



PRESS ADVISORY

**POLICE CONSTABLE MICHAEL THERIAULT
“GUILTY” of ASSAULT**

**JUDGE CONVICTS TORONTO POLICE OFFICER FOR BRUTAL BEATING OF
BLACK YOUTH**

JUNE 26, 2020

Superior Court Justice Joseph Di Luca has found Police Constable Michael Theriault guilty of assault in relation to the attack on Dafonte Miller on December 28, 2016. Dafonte suffered catastrophic injuries, including the loss of his left eye.

Dafonte Miller commented: **“While I am disappointed that both Michael and Christian Theriault were not convicted of all charges, I am grateful that Justice Di Luca found Michael Theriault guilty of assaulting me. I am grateful that the Judge recognized that what “probably” happened was much worse. The Judge recognized that I was running for my life from people who were trying to harm me not arrest me. Officer Theriault abused his authority and he needs to be held accountable. I want to thank my family for all their love and support during these challenging times. I would also like to thank the community for all of their support. My family and I are forever grateful.”**

Lawyer Julian Falconer of Falconers LLP who acts for Dafonte Miller and his family in investigating the police misconduct and commencing his civil lawsuit, stated:

Important progress was made today in the ongoing struggle to make police authorities accountable. This case started with Dafonte Miller being charged with six criminal offences and has ended with a conviction of assault against Constable Mike Theriault. The force used that night by the Theriault brothers was found to have been more than likely intended to exact vigilante justice. Questions remain how these facts could have instead led to charges against Dafonte Miller. The events of that night raise questions about the entire approach of the Toronto Police Service and the Durham Police Service in attempting to shield the Theriault brothers from being held to account for their actions. We have to put an end to this type of brutality and inevitable cover up.



Questions remain:

- **How could this cover up (failure to notify the Special Investigations Unit) have been jointly orchestrated by two police services (Toronto and Durham) to protect a Toronto police officer and his brother?**
- **What was the role of the father of the Theriault brothers (Toronto Police Service Detective John Theriault) in the initial police investigation and ultimate cover up of the brutal police beating of Dafonte Miller?**
- **In view of the catastrophic injuries to Dafonte Miller and no injuries to the Theriault brothers, how could the bogus charges have been initially laid against Dafonte Miller?**
- **What is the justice system prepared to do to curtail the hardball legal Defence tactics in the courtroom that serve to repeatedly and mercilessly re-victimize victims of police abuse?**

A Federal Royal Commission of Inquiry is necessary to bring out the truth about beatings and killings of racialized and Indigenous people in police custody. Dafonte Miller's experience is hardly an isolated incident. It's time to commit to real police reform."

For further information, please see the attached Backgrounder, which is also available on the firm website at www.falconers.ca

If you have any questions, please contact Odi Dashsambuu of Falconers LLP at 416-964-0495, extension 248.

