

Nine recommendations for Baltimore City Police reforms

By Richard Ochs

1. Protect whistle blowers in the Police Department. There are no “good cops” and there can be no good cops because of the “no snitch rule.” The police culture of silence needs to be broken up, as does the practice of retaliation against aspiring good cops. The racist Fraternal Order of Police intimidates cops who want to do the right thing. Those who retaliate against whistle blowers need to be punished. Retaliations consist of sending snitchers on dangerous missions alone with no back-up, where they could be hurt. We need to stop that.
2. Ban the practice of cops putting their knee on the spine of detainees who are lying face down on the street. That is probably what happened to Freddie Gray and it is a dangerous and unnecessary practice, causing permanent injury or worse.
3. Require a jury trial whenever a police officer is indicted for killing anyone.
4. Negotiate with the Fraternal Order of Police to drop the lawsuit by the F.O.P. against our States Attorney Marilyn Mosby, who had the temerity to indict 6 cops for the wrongful death of Freddy Gray. The F.O.P. vindictive and racist attitude has been expressed in their press conferences since the indictments, impugning the motives and integrity of our courageous States Attorney. The racist attitude of the F.O.P. is infecting the culture of the Baltimore Police and needs to be stopped.
5. Require immediate medical checks by independent medical personnel of any detainee who requests medical help. Such medics must not be on the payroll of the Police Department.
6. Recommend amnesty for the protesters still serving time for property destruction during the Freddie Gray uprising, especially since the police who took an innocent life served no time at all.
7. Recommend a review of the case of Tyrone West, who was also murdered by Baltimore police.
8. Develop new technology to secure detainees in police vehicles, designing a new type of vehicle if necessary, since buckling up detainees in such confined spaces is problematic and may put an officer or detainee at risk.
9. Institute an elected Civilian Police Review Board to help develop policy and reforms.