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Iraq Veteran police brutality

Tue, 15 Nov 2011 21:53:50 -0800 (PST) (11/16/2011 12:53:50 AM)

To whom this may concern,

My name is Joshua Gerard. I am a 10 year veteran of the U.S. Army. I served one tour in Iraq from November 2003 to October 2004. I suffer from PTSD and also TBI. You probably have heard my name thrown around in the news a little. As you may know I had an incident on 09 May 2010, with the Volusia County Sheriff's Department. In particular Deputy, Sgt. Mejias. What you don't know are the specifics and also the cover-ups. That night I was having a complete mental breakdown. I didn't know who anyone was, and thought people were coming after me. My wife called 911 for help. It was a mental health/domestic call. What she got was a nuclear bomb on top of an already bad situation. When Sgt. Mejias arrived at our private residence, he arrived alone. He spotted me standing alone in my driveway with no threat to anyone, holding a shotgun. An unloaded shotgun which was reported to the 911 dispatcher. Instead of waiting for back-up, Deputy Mejias left the safety of his vehicle. He did not even stand behind his reinforced door. My wife standing over at my neighbors house, watched as Sgt. Mejias charged at me from behind, and without warning, shot me three times in the back. This whole incident took 9 seconds which is verifiable on the 911 tape of the call. It took Sgt. Mejias 9 seconds to stop his car, get out of his car, assess the situation, supposedly give me three warnings(this is according to Sgt. Mejias), decide my fate, and shoot three times to kill. He did not shoot to disable, disarm, or injure, he shot 3 times in the torso. This also goes against his deposition recorded in court, that he approached me, and gave me a warning to drop the gun. He stated that I then turned and faced him with my shoulders square to his, with my shotgun held in both hands across my body. Sgt. Mejias then stated I raised my shotgun and pointed it at him, and that is why he shot me once in the front of my stomach, once in the front of my chest and then as I spun around he shot me once in the center of my back. This is what he stated in court. This statement even goes against the police report that night which stated he shot 3 times hitting me once in the front of the arm and that he treated my non-life threatening wounds and called for medical assistance. The truth to all this is actually a lot different. My wife who was standing outside my next door neighbors witnessed Sgt. Mejias charge straight at me and shot 3 times with out warning. Which I might add, that my wife and kids were right in the officers direct line of fire, he would have hit them had all 3 bullets not hit me first. The first bullet entered in my back left flank right above my kidney and below my lung. It almost exited out through the front of my stomach but stopped in my large intestine, which I had to have 5-6 inches removed. The second shot hit the back of my left elbow shattering it to pieces. This injury took 2 surgeries to repair and has left me permanently disabled, and I am also left-handed. My orthopedic doctor from the VA and a ballistics expert who is retired from the same sheriff's office, stated they are willing to testify, on our behalf, in court that there is no way possible for that bullet, or any of the bullets to have come from the front. They said without a doubt that all three came from directly behind me. The third bullet actually skimmed my back from my shoulder up toward my head. This happened because Sgt. Mejias fired his third shot after I had dropped the weapon and was falling to the ground already. I have the physical evidence on my body and my wife as a witness, to prove that what I said is nothing but the truth. My family still suffers today from this horrific event. Most of all my wife who now suffers PTSD from that night. She is very afraid of police officers, helicopters, knocks at our door, any loud noises, and over all

is just plain distraught. I feel that my family has suffered a great injustice and I want to get my story out there. I feel that the Volusia County Sheriff's Office and Sgt Mejias should have to pay for what they did to my family and I. If anyone could be of assistance it would be greatly and forever appreciated.

Sincerely,

The Gerard Family

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