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Prosecution threatens to jail witnesses in Squires' trial

Wayne County assistant prosecutor Todd Flood has threatened to charge and jail two young friends of Cornell Emmanuel Squires if they come to a pre-trial hearing to testify on his behalf. The hearing is set for Wednesday, May 17 at 9 a.m. In front of Judge Kym Worthy, Room 502, Frank Murphy Hall of Justice.

Squires, the 18-year-old son of police brutality activist Cornell Squires, faces life in prison on charges of assault with intent to rob (armed) and attempted carjacking. The two witnesses were with him in their car on October 31 when Squires was stopped by plainclothes police officers William Melendez and David Le Valley.

According to defense attorney Shaun Neal, none of the three young men has a police record. At the preliminary examination, the prosecution and police produced no evidence showing that any weapon was involved in the incident. Squires and his witnesses say that there was no assault or attempted carjacking.

Squires' father and the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality believe the charges against Squires are part of a series of frame-ups directed at their family because the senior Squires protested his beating by Officer Robert Fold in October 1998. Witnessing that beating caused the senior Squires' father Eugene to suffer a heart attack that eventually proved fatal.

The senior Squires is scheduled for a trial on charges of interfering with a police officer in the October, 1998 incident on Monday, May 15 at 9 a.m. In 36th District Court.

A trial in Cornell Emmanuel's case was originally scheduled a month ago. Judge Worthy set the May 19 hearing to review the witnesses' testimony, and said she will have court-appointed attorneys present to represent them. She did not challenge the prosecution for threatening the witnesses, although defense attorney Shaun Neal said police have had the witnesses' names since Cornell Emmanuel's arrest and had not charged them to date.

Worthy earlier reprimanded and fined Neal for not promptly turning over a videotape of the incident to the prosecution in discovery, but took no action against the prosecution when Neal said that their attorneys had not yet turned over evidence he had demanded in discovery, including radio transmissions between the police cars involved.