

Burglar to Get \$25,000 In Alleged P.G. Police Beating

[FINAL Edition]

The Washington Post (pre-1997 Fulltext) - Washington, D.C.

Date: Aug 15, 1996
Start Page: C.04
Section: METRO
Text Word Count: 254

A federal judge in Greenbelt has approved a \$25,000 payment by Prince George's County to a convicted burglar who said he was beaten by four Prince George's police officers outside the Shakey's restaurant in Suitland in October 1994.

Three of the officers had been convicted by a county judge of battery and official misconduct, but a jury in a higher court acquitted all four officers in May. The case renewed concern in the county over police brutality and strained relations between some black and white officers. The burglar is black, and three of the accused officers are white and one is black.

The civil suit stemming from the incident was closed last week when U.S. District Court Judge Deborah K. Chasanow approved an agreement reached between the county and the burglar, Henry L. Gray.

The county offered to pay Gray \$25,000 and reasonable attorneys' fees to avoid a trial that would have cost far more than that amount, according to Deputy County Attorney Sean Wallace. He said Gray originally sought a \$750,000 settlement.

"In no way is there an admission of wrongdoing," Wallace said. "We feel comfortable that ultimately we would have prevailed. After all, a jury has already cleared these officers."

But Gray's attorney, Terrell N. Roberts III, said the agreement was a victory for his client.

"He achieved what he set out to do," Roberts said. "This a vindication of his constitutional rights. You don't pay this amount of money if the officers weren't guilty."

Credit: From News Services and Staff Reports

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.