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Note shows gunman in 2016 Baton Rouge ambush sought to kill police

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(Reuters) - A suicide note released on Friday showed the former U.S. Marine who killed three police officers and wounded three others in Baton Rouge, Louisiana last July went to the city to kill police, a prosecutor said.

FILE PHOTO - Gavin Long, a black U.S. Marine Corps veteran who shot dead three policemen in Louisiana's capital who deliberately sought out officers to assassinate them, according to officials, is seen in this still image taken from video in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, U.S., released by Louisiana State Police, July 18, 2016. Louisiana State Police/Handout via REUTERS

The note's contents were among new information offered by local District Attorney Hillar Moore III that provided the most extensive details to date of the shooting rampage. It was the second racially-charged incident in July 2016 in the city, where angry protesters decried the police shooting of a black man outside a convenience store.

Citing computer records, Moore said gunman Gavin Long had searched for the addresses of the two Baton Rouge police

officers involved in the July 5, 2016, death of Alton Sterling, 37, outside the Baton Rouge store.

But investigators found no evidence that Long, 29, who was black, did anything else to pursue those officers, the prosecutor said.

“We don’t have a clear answer as to why, exactly, he came” to Baton Rouge versus targeting another city, Moore told reporters.

Long, who was angered by the deaths of black men in police shootings, wrote in the suicide note that his actions were “a necessary evil” that needed to happen “in order to create substantial change within America’s police force and judicial system.”

During the incident, witnesses alerted Baton Rouge police officer Matthew Gerald and East Baton Rouge Sheriff’s Deputy Brad Garafola to a man circling behind a shop with an assault rifle.

Baton Rouge officer Montrell Jackson, who was at a nearby car wash, joined the lawmen to search for the suspect. In a surprise ambush, Long fired multiple rounds toward the three officers, killing them.

He injured three more Baton Rouge police officers before he was killed in a gunfight.

“There was no doubt” the officers’ decision to kill Long was necessary, Moore said.

“These courageous officers who responded to this tragedy were completely justified in dispensing of their duties and certainly saved more lives than what was taken,” Moore said.

Long's ambush followed an attack on police in Dallas that left five officers dead and unrest over the police killing of Philando Castile, 32, near St. Paul, Minnesota, on July 6.

Federal prosecutors declined to charge the officers involved in Sterling's death, and the officer who killed Castile during a traffic stop was acquitted in that case this month.

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