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If You're Black in America, the Rules are Different Would Freddie Gray be Dead If He was White?

by MIKE WHITNEY

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“In its response to the eruption of police violence over the murder of Freddie Gray, the black political establishment, headed by the first African-American president, has shown itself exactly for what it is: corrupt, self-interested and utterly hostile to the interests and aspirations of the poor and workers, black and white.”

— Andre Damon and Joseph Kishore, “The Social Eruption in Baltimore, Maryland”

25 year old Freddie Gray didn't kill himself thrashing around in the back of a police van. That's pure hogwash. He was murdered by killer cops who were determined to shut him up and teach him a lesson. That's what I think. And that's why the official police report has not yet been released to the public. That's why the police are denying that the van made a fourth stop at “a desolate intersection... surrounded by vacant lots”. That's why the recordings between the driver of the van and headquarters haven't been released. (“Whenever a police officer makes a stop he's supposed to radio it in.”) That's why the Police Commissioner has refused to answer questions about the video footage that was seized from grocery store owner Jung Hyun Hwang whose security camera was on when the police van made “a previously unknown stop” while Gray was still onboard. Check it out:

“The store owner... told The Associated Press that two police officers visited his store during the week of April 20 and later made a copy of the surveillance video.” Since then, the original copy in Hwang’s possession has also mysteriously vanished.

Sure, it’s vanished, just like every other piece evidence is going to vanish. What do you expect: Justice?

Hell, no. As for the ridiculous “Gray killed himself” story, that’s already been thoroughly discredited by the experts. Take a look at this from the Daily Beast:

“I’ve never seen somebody self-inflict a spinal cord injury in that way,” says Anand Veeravagu, a Stanford University Medical Center neurosurgeon who specializes in traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries....It’s hard for me to envision how a person could try to do that,” he says. “It would require them to basically hang themselves in a car where there isn’t anything to hang yourself with.”

Veeravagu says that there are only a few ways you can injure your spine in a similar way to the injuries that ultimately led to Gray’s death. One, he says, is by a sharp injury, which is a direct penetrating injury—either somebody with a knife “who knows what they’re doing, or something else that cuts through, like a gunshot wound sometimes people attempt suicide by hanging themselves. It’s one of the only ways I’ve seen where you can (commit suicide or intentional self-harm) by spinal fracture. They kick their chair out, they fall, they snap their neck. It results in immediate spinal cord injury,” he says. “But it’s very hard to see how somebody could attempt suicide by a spinal cord injury without the use of something else.”

But it’s even in those instances, he says, patients often don’t die of a spinal cord injury. And most who are taken to the hospital in time after suffering spinal cord injuries—self-inflicted or not—survive the trauma.

“Most spinal cord injuries are not fatal if patients are taken to the hospital,” Veeravagu says. “Most survive.” (“Experts: You Can’t Break Your Own Spine Like Freddie Gray“, Daily Beast)

The reason it’s hard to imagine someone inflicting a severe spinal cord injury on themselves in the back of a moving van, is because it’s never happened. It’s because the whole thing is a fraud, a hoax, a lie, that’s why.

And another thing: The real reason why Gray wasn’t taken to the hospital, is because Gray’s life didn’t matter. It’s that simple. If he was white, he would’ve gotten the treatment he needed because the cops would have been worried about the consequences. But because he was black, they didn’t have to concern themselves. Nothing was going happen. The front office would cover it up, the video footage would disappear, the big-city mukky-muks would concoct a believable whitewash-story, our African American president would offer his support for ‘our fine men in blue’, and all would be forgotten. Isn’t that how it always goes?

That’s not to say that, if Gray had been white, he would have gotten justice. Heck, no. He probably would have been forced to plea bargain on some trumped up charge that

would have landed him in the pokey for a year or two. In other words, he'd still get railroaded, but he'd still be alive, that's the difference. They wouldn't have broken his neck and left him to die. That sort of treatment is reserved for blacks, not whites.

If you're black in America, the rules are just different. Everyone knows that. Just like everyone knows that if you're an unarmed black man who gets shot 7 times running away from a cop for "making eye contact", well, guess what: You just died of "natural causes" dude, because that's how it's going to read in the papers the next day. So deal with it.

Only this time, people don't want to just "deal with it". They're fed up and they want things to change. So, they've poured out onto the streets across the country to express their frustration, their anger, and their insistence that their voices be heard. Sure, there's been a little violence, but so what? It's nothing compared to the violence that Gray experienced when he was shoved to the ground, kneed in the face, after which his "spinal column was 80 percent severed at the neck and his voice box crushed."

Nor does it compare to the violence that urban blacks face daily in their encounters with the cops. Here's a clip from the WSWS:

"A report by the *Baltimore Sun* last year found that the city paid out \$5.7 million since 2011 over lawsuits related to police violence.

"Officers have battered dozens of residents who suffered broken bones—jaws, noses, arms, legs, ankles—head trauma, organ failure, and even death, coming during questionable arrests," the newspaper reported...." (World Socialist Web Site)

Now that's what I call violence, not a couple broken windows or a few smashed up cars. Now check this out from Interfluidity:

"In theory, a peaceful political process is absolutely the right way to solve the problems of brutality and exclusion. In practice, it hasn't happened, it isn't happening, there is no sign that it will happen....Riots do severe, immediate, harm, they are an escalation, they are violent, they are prima facie bad. Yet the fact that rioting sometimes happens, the uncomfortable possibility of it, has historically and may again create urgency and motivate political change that is ultimately good." ("There is a name for this", Steve Randy Waldman, Interfluidity)

Well put, but what's important to remember is that the violence in Baltimore didn't emerge from nothing. It has its roots in injustice. Treat people fairly and the problem goes away. Use the rioting as an excuse to implement loony martial law strategies, and reap the whirlwind. That's the choice, isn't it?

And we know which way the government has chosen to deal with it, through provocation, escalation and aggression the same way the US deals with everything. The governor has deployed two thousand National Guard troops onto the streets to accompany the hundreds of robo-cops that have transformed downtown Baltimore into a warzone so they can see how

effective their new tools are in terrifying the public into submission. And who's helping the governor and the city kingpins in their crackdown on the protestors?

The elites in the black establishment, that's who. An article in the World Socialist Web Site sums it up perfectly:

“In her press conference Tuesday, Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake repeatedly referred to young people expressing their anger over police violence as “thugs” in announcing the imposition of a curfew and the calling in of the National Guard. She was flanked by Patrol Chief Darryl De Sousa, the City Council President Bernard C. “Jack” Young, and City Council member Brandon M. Scott, all of whom were black, with the latter two also calling the demonstrators “thugs.”...

“In its response to the eruption of police violence over the murder of Freddie Gray, the black political establishment, headed by the first African-American president, has shown itself exactly for what it is: corrupt, self-interested and utterly hostile to the interests and aspirations of the poor and workers, black and white.” (“The social eruption in Baltimore, Maryland”, Andre Damon and Joseph Kishore, World Socialist Web Site)

Will there ever be justice for Freddie Gray?

Nope. The people who own this country wouldn't allow it.