**Vendetta Son of prominent anti police brutality activist convicted in police frame up**



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Bukowski, Diane
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VENDETTA: Son of prominent anti-police brutality activist convicted in
police frame-up Family will ask Worthy to overturn jury verdict

Death, beatings, and now prison face the Squires family. The ongoing
conflict between members of the family and some Detroit police officers has
touched three generations.

As police beat Cornell Squires two years ago, his father - who witnessed
the beating - suffered a heart attack which proved to be fatal. Now he may
lose his only child to the prison system as a result of the subsequent
police frame-up.

Cornell Emmanuel Squires, 19, was convicted September 26 of assault with
intent to rob while being armed. The jury Squires faced had only two Black
members. He was acquitted on charges of attempted carjacking of two
undercover police officers. The trial took place before Wayne County
Circuit Court Judge Kym Worthy.

Squires faces sentencing October 30, with guidelines that call for minimums
ranging from 27 months to six years in prison. The maximum sentence is
life. Emmanuel, as he is known, has no prior police record.

"We plan to ask Judge Worthy to overturn the verdict, and are asking the
community to support us by writing and calling her," said Cornell Squires,
the defendant's father. "We do not believe that any jury in the old
Recorders' Court, composed of Detroiters, would have believed the police
and brought this verdict."

He says his son was planning to start chef's school in Pittsburgh this
month. But the jury's verdict has changed all that.

Squires was arrested by Fourth Precinct undercover officers William
Melendez and David LeValley last fall. The officers worked on the
precinct's narcotics team with officer Robert Feld, who beat Squires'
father the previous year, calling him a "nigger" and threatening to kill
him.

The jury never heard testimony regarding the history of Fourth Precinct
police harassment of the Squires family. Testimony of a witness in the car
with Squires at the time of his arrest was also barred, after prosecutor
Thomas Trzcinski threatened to have the witness arrested if he testified.

"How is the earlier information regarding officer Robert Feld relevant?"
Judge Worthy asked at the outset of the trial.

Worthy referred to an article in The Michigan Citizen detailing frame-ups
carried out against the Squires family after the 1998 incident. She said
testimony regarding those incidents should have been brought in pre-trial
evidentiary hearings.

Melendez and LeValley testified that Squires approached them holding an
unknown object they thought was a weapon. They said Squires told them, "Get
out of the f-ing car."

The officers testified that they identified themselves as policemen, and
the car Squires was riding in took off at a high rate of speed. Squires was
arrested, and officers found no weapon.

According to defense attorneys, no evidence of assault was ever put forth
by the prosecution.

"No weapon was ever presented in evidence, and the officers testified that
Squires never took any further action after the alleged statement," said
defense attorney Shaun Neal.

Testimony from the two officers was conflicting. Melendez claimed Squires
got within "six inches" of his partner. LeValley, on the other hand,
testified that Squires was "two feet" from the front of the officers' car -
or about ten feet away.

Neal moved for a directed verdict of "not guilty" after the officers
testified, but Worthy denied the request.

Witness Stanley Wilson, an 18-year-old friend of Squires who was subpoenaed
by the prosecution, completely contradicted the officers' testimony, Wilson
said on the night of the incident, he and another friend dropped Squires
off near his home. He said their car drove away at a normal speed and sat
parked within view of the ensuing arrest.

Although police had the names of both Wilson and the driver, Quintin
Baxter, from the beginning, no charges were brought against the two.

Emmanuel Squires calmly testified on his own behalf, only breaking down
when the prosecutor asked about his family. He started to cry, saying, "I
miss my grandfather."

Squires testified that officer Melendez got out of his car, never drawing
his gun or shouting "Police," and chased him.

Squires also testified that he saw the police investigator who took his
statement ball it up and throw it away.

Squires said he signed another statement after being promised he would be
promptly released.

During closing arguments, supporters from the Detroit Coalition Against
Police Brutality who came to court on behalf of Emmanuel were barred from
the courtroom.

Several of those already present were loudly reprimanded by Worthy for
whispering, and one supporter was ejected by a court sheriff who claimed he
was sleeping.

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