



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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District Man Sentenced to More Than 30 Years in Prison For January 2009 Murder - Defendant Later Boasted of the Killing -

WASHINGTON - Curtis Bunn, 25, of Washington, D.C., was sentenced today to a prison term of 30 ½ years on charges stemming from a slaying that took place in January 2009 in Southeast Washington, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Bunn was convicted in November 2010 by a jury in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia of second degree murder while armed, possession of a firearm during a crime of violence, and carrying a pistol without a license. He was sentenced today by the Honorable Judge Herbert B. Dixon Jr.

According to the government's evidence, Bunn attempted to force his way into the home of the decedent, Darren Byas Sr., on the evening of January 9, 2009, for the purpose of buying marijuana from someone inside. Byas, 38, was inside his residence, in the 3500 block of 7th Street SE, with several other men. The group was playing cards and a video game. Bunn demanded to speak to one of the men and tried to push his way past Byas, who pushed him back.

Byas, unarmed, exchanged words with Bunn and came outside to confront the unwelcome visitor. Then, as Byas was walking away, Bunn shot the victim once in the back of the head and continued to fire multiple shots into his prone form. All told, Bunn shot Byas 10 times at close range. Byas was pronounced dead at the scene.

Ricochets from the bullets struck a bystander as well as the vehicle in which two eyewitnesses were sitting at the time. After the shooting, Bunn boasted about the killing to his friends, describing in detail the brutal manner in which he carried it out. Later, after his arrest in May 2009, he laughed when police confronted him about the punishing manner of Byas's death.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of the Metropolitan Police Department personnel who worked on the investigation. He cited the efforts of Detectives Dwayne Partman, Robert Arrington, Will Covington, Monica Shields and Michael Murphy, of Homicide; Detective Tim Francis of the Seventh District; Detective Joseph Radvansky of the Fifth District; Officers Ron Royster and Tom Coughlin of the Mobile Crime Lab, and Officers Richard Wince and Kevin Bergeron of the Seventh District. He also commended the work of Joseph Ruddy and Jonathon Church of the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office and Sgt. Patrick Hampson of the Prince George's County Police Department.

Mr. Machen also acknowledged the efforts of those in the U.S. Attorney's Office who worked on the case. They include: Christopher Brophy, Nelson Rhone, Durand Odom, John Marsh and Melissa Matthews of the Criminal Investigations and Intelligence Section; Leif Hickling and other members of the Litigation Support Unit; Paralegals Alesha Matthews and Ethel Gregory; Assistant United States Attorney Eric Gallun, who was involved in the early investigation of the case, and Assistant United States Attorneys Kevin Flynn and Patrick Martin, who handled the trial for the government.

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