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Fontana Third Striker, Los Angeles Felon Convicted of Robbing Off-duty Secret Service Agent at Gunpoint in Tustin Neighborhood

*Third suspect pleaded guilty, sentenced to six years in state prison;
Victim shot and wounded one suspect during robbery.*

SANTA ANA, Calif. – A third striker from Fontana and a Los Angeles felon have been convicted by a jury today of robbing an off-duty U.S. Secret Service agent at gunpoint in a Tustin neighborhood, stealing police equipment from the agent after he returned from working at a Los Angeles fundraiser where President Joe Biden was in attendance. The Secret Service agent fired at the suspects, hitting one of the men. A third defendant pleaded guilty to the robbery in July and was sentenced to six years in state prison.

DNA found on several of the agent's stolen items connected one of the suspects to the robbery, eventually leading to the arrest of all three men.

Jamonte Fitzgerald Johnson, 32, of Fontana, was found guilty of one felony count of second-degree robbery, one felony count of possession of a firearm by a felon, and two felony enhancements of personal use of a firearm. Johnson, who is a third-striker is currently on federal parole for weapons violations. Johnson has prior strike convictions for an attempted residential burglary in San Bernardino in 2012 and a residential burglary in 2013 in San Bernardino. He faces a maximum sentence of 35 years to life in state prison. Johnson is scheduled to be sentenced on November 22, 2024.

E'shon Dwayne Dodson, 21, of Compton, was found guilty of one felony count of second-degree robbery and one felony enhancement of being armed with a firearm during the commission of a felony. He faces a maximum sentence of six years in state prison. Dodson is scheduled to be sentenced on January 10, 2025.

Bertran Claude Bell, 38, of Los Angeles, pleaded guilty in July to one felony count of second-degree robbery and was sentenced to 6 years in state prison.

On Saturday, June 15, 2024, just after 9:30 p.m. an off-duty Secret Service agent was walking from

his parked car in a residential neighborhood in Tustin when a man, later identified as Johnson, got out of a gray SUV and approached the agent. Johnson is accused of pointing a gun at the agent and grabbing the agent's laptop bag. During the robbery, the agent fired several shots, hitting Bell who was in the gray SUV. It was later discovered that Bell was hospitalized in Los Angeles and being treated for his gunshot wounds.

While returning to the SUV after the robbery, Johnson dropped the gun he was holding. The gun was recovered at the scene by Tustin detectives, while the agent's stolen cell phone, radio and other belongings were later recovered in the area after they were discarded by the suspects during their escape.

Johnson was arrested in the City of Riverside on July 11, 2024, with the assistance of California Department of Parole, after DNA on the gun and the agent's stolen belongings connected him to the crime.

Dodson was arrested in the Watts area of Los Angeles on July 17, 2024, with the assistance of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Major Crimes Bureau Burglary-Robbery Task Force. Bell was taken into custody in the City of Los Angeles on July 24, 2024, also with the assistance of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Major Crimes Bureau Burglary-Robbery Task Force.

"The state Legislature and the Governor's soft-on-crime policies are continuing to encourage violent career criminals to come to Orange County from other counties for the sole purpose of victimizing Orange County residents," said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. "Today's convictions are yet another example of how crime doesn't pay in Orange County and that justice will be swift and it will be decisive."

Deputy District Attorney Billy Ha of the Special Prosecutions Unit is prosecuting this case.

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