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USA

All Night, All Day, We Will Fight for Freddie Gray! In Solidarity with Baltimore

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Sixteen days after the arrest of Freddie Gray, Baltimore police and government officials have no word for their city on why he died. No statement, no explanation, no insight as to how this young man emerged from police custody with his voice box crushed and 80% of his spinal cord severed. Outrage at this injustice and the pattern of racist violence it represents has sparked ongoing demonstrations, a drive to organize and unite against police brutality, and a politicization unprecedented in the city's recent history.

The response of Baltimore's and Maryland's ruling class to this movement for justice has been violent repression. Police stoked tension with fabrications, uncritically reproduced in the media, about a gang plot to kill officers, and acted deliberately to provoke a riot, forcing young people out into the streets and incessantly harassing them. The resulting expressions of rage and hopelessness have been used as a pretext for physical and political war against entire communities. Even more than usual, the police are acting as an occupying army, with reinforcements from state police and the National Guard called in and a citywide 10:00 p.m. curfew declared. Hundreds have been arrested. In spite of this onslaught, protests and organizing continue to grow. Medical, legal, and community support is being self-organized, demonstrations continue with massive ones planned for this weekend, and new coalitions are forming.

Racist violence by police is integral to the US power structure, as is the social violence of joblessness, water shutoffs, and displacement perpetrated daily against black communities. Defeating this violence is central to the victory of all struggles for justice. Politicians and media exploit the riots to criticize the entire movement and call for "peaceful protest" that does not threaten the status quo, but militant struggle is needed to overcome racism and the power structures it supports. Baltimore's uprising, like Ferguson's before it, points the way forward. We stand with Baltimore's movement for justice and condemn the violence of police and the National Guard. Solidarity with the #BaltimoreUprising! Justice for #FreddieGray and all victims of police brutality!

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