



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report



2022-1472

Officer Involved Critical Incident – 2793 Waterpark Drive, Mason,
OH (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Thomas Henry Cromwell (S)
Date of Activity: 07/13/2022
Activity Location: Warren County Sheriff's Office – Business – 822 Memorial Drive ,
Lebanon, OH 45036, Warren County
Author: SA Richard Ward, #55

Narrative:

On Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at 1558 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI) Special Agents Richard Ward and Steve Seitzman met with Lebanon Police Sergeant Gregory "Nate" Trout (Trout) at the Warren County Sheriff's Office, 822 Memorial Drive, Lebanon, Ohio, for the purpose of an interview. Also present was Trout's union representative/attorney, Steve Lazarus. Trout is currently the Warren County Regional Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team Commander and held that role on July 12, 2022, during a standoff with an escaped prisoner, Thomas Cromwell (Cromwell). Cromwell had escaped from Hamilton County Corrections the previous day. During the standoff at the Baymont Inn (Mason, Ohio), the SWAT team breached the hotel room door, and once inside the room, Franklin Police Officer Keene shot and killed Cromwell, who had a knife held to the female hostage's [Kelly Rose's] throat.

Trout has been employed by the City of Lebanon Police Department since 2008 and was promoted to sergeant in 2019. Trout has been the SWAT Commander since November of 2021. On July 11, 2022, Trout stated he was notified by Deputy Scott Williams (Assistant SWAT Team Commander) of a barricaded person/hostage situation in Mason. Trout requested a SWAT page via Warren County Communications be sent out. Trout responded to the scene, met with a lieutenant from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, and a command post was established. Trout sent a text message to all the SWAT members indicating the first five would be the "Emergency Reaction Team" and to immediately secure the third floor of the hotel. This team would relieve the Mason police officers on the third floor who had responded prior to their arrival. According to Trout, the purpose of the first five SWAT members was to provide a quick response if necessary because of the hostage situation.

Trout had Hamilton County deputies handle the crowd that arrived on the scene. He also provided assignments to SWAT team members as they arrived. Because the belief was that the hotel room door was barricaded, Trout helped devise a plan to perform an explosive breach.

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The explosive wall charges were to be placed in the hotel rooms on each side of the Cromwell's location. The wall charges would be placed deep inside one room's wall and in the other room, on the jointing wall to the bathroom to prevent Cromwell from retreating with Rose to the bathroom. According to Trout, the door handle "757" charges are typically used, but experience has shown the door charges do not work well on hotel room doors.

Trout stated he wanted all the recording and negotiation equipment on the scene before attempting contact with Cromwell. Although they could hear them inside the room, Trout stated nothing was heard to create any exigency for immediate entry and believed there was time to wait for the equipment to arrive. Once the equipment arrived, negotiations began, and after several hours, the Hamilton County SWAT team relieved the Warren County team at approximately 2300 hours, but Trout, Deputy Scott Williams, and the two members responsible for the explosive breaches remained on scene. The remainder of the team sought rest at a nearby firehouse. Trout stated that the request to use the Hamilton County team rather than West Chester Police was due to their ability to utilize explosive breaching equipment. He later learned that Hamilton County did not have any explosive breachers available.

Trout stated they believed Rose was inside the room against her will, and Cromwell was cautious about allowing Rose to speak to the negotiators. Rose's voice was heard from outside the room and was believed to be okay. Cromwell had indicated several times that he would kill Rose if the police attempted entry. Cromwell also indicated that he would "shoot it out" with the police. Trout stated they visually confirmed Cromwell had a knife, but it was unclear if any other weapons or firearms were in play.

Agent Ward asked Trout what happened to recall the Warren County SWAT back to the scene. Trout stated Hamilton County indicated their team would not make a deliberate breach and would only enter the room if exigent circumstances arose. Trout stated he received a Facebook live video, which depicted Cromwell with a knife to the throat of Rose. After the Facebook live video, Trout stated they needed proof of life of Rose. Trout believed an actual threat was observed on the video, and he recalled the team. During the negotiations, Trout stated that Cromwell indicated he would release the dog that was inside the room and wanted to talk with "his people." On that same phone call, Cromwell indicated he would kill Rose and die a "glorious death."

Trout stated that around the same time, Cromwell requested Newport cigarettes and a McDonald's cheese burger. Trout wanted to use this opportunity to breach the hotel room door. Once the team arrived and Hamilton SWAT left, Trout briefed the team. The plan was that once Cromwell was reached on the phone, the breach would be made shortly thereafter. Sometime between 0200–0230 hours, the breach countdown was initiated, commencing at "eight." The shotgun breach was first, followed by both explosive wall charges simultaneously. According to Trout, a shotgun breach at the front door of the hotel room was used as a distraction because it was unclear if it would be successful; and they "relied heavily" on the deep wall breach and the bathroom wall breach to keep Cromwell from those areas. From what he could hear, Trout stated the breach sequence was timed to the plan, and moments afterward, he heard "suspect down" and "Bingo." Trout stated the term "Bingo" is used once a hostage is successfully recused. A determination was made that Cromwell was deceased and remained inside the hotel room.

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Agent Ward asked Trout if he took any after-action steps, and Trout stated he had all equipment, with the exception of personnel items, left at the scene. Additionally, the third floor was locked down. All SWAT personnel were removed and the scene was turned over to Mason Police Department. Trout had his team remain in the area for scene security until the death notification was made.

Agent Ward concluded with Trout at 1627 hours. The audio interview with Trout is attached below.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2022-07-13 / Sgt. Gregory "Nate" Trout Audio Interview

Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.