

Jimmy Carter: Zimmerman jury made 'right decision'

Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter discusses the acquittal of George Zimmerman, saying that the jury made the right decision based on the evidence presented.

Catalina Camia, USA TODAY 11:36 a.m. EDT July 17, 2013



(Photo: Prakash Mathema, AFP/Getty Images file)

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Former president Jimmy Carter said the jury in the George Zimmerman trial "made the right decision" and agrees with President Obama that Americans should respect its judgment.

Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch volunteer, was acquitted last Saturday in the shooting death of Florida teenager Trayvon Martin. Carter, the nation's 39th president, made his comments about the high-profile case in an interview Tuesday with WXIA in Atlanta.

STORY: ['Justice for Trayvon' rallies planned \(http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2013/07/17/justice-for-trayvon-rallies-planned-for-100-cities/2524701/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2013/07/17/justice-for-trayvon-rallies-planned-for-100-cities/2524701/)

"I think the jury made the right decision based on the evidence presented because the prosecution inadvertently set the standard so high that the jury had to be convinced that it was a deliberate act by Zimmerman and that he was not at all defending himself," Carter said.

"It's not a moral question," he continued, "it was a legal question and the American law requires that the jury listens to the evidence presented."

Trayvon's death sparked outcry over Florida's "stand your ground" laws and a national debate over racial profiling. State prosecutors argued during the trial that Zimmerman profiled and murdered the teenager, then lied about the Trayvon initiating the fight.

INTERACTIVE: [Timeline of Trayvon Martin case \(http://www.usatoday.com/interactives/news/nation/trayvon-martin-zimmerman-case/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/interactives/news/nation/trayvon-martin-zimmerman-case/)

Since Zimmerman was acquitted of second-degree murder, protests have occurred in some communities across the country.

Asked if race was a factor in the jury's decision, Carter said he believes the six women based their decision on the evidence that was presented. "I can't allege the six jurors ... are not just as sensitive about the race issue as I am or you are," he said. "I would presume they listened to the evidence."

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