

Andrew Brown shooting: anger as family shown only 'snippet' of police footage

- *Lawyers say police trying to hide truth of Brown's death*
- *Brown, 42, killed by officers in North Carolina last week*



Benjamin Crump, one of the Brown family lawyers, said: 'The state of North Carolina can no longer hide videos from the people who need to see them.'

Ed Pilkington in New York

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Lawyers representing the family of Andrew Brown, a Black man killed by police in North Carolina last week, erupted in anger on Monday afternoon after relatives were shown only a 20-second "snippet" from one police body camera, which they said showed Brown with his hands on the steering wheel of the car he was driving when he was shot dead in a hail of police bullets.

Brown's son, Khalil Ferebee, spoke briefly at a press conference in Elizabeth City to say: "My dad got executed just trying to save his own life. It's not right, it's not right at all."

The family had been bracing themselves for a viewing of body-camera footage on Monday morning that could cast light on whether Brown was shot in the back.

Family attorney Harry Daniels on Monday afternoon said that in fact it appeared that Brown was shot in the back of the head.

Local media had reported that the family would finally get to see the video after an agonizing wait following Wednesday's shooting, which happened during the serving of a drug warrant.

But anger mounted on Monday after repeated delays. According to lawyers for the Brown family, they were informed that there would be a delay because parts of the footage had to be redacted.

Then mid-afternoon, lawyers and family emerged from the viewing to report that there had been heated disagreements between the attorneys and county officials and that in the short piece of footage that was shown, police were already firing at Brown when the clip began, crowding his car with handguns and assault rifles drawn, family lawyer Chantel Cherry-Lassiter said.

“They ran up to his vehicle, shooting. He still sat there while being shot at,” she said, adding that Brown did not at any point present a threat to the officers.

She said the attorneys lost count of the number of shots fired during that 20 seconds.

Earlier, Benjamin Crump, also representing the family, had said the authorities were trying to sweep the truth under the rug.

He had said: “They want to redact the face of the police officers who killed Andrew Brown. Andrew Brown didn’t kill nobody, the police killed Andrew Brown, but we are going to protect them and not show their face.”

According to an eye witness, deputies fired at Brown, 42, as he tried to drive away.

Dispatch audio has been captured in which a first responder can be heard saying: “Be advised EMS has one male, 42 years of age, gunshot to the back.” A car taken from the site of Brown’s death was reported to have a shattered back window.

The public may have to wait considerably longer to see the video. Under North Carolina state law, a judge has to approve the general release of body-camera footage – a process that could still take days.

Local leaders are urging calm amid protests surrounding the police killing. Lloyd Griffin, chairman of the commissioners of Pasquotank county, said: “Rushing the gathering of evidence and interviewing of witnesses would hurt any future legal case that might be brought in the wake of this tragedy.”

But lawyers said that patience was running out. Bakari Sellers, one of the legal team for the Brown family, told Monday’s press conference: “I wish we were somewhere else. I wish we had a week where Black folk weren’t just dying at the hands of law enforcement. The state of North Carolina can no longer hide videos from the people who need to see them.”

Crump addressed the indications that Andrew Brown was shot in the back. “The most cowardly thing in the world you can do is shoot somebody in the back. They don’t shoot white men in the back. They shoot us in the back. The most dangerous thing to a police officer in America is a black man running away.”

At the weekend, the Rev William Barber of the Poor People’s Campaign called for the footage to be made public.

“We’re sick and tired of all these deaths happening that don’t have to happen,” he said.
“Release the tapes!”

Brown died after seven officers including a tactical team were deployed to his house to serve a drug-related search and arrest warrant. All seven have been placed on leave.

According to Betty Banks, Brown’s aunt, no drugs or weapons were found.