

Two plead guilty to killing single mother in racially charged case

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DETROIT -- **Two** men pleaded **guilty** this afternoon in the **killing** of **a** 38-year-old Taylor **mother** that police said was their most confusing case in 20 years.

JuJuan Earl Willis, 22, Michael Johnson, 19, both of Detroit pleaded **guilty to** second-degree murder, assault with intent **to** murder and felony firearms charges in the July 30 fracas that killed Wendy Meinke. Willis could face up **to** 27 years in prison at his sentencing on April 21 under the plea agreement. Johnson, who was identified **as** the shooter and was charged with first-degree murder, could face up **to** 32 years in prison.

"We were prepared **to** present our case and believe we could prove it without **a** reasonable doubt," said Maria Miller, spokeswoman for Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy. "We believe this was **a** just result."

The Taylor case drew public scrutiny after three suspects were freed after **a** lack of evidence. Their arrests caused **a** stir in Taylor when protestors accused police of rounding up black suspects for the white woman's death.

Franklin Smith, 18, and Devin Plummer, 17, were freed Aug. 15 after Worthy dropped the charges. Ballistics tests showed no traces of gunpowder on Plummer the night of the shooting.

Police alleged Plummer was one of at least **two** people **to** fire at Meinke, who came **to** the aid of her son during **a** fight at the Coppertree Apartments. Smith was charged with driving the getaway car.

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