



ONTARIO POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Steven Romero
Chief of Police

Jason Cooper
Lieutenant

Press Release

12/21/2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release #19-12-001

Ontario, Oregon: On December 21, 2019 at approximately 09:41 hours, the Ontario Police Department responded to 653 E Idaho Ave., Ontario, Oregon, regarding a stabbing incident at the Pilot / Arby's truck stop.

Upon arriving at the location, Investigating OPD personnel found the stabbing suspect being restrained by several Arby's Restaurant employees. The victim was located nearby, with multiple stab wounds to his neck area. Upon securing the scene, the suspect was taken into police custody and the victim was transported to an area hospital in Idaho, where he remains in stable condition.

The suspect has been identified as: 26-year-old, Caucasian, Nolan Strauss, from Nebraska and believed to be driving a tractor trailer for the May Trucking Company.

The victim has been identified as: 48-year-old, African-American Ronnell Hughes, who is believed to be a new arrival in the Ontario area from the state of North Carolina.

Through interviews of witnesses, the suspect, as well as reviewing video evidence and physical evidence at the scene, investigating detectives have learned that the victim had been inside the Arby's Restaurant on a job seeking visit. Without provocation or communication, suspect Nolan Strauss approached the seated victim and suddenly began to attack him with a knife. Victim Hughes suffered slash and stab wounds to his neck area and attempted to fend off the attack. Several employees began to intervene and were able to subdue the armed suspect inside the restaurant. None of the employees were injured during the incident.

At this time, there is no indication that the suspect and victim know one another nor had any prior interactions prior to the attack. The investigation by the Ontario Police Department, Oregon State Police, and Malheur County Sheriff Office is on-going and the motive for the attack leans heavily towards a racially motivated crime.

Suspect Strauss is currently lodged in the Malheur County Jail and will likely face charges of: Assault I, Bias Crime I and Attempted Murder.

CONTACT:

At this moment, telephonic and in person media interviews are not available. Please contact Chief Steven Romero during business hours Monday Through Friday 8:00-5:00 pm to request in-person or telephonic interview.