

# Baltimore police shoot 14-year-old boy

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On Wednesday, 14-year-old Dedric Colvin was shot by undercover Baltimore police detectives after they alleged he was carrying a semiautomatic pistol. After two bullets penetrated the boy's body, police found no gun but instead found a spring-air-powered BB gun.

Two plainclothes detectives were driving along the 1100 block of E. Baltimore Street in East Baltimore, Maryland just after 4PM on Wednesday when they spotted Dedric walking with what they alleged to be a firearm. Baltimore city officials stated the undercover detectives identified themselves as police officers and ordered Dedric to drop his gun, after which he ran approximately 150 yards with officers in pursuit. According to Volanda Young, Dedric's mother, the plainclothes detectives shot him once in the shoulder and once in the leg.

After Dedric's brother informed her that he had been shot, Dedric's mother ran outside and found him bleeding near a basketball court. "All I could see was blood," she said. "I was screaming." She asked the police, "Is my son alive?" Officers would soon handcuff her and place her in a police car, where she was taken to a police station. There she was questioned and placed in a cell. The officers told her she was arrested for being "belligerent." One wonders how the mother of a son who was shot and bleeding and whose blood stained the pavement is supposed to act. Such cruelty is hard to fathom.

Fortunately for Dedric and his mother, he is expected to make a full recovery.

Dedric posed absolutely no harm to the officers. There is no indication that Dedric pointed his BB gun in their direction. A witness told the police the boy had turned back toward the officers with the gun in his hands before he was shot in an attempt to tell them the gun was fake.

"I heard him yell, 'It's not real,' like twice, and that quick, the male officer shot him twice in the leg," said

the witness.

Baltimore city officials have officially sanctioned the shooting, with Baltimore Police Commissioner Kevin Davis stating, "I don't know why that young man chose to flee. I've got two 13-year-old twins myself at home."

"They got out of their car and they engaged a person who had what looked like a gun in his hand," Davis said, defending the officers' actions.

"I mean, come on. That's what we're supposed to do. That's what cops do. When he ran—and the foot chase was a good 150 or so yards, he rounded a corner, kept running—he had every opportunity to drop the gun, had every opportunity to stop, put his hands in the air, comply with the instructions of the police officers," he said.

Such brutish logic paints clearly the reactionary and deadly force that is the American police. According to Davis and the rest of the capitalist state apparatus, any person that carries anything that resembles a handgun can be shot and killed on the spot by a police officer.

The shooting of 14-year-old Colvin, in an incident almost identical to the killing of Tamir Rice, came on the one-year anniversary of the killing of Freddie Gray, whose spinal cord was brutally mangled after being arbitrarily detained and taken for a "rough ride" in a cage in the rear of a Baltimore police van.

The relentless reign of terror by US police agencies, the majority of whose victims are the working class and poor, has not let up. According to the *Washington Post*, 322 people have been killed by police so far this year.

The police represent an agency of the US capitalist class and the state that it controls.

The unending reign of police terror against poor and working people is part of a broader process of the militarization of society and preparation for dictatorship aimed at safeguarding the capitalist order and upholding the privileges of the corporate-financial

elite.

Last year, Baltimore was placed on military-police lockdown in an attempt to forcefully contain the social eruption that followed Freddie Gray's death. The *World Socialist Web Site* noted at the time: "In the methods deployed on the streets of Baltimore, the ruling class is demonstrating what it is prepared to do in response to all opposition to its policies of war and social counterrevolution."



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