. A police statement said the charges against the 18 included "being a pedestrian on the freeway." —AFP



MINNEAPOLIS: Protesters gather in Loring Park on Saturday. —AFP

WOMAN WHO STORMED STAGE DURING 'CAESAR' IS ARRESTED

NEW YORK: A New York production of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" with a Trump-like character who is assassinated had a boisterous new scene this weekend: An activist who stormed the stage, yelling, "Do you want Trump to be assassinated?" Police said Laura Loomer was arrested Friday evening during the play presented in Central Park by the city's Public Theater. She was arrested, charged with criminal trespass and disorderly conduct and released. She must appear in court at a later date to respond to the charges.

"I'm out of jail, but I'm not apologetic," the 24-year-old conservative activist wrote on Twitter. "Thanks to everyone who is supporting me & condemning political violence." As she rushed to the stage, Loomer reportedly shouted, "Stop leftist violence!" In the play, actor Gregg Henry resembles Donald Trump,

with fluffy blondish hair, wearing a suit and a tie hanging below his belt. Sticking to Shakespeare's script, he is stabbed multiple times by a group of senators including his close friend Brutus.

Several audience members tried to shush Loomer by booing. And the performance came to a brief stop. She was not alone. Her supporters were in the audience, and one stood up and yelled, "The blood of Steve Scalise is on your hands!" - referring to the Republican congressman who was shot and critically injured earlier this week by a lone gunman on a baseball field in Virginia; four others were injured before the shooter was killed by police.

In New York, a video of the Shakespeare play incident was released almost immediately after Friday's disruption, apparently by the protesters who posted it online

for all to see. The Public Theater reacted on Twitter, saying that while they are "champions" of the First Amendment, Friday's interruption of the performance was "driven by social media." The young woman belongs to an online, right-wing group called The Rebel Media.

Delta and Bank of America have pulled their sponsorships of the Public Theater, citing the "Julius Caesar" production. Sunday is the last performance of the play, which is part of the free Shakespeare in the Park series in the Delacorte Theater. The production opened on May 23 in previews - a week before comedian Kathy Griffin's staging of a bloody, decapitated Trump-like head and after Snoo Dogg's video of him shooting a Trump-lookalike clown. But the production did not get much attention until more recently when the media highlighted the Trump-linked details. — AP

It's time for ultimate performance.

TISSOT BALLADE.

THIS CLASSIC PIECE BEARS A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT. ITS BEATING HEART IS A BALANCE SPRING MADE OF SILICON. INTEGRATED TO A POWERMATIC 80 MOVEMENT THAT OFFERS UP TO 80 HOURS OF POWER RESERVE. THE SILICON IS ANTI-MAGNETIC, RESISTANT AND CONSISTENT. FOR ULTIMATE PRECISION AND LONGEVITY.

TISSOT THIS IS YOUR TIME

TISSOTWATCHES.COM

موراد يوسف بهبهاني Morad Yousuf Behbehani شركة محمد صالح ورشا يوسف بهبهاني Mohammed Saleh & Ross Yousuf Behbehani Co.

New Street: 22453927 • الدوحة الجديدة • Marina Mall: 22244838, 22244882 • سوبر ماركت: 25718224 • سوق السالمية • سوق شارق: 22433770, 22433500 • مجمع صهيبي • The Gate Mall: 22056366 • المدينة مول • Bebehani Complex: 22406795, 22453863 • Lala Gallery: 257197801 • ابراهيم جابر • The Avenues: 22597727, 22597728 • الكورنيش: 22200726 • ابيدولاد (سوق) (القديم) • Alkout Mall: 226903389