

# Chicago police warn of unrest after murder of teen

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Ahead of the public release Friday of body and dashboard camera footage of the police shooting of 18-year-old African-American Paul O'Neal, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) issued a national bulletin warning of possible "civil unrest." The teenager was shot in the back on July 28 and his death has been ruled a homicide.

The fatal shots do not appear on any of the nine videos released. Instead, cops are seen firing at least 15 shots at O'Neal's car. The police then chase him through a residential neighborhood and several more shots are heard off-camera. Three unidentified cops have been relieved of their duties after police officials suggested they might have violated protocol when they murdered the youth.

The CPD claims there have been problems with the body cameras, which were supposed to assure "transparency" and improve relations between the public and the city's notoriously violent police force.

O'Neal was shot by one or more officers and died of his injuries shortly after being arrested. Police say O'Neal fled in his car after they stopped him for suspected car theft. The cops fired into the front and back windshields of the car, but media outlets say none of those shots hit O'Neal.

The videos contain damning footage showing reckless violence by the police and confusion and fear among residents as police pursue the youth through a quiet south side neighborhood before they fire the fatal shots. The footage shows dismayed neighbors trickling out of their homes to see what has happened as the cops discuss the possibility of being suspended for their actions.

One officer suggests that the unarmed suspect had fired at them first. Another tells a group of cops in the street to turn off their body cameras. Additional footage

shows the police handcuffing the youth as he bleeds to death.

The family saw the footage before it was released to the public on Friday, according to CNN. Ja'Mal Green, a family spokesman, told CNN that the relatives of O'Neal's mother and sister walked out. "They can only take so much," he said. "Once the gunshots started, they immediately left the room ... crying, breaking down."

O'Neal family attorney Michael Oppenheimer declared the killing an execution and denounced the police and the "independent" police review authority for covering up the crime. "They decided they would control this, so the cover-up has begun," the attorney said.

Chicago's Democratic mayor, Rahm Emanuel, has already been implicated in a cover-up of a police murder. Last November, a judge ordered the release of video footage of Chicago cop Jason Van Dyke firing 16 rounds and killing black teen Laquan McDonald in 2014. The Emanuel administration paid the family hush money, let the killer cop go free, and suppressed the footage of the murder with the help of the state's attorney and the unanimous support of the City Council for more than a year.

The release of the video provoked mass protests and threw Emanuel, Obama's former White House chief of staff, into a political crisis. The official civil rights organizations, the unions and their pseudo-left supporters essentially rescued Emanuel by attributing police violence entirely to racism and thereby covering up the more basic issues of poverty, economic inequality and state repression that impact the entire working class and point to the capitalist system itself as the root cause of the epidemic of police killings. These forces lent credibility to Emanuel's cynical and empty

promises to enact police reform and change the “police culture,” which included installing a new black police chief who was himself notorious for suppressing anti-NATO protests in Chicago in 2012.

The basic function of the police in America’s third-largest city, as in the rest of the country, is to defend the super-rich minority against the increasingly angry and restive working class majority. While 15 billionaires and some 134,000 millionaires call Chicago their home, dozens of schools, mental health clinics and other public services have been shut down, and homeless encampments have sprung up across the city, whose occupants include low-wage workers and impoverished college students. The same day the video of the O’Neal shooting was released, Chicago officials announced the layoff of 1,000 public school teachers and staff.

Deaths caused by the US police so far this year have climbed to 696, according to KilledByPolice.net. The O’Neal murder occurs in the aftermath of the political conventions of both big business parties, each of which, in its own way, defended the police and justified the unprecedented militarization of police departments across the country by the Obama administration.

The Republican National Convention in Cleveland was a celebration of the military and the police, with Republican nominee, billionaire Donald Trump, declaring that he was the candidate of “law and order” who would “make America safe again.” It featured fascist denunciations of protests against police killings.

The Democratic National Convention was dominated by racial and gender politics, promoted for the purpose of defending militarism abroad and the militarization of the police at home. Nine mothers of police murder victims, including Eric Garner and Michael Brown, were brought onto the stage to present the wave of police killings as a problem of “lack of trust” between the police and “people of color.”

These parents’ personal tragedies were cynically exploited to conceal the fact that more than half of those killed by police are white and that police violence is directed against the entire working class, especially its poorest and most vulnerable sections. Democratic officials, including presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, praised the police for upholding public safety. There was much blather about improving relations by

means of “sensitivity training,” “community policing,” and bringing to bear the services of racist groups that orbit the Democratic Party such as Black Lives Matter.

The real attitude of the Democratic Party on this question can be seen in the record of the Obama administration. The president’s Justice Department has not prosecuted a single killer cop, and the administration has repeatedly intervened in the federal courts to oppose challenges to police violations of constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties. The administration supported the declaration of states of emergency and police-military occupations to suppress protests against police violence in Ferguson, Missouri and Baltimore, Maryland. At the same time, the Obama administration has continued to funnel billions of dollars worth of military equipment, including armored vehicles, combat helicopters and military-grade weapons, from the Pentagon to local police departments.

Regardless of who wins the November elections—the fascist Trump or the warmonger and Wall Street tool Hillary Clinton—the next administration will step up police repression in an effort to crush growing social opposition.



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