

“I don’t see Terrance being surrounded by police in an enclosed basement trying to put up a fight.”

Mother Sheila O’Neal



Franklin pleaded for his life, family says



● Parents point to his voice on video captured by a bystander.

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The parents of a man shot and killed by Minneapolis police earlier this year said Tuesday that they can hear their son pleading with officers to let him go on video shot by a bystander.

The video — taken from across the street as officers converged on a house in the Uptown neighborhood where Terrance Franklin, 22, was hiding — includes an audio track that at times is difficult to discern. Parents Walter Franklin and Sheila O’Neal said they clearly hear their son’s voice above the din.

“He’s saying, ‘Man, let me go,’” Walter Franklin told the Star Tribune.

The family’s assertion comes less than a week after a Hennepin County grand jury found that there was no evidence to file criminal charges against the five police officers involved in the May 10 incident. A Police Department investigation, released hours after the grand jury’s decision, said that Franklin charged at officers when they found him hiding in a basement and that he used one of the officers’ guns to shoot two of them in the legs, causing two other officers to shoot him to death.

Franklin’s parents Tuesday also brought up their attorney’s earlier claim that the same video caught police using a racial epithet referring to Franklin. In response to the family’s allegations, Police Chief Janeé Harteau said Tuesday that she stands by the grand jury decision and her department.

“A Grand Jury cleared all officers from any wrongdoing connected to this matter. The Minneapolis Police Department presented the facts of this case to the public in a detailed presentation last week. We respect the Grand Jury process and stand by our officers,” the statement read. It did not address the video directly.

Franklin’s parents say the video shows that their son was apprehended in the basement and held for a short time after the two offi-

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Sheila O’Neal, Terrance Franklin’s mother, and Mike Padden question police accounts and cite a video at tinyurl.com/jjazhw.

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Video has Franklin pleading for life, family says

◀ FRANKLIN FROM B1

cers were hit by gunfire; how those officers were shot and what sparked the shooting of their son is a mystery, they say.

"I don't really understand because I don't see Terrance being surrounded by police in an enclosed basement trying to put up a fight," said Sheila O'Neal. "That's a question I'm steady asking myself, 'What did actually happen?' And why did they just kill my son the way they did?"

The police said Franklin, who had a lengthy criminal record, was a wildly out-of-

control suspect who fought to the death. He led officers on a 91-minute chase through Uptown after an apartment building manager on Lyndale Avenue S. called 911 to report a burglary suspect, Franklin, on his property.

"Mr. Franklin's actions dictated the outcome of that day," Harteau said at last week's news conference.

The same YouTube video that Franklin's parents say carries their son's voice was part of an earlier allegation by Franklin family attorney Mike Padden in late May that officers had used a racial epithet while


trying to capture Franklin. The claim was dismissed by Harteau, who said at the time that Padden should apologize to the department and the public.

Franklin's parents insisted again on Tuesday that someone who they said is a police officer can be heard saying, "Damn freaking (racial epithet)" 26 seconds into the video. They say their son's voice can be heard just after that phrase.

Padden, who has said he will likely file a wrongful-death lawsuit, said the epithet and Franklin's voice could be heard outside on the street because radios worn by the

police officers in the basement were broadcasting the sounds to officers outside.

Walter Franklin, who said he's convinced that police officers beat his son, said he doesn't believe his son would have tried to take an officer's gun.

"I know my son and I know he's not a cop killer," he said. "They could have Tased him. They could have brought him out of the basement alive, but they took it upon themselves and they killed my son." 

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