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JURY CONVICTS ON FIREARMS CHARGES RELATED TO FATAL SHOOTING OF TWO BASTROP POLICE DETECTIVES

Defendant still faces state murder charges

Shreveport, Louisiana . . . A federal jury convicted TANYA MARIE SMITH, 25, of Mission, Texas, of firearms charges resulting from the August 2007 shooting at a Bastrop, La. motel that killed two local police detectives, United States Attorney Donald Washington announced today. The shooting at the motel left SMITH's boyfriend dead, and SMITH was charged with conspiracy and possession of six firearms by a convicted felon, including possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number, and possession of an unregistered shotgun with a barrel of less than 18 inches in length. SMITH was convicted of all charges except for possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number. SMITH is also facing pending state charges of two counts of second-degree murder and eight additional gun and drug charges.

In 2004 SMITH pled guilty in North Dakota to drug-related charges and was later convicted in federal court of possession with intent to distribute marijuana in Houston, for which she was still under supervision at the time of this offense. In addition to violating a specific condition of her probation by leaving the Southern District of Texas without permission, she was also prohibited from associating with Dennis Clem.

The two left Texas and arrived in Bastrop on August 5, 2007. A security camera at the motel where the shooting occurred captured the events that followed. At 1:30 pm on August 10th, Officers Chuck Wilson and John Smith of the Bastrop Police Department arrived in relation to the investigation of stolen merchandise. The officers knocked on the motel room door and SMITH answered the door. The officers entered the room and were shot and killed by Clem. A few moments later, SMITH exited the motel room calmly and walked away. Clem was later killed in a shootout with other police officers arriving at the scene. A 9mm pistol and a .45 caliber pistol were recovered next to Clem's body. Another 9mm pistol, a .12 gauge sawed-off shotgun with an obliterated serial number, a .22 caliber rifle, and a SKS assault rifle were recovered from the vehicle.

Conspiracy to possess a firearm by a convicted felon carries a maximum sentence of 5 years and a $250,000 fine. Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon carries a maximum sentence of 10 years and a $250,000 fine. Possession of an unregistered shotgun with a barrel of less than 18 inches in length carries a maximum sentence of 10 years and a $250,000 fine.

U. S. Attorney Donald Washington stated: "We continue to offer our condolences to the brave men who lost their lives in their encounter with SMITH and her violent companion. We pledge to continue to do all this office can to prevent violent crimes of the sort represented in this prosecution. When prevention efforts fail, we pledge to aggressively pursue and prosecute the perpetrators of crimes of violence prohibited by federal law."

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was investigated by the Louisiana State Police, the Monroe Police Department, and the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), Shreveport Field Office, Special Agent T.J. Boddie, and was prosecuted by Assistant U. S. Attorney Joseph Jarzabek.

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